

SATCHEL

VOLUME 4 OF 2025



Resolution and Bylaw changes Deadline:

If your branch is sending any Resolutions or Bylaw changes to be read and voted on at the 2026 Oregon State Convention and you want them printed in the convention book, then they all must be in the hands of the Secretary-Treasurer no later than January 24th, 2026. Any Bylaw changes received after this will not be read or voted on at the 2026 State Convention. Any resolutions received after this will not be printed in the convention book and must be brought to the convention and signed by at least ten delegates representing at least three branches and submitted to the Secretary-Treasurer before the end of the first day's lunch break.

Delegate Lists:

All Branches in Oregon should have received the Convention Call for the 2026 Oregon State Convention. Our current bylaws state that all branches will send a list, type written and alphabetized, of the names of their delegates elected to the State Convention to the State President and Host City Secretary within 10 days after the election of their delegates. Registration for each delegate can be submitted after that, as soon as possible, and doesn't have to include all delegates on the former list already sent. All registration and registration fees should be sent to the Secretary-Treasurer.

Website:

The Oregon State Association website is live and active!!! There you will see important updates, Info about your state officers (not all bios are in), upcoming events, links to this year's Satchel's, and some valuable resources (including our state by-laws). So be sure to check it out and let us know if you'd like to see something added to our website. The address is www.osalc.org.

Elections:

At our 2026 State Convention on April 24th & 25th, 2026, there will be elections for The State Executive Board. Each person on the executive board is responsible for visiting all City Stations in an assigned area in Oregon once a year before October 1st. These visits are to check on the current situation with treatment, facilities, vehicles, and report this to the regional office. Besides that, we meet two times in person each year and make a lot of decisions via email as well. The term for this position is 2 years. If this sounds like something you would like to do, then make sure you are attending the next State Convention or send a signed acceptance letter and have someone nominate you that goes. No experience is required to be on the executive board!

OSALC OFFICERS

Abe RedCloud
President
maildudeff@gmail.com
Cell: 831-331-0798

Lisa Fair
Vice President
lisafair2@aol.com
Cell: 541-282-3265

Casey English
Secretary -Treasurer
casey.english82@gmail.com
Cell: 503-309-9689

Brandon McCabe
Recording Secretary
beavertonshopsteward@aol.com
Cell: 805-340-6786

George Wallenstine
Dir. Of Retirees
wallensteing@gmail.com
Cell: 503-318-9328

OSA EXECUTIVE BOARD

Valerie Castillo
Exec. Board Chair
valeriecastillo347@gmail.com
Cell: 503-569-9744

Scott Menzer
Executive Board
sbmenzer@gmail.com
Cell: 509-570-3589

Tiffany Miller
tqmillier1025@gmail.com
Cell: 208-697-0638

TJ Sanders
discmantj@gmail.com
541-990-9278

Theresa Dunas
birdmom4eva@outlook.com
Cell: 541-430-9804

REGIONAL OFFICERS

Nick Vafiades
National Business Agent

Debbie Dixon
Regional Administrative
Assistant

James Frankford
Regional Administrative
Assistant

Amy Gallo
Regional Administrative
Assistant

Sue Wellhausen
Regional Grievance
Assistant

National Business Office
Region 2
7710 NE Greenwood Dr
Vancouver, WA 98662

The Satchel is the official publication of the Oregon State Association of the National Association of Letter Carriers. It is published seasonally approximately four to five times per year as provided in the by-laws of the Oregon State Association. Opinions published in The Satchel do not necessarily represent the official position of the Oregon State Association. Submissions are gladly accepted and are subject to editing for content and space. Please send your submissions to:

OSA Satchel Editor
Brandon McCabe

For more information about the National Association of Letter Carriers including information about the national contract, congressional legislation, the NALC Health Benefits Plan, the Mutual Benefit Association, and the Letter Carrier Political Fund, log on to NALC.org. To stay up to date with notifications on all these issues and many other informational resources, download the NALC app.



Understanding Overtime Rules

Hello, my Sisters and Brothers of Oregon! In this edition of the Satchel, we decided that our topic will be workplace issues. So, each of us will be writing about a different topic that has something to do with issues you'd find at our workplace. The one exception is George who will draft his article about something for the Retirees. I hope you all find this issue beneficial and at least one part of it helps you with something going on in your office. Without further ado, I am going to write about Mandatory Overtime and Off Assignment.

First let's start with Mandatory Overtime. This is when management has used all the other help they have per the contract and must force carriers, not wanting overtime, to work it. When is it ok for you to be given Mandatory overtime? Well, if you are an 8-hour carrier, then management must first make all ODL carriers work 10 hours, before forcing you to work any overtime on your own assignment. They should work all PTF's 10 hours, and CCA's 10 hours, but they don't have to. If you are an 8-hour medical, they can't force you to work anything over eight, or whatever your medical states. Do not work over your medicals, because all you are doing is showing management that you can do it and that could cause problems, let alone you getting hurt. If management is giving a non-medical 8-hour carrier overtime on another route other than their own, then they must maximize ODL carriers to twelve work hours. Again, they should work all PTF's to 11.5 work hours and CCA's to 11.5 work hours, but they don't have to. Management can require an 8-hour carrier to work past their 8 hours as long as it is on their own route and all ODL's and auxiliary assistance (PTF's and CCA's) are working at least 10 hours as stated above.

What about if you are on the work-assignment list? If you are on this list then you can be required to work up to 11.5 work hours on your own assignment, but not on another route. If you are on the work assignment list and a Carrier Technician (T-6), then you can be required to work up to 11.5 hours on any of the routes on your string as long as you worked at least 8 hours on the route you are assigned to that day. In another situation, a work assignment T-6 is entitled to all the overtime (up to 11.5 work hours) on any of their routes that has a regular carrier on the ODL. So, management can give a work assignment carrier overtime on one of their routes that has an ODL and then have the ODL work overtime on another route. They do this in cases they have a lot of routes to cover and are trying not to go "Off Assignment."

What is "Off Assignment"? This is when ANY regular carrier (including work assignment and T-6 carriers) not on the ODL are forced to work any overtime not on their assignment (your assigned route of the day or any route on a work assignment T-6's string). Before management does this, they are required to follow the guidelines above in this article and should ask for volunteers before forcing carriers to work overtime. Unfortunately, they don't have to ask for volunteers because the contract says they "may" seek volunteers. There are also rules management must follow when going "off assignment."

When going Off Assignment, management must assign sections by juniority. What this means is that they must use a current seniority list and start assigning sections to the lowest seniority carrier and move up the list, one carrier at a time. If skipping over anyone as they move up, they must write the reason they did that (medical, appointment, anniversary, birthday, etc.). Yes, that is right, management should consider and skip anyone that has a prior obligation such as a birthday, anniversary, illness, or something like that. They don't HAVE to do that as the contract says, "exceptions if requested by the employee may be approved," but they should. Okay back to the seniority list. Management should write where they started drafting carriers and where they stopped drafting carriers. This is because next time they go Off Assignment, they must start at the next person above where they stopped and go up from there. That's right, they DO NOT start at the bottom every time. When reaching the top seniority carrier, they continue wrapping back to the bottom and working their way back up.

Well, there you go. There is a brief explanation of Mandatory Overtime and Off Assignment. If what I specified is not happening at your station, you should tell your steward so they can investigate it. In fact, ANYTIME you get drafted to do another route in overtime and you don't volunteer for it, you should contact your steward, because management can a lot of the time be sneaky and go off assignment and don't tell the steward to try to get away with it without a grievance. If you don't have a steward, contact the regional office or the contact person with the State board that someone in your office should have. I hope this has helped in some way around Oregon. Take care everyone and be well!

In Solidarity and Unionism,
Abe RedCloud

Stationary Events

In today's data-driven workplace, letter carriers are increasingly monitored through digital tools like GPS breadcrumbs, RIMS, and scanner analytics. While these technologies aim to improve efficiency, they can sometimes raise questions about so-called "stationary events." Those are the moments when your scanner doesn't move for a period of time. Let's be clear: being stationary doesn't mean you're not working.

What Is a Stationary Event? A stationary event is typically flagged when a carrier's scanner remains in one location longer than a predetermined threshold. These thresholds are often arbitrary and don't account for the real-world demands of our job. The data may show a pause, but it doesn't tell the story of what was happening at that moment.

The most important thing to remember is that if you were working, doing your job, and fulfilling your duties, you have nothing to worry about. There are countless legitimate reasons a carrier might be stationary. Some examples could be:

- Replenishing mail trays or organizing parcels
- Replacing a name tag or updating box information
- Assisting a customer with a question or concern
- Pulling mail from a vacant box
- Navigating a complex delivery situation

These are all part of the job—and none of them are visible in a GPS "ping."

When management questions a stationary event, they're usually looking at digital data—not witnessing your actions firsthand. A scanner's location doesn't capture the context of that moment in time. It doesn't see the elderly customer you helped, the misdelivered parcel you corrected, or the moment you paused to ensure accuracy.

If management were physically present and observed something inappropriate, they should address it in real time. Otherwise, they're relying on incomplete information generated by a "ping" in a computer database.

If you're ever called into an investigative interview about a stationary event and you know you were doing your job, your response is simple and powerful: I WAS WORK-

ING. That's the truth. If you'd like to add context—such as "I was updating a name tag" or "I was answering a customer's question"—you can. But you're not obligated to justify every moment of your route when you were actively engaged in your duties. And let's be real, we might not remember exactly what the situation was when the scanner showed the inactivity, but we know we were working.

Letter carriers are the backbone of community connection. Our duties were created out of necessity for a service. A service to the people. The number crunchers forget that customer service is a key element to our job duties. Some customers need more service than others.

Every day we navigate unpredictable conditions, serve with care, look out for our customers, and uphold the integrity of the mail. Don't let digital shadows cast doubt on your commitment to the job.

If you were working, you were doing your job. And that should be enough.

In sisterly solidarity,
Lisa Fair
Southern Oregon Branch 1433



No Tax on Overtime?

Before I begin my article, I'd like to draw everyone's attention to the announcements on the front cover. There's some valuable information, including about our upcoming State Convention. Also, please take a look at our new website: osalc.org. We've worked very hard to finally bring this website to you all, and I'm glad that it's finally (mostly) ready.

So, by now, I'm sure most people have heard about the "One Big Beautiful Bill Act". As originally drafted, this bill would have been devastating to all federal workers. Versions of the bill would have ended the FERS Special Retirement Supplement, raised FERS contributions for all employees to the current rate of 4.4 percent, nearly tripled to contribution rate for new hires, forced new hires to choose between paying a higher FERS contribution or becoming "at-will" and waiving all civil-service and union protections, based annuities off of a high-5 instead of a high-3, and forced the Postal Service to sell off any electric vehicles they had acquired. Luckily, due to intense activism and lobbying from the NALC and other federal unions, all those provisions were removed from the final bill that was signed into law earlier this year. Now, if that doesn't highlight the value in contributing to the Letter Carrier Political Fund, I'm not sure what will. So, before I go any further, I'd like everyone reading this to consider contributing if they aren't already. These attacks on federal workers are only going to get worse over the coming years.

However, there were a lot of other provisions that did make it into the final bill that are of interest to us as workers. One of the ones I've heard people talking about the most is the "No Tax on Overtime" rule. Leading up to the passage of the bill, there was a lot said about this provision, and I think that not all of it was entirely honest or upfront, so I figured I would take some time and try to breakdown how, based on what the IRS has put out, the "No Tax on Overtime" rule will work. Let's start by looking at what the IRS says about this new rule:

"No Tax on Overtime"

New deduction: Effective for 2025 through 2028, individuals who receive qualified overtime compensation may deduct the pay that exceeds their regular rate of pay -- such as the "half" portion of "time-and-a-half" compensation -- that is required by the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) and that is reported on a Form W-2, Form 1099, or other specified statement furnished to the individual.

There's a lot to digest there. First, I'd be remiss if I didn't point out the very specifically chosen end-date for this deduction. Moving on, pay very close attention to where it says, "may de-

duct the pay that exceeds their regular rate of pay -- such as the "half" portion of "time-and-a-half" compensation". That means that, for example, if you normally earn \$30 an hour, you only get to deduct the \$15 an hour that is over your normal rate of pay. I don't know about you, but I don't think of my overtime as an extra 50%, I think of it as time-and-a-half. So even calling it "no tax on overtime" is disingenuous, in my opinion.

Next, and this is perhaps the most important bit of that language:

"that is required by the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA)". This means that it doesn't apply to "Postal Overtime". For those of you that don't sit by the campfire at night reading the JCAM, let me explain. As I'm sure most people are aware, we as letter carriers earn one-and-a-half times our straight-time pay whenever we work more than 8 hours in a day or more than 40 hours in a week. That is called "Postal Overtime". It is an overtime rate created by our National Agreement, not guaranteed under the law. In contrast, the Fair Labor Standards Act only

requires employers to pay overtime to non-exempt employees whenever they work more than 40 hours a week. That is the overtime that is deductible under this new law, not our contractually guaranteed "Postal" overtime. It also doesn't apply to the contractually guaranteed "penalty" overtime, or this new two-and-a-half times rate for work over 12 hours in a day or 60 in a week.

So then, how much of our overtime actually counts? It's honestly hard to say, but it certainly isn't going to be as much as some people were thinking when this law was passed. It's easy enough to determine if you have any FLSA overtime by looking at your paystub on LiteBlue. Any week in which you had FLSA overtime should have an "FLSA" line. Except, it says \$0. That's because the overtime compensation you earned through Postal (and penalty) overtime was at least as much as what the FLSA says you are owed, so the line is \$0.

But because the FLSA says you only get overtime if you work over 40 hours in a week, any weeks in which you took any kind of leave likely don't qualify for overtime under the FLSA. So, any overtime you earned those weeks won't be deductible.

Honestly until it comes time to file our taxes next year, we're not going to know how much overtime actually counts, or how much we're going to be able to deduct. But it's clear that what we were given was not what was being sold to us.

Until next time,
Casey



Always Check Your Pay and Benifits

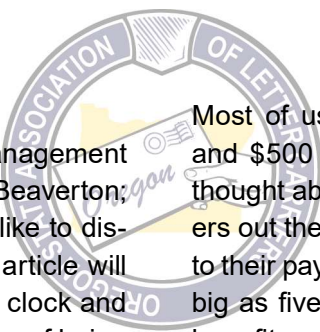
Hello NALC Family!

I am very blessed to have level headed management in the two offices I am the Steward of in Beaverton, however, there is a workplace issue I would like to discuss with you all and, ultimately, I hope this article will encourage you all to look at your virtual time clock and your paystubs because the automated process of being paid is not as automated as one would think.

I had a carrier in Aloha (Beaverton) come to me regarding his upcoming paycheck. This Carrier is wise and always checks his paystubs and makes sure that things look proper. He discovered he had been dropped five pay steps from M to H. His paycheck was missing around \$500.

The Carrier and I both went to the floor supervisors who did what they could to try and understand what happened to no avail. The Carrier and I called Shared Services and were not given any definite information as to what took place. The operator gave us a loose guestimate as to what may have taken place; however, ultimately stated that a member of the accounting team would call the Carrier back by or before Tuesday (it was Friday when we called.)

He was never called back. He never received an explanation, Form 50, or in any other way as to why this happened. We filed a grievance, and it is currently at Formal A. Among other things, we asked for an in-writing explanation of what happened. This action, or inaction, showed such little respect for this carrier.



Most of us are, sadly, paycheck-to-paycheck carriers and \$500 can really break the bank for most of us! I thought about this and believe there may be other carriers out there that could have had an impromptu change to their pay and may not have noticed it. It may not be as big as five pay steps! Please remember to check your benefits and spend at least 10 minutes every Sunday to go over your paystub and alert management and steward immediately if there is an issue.

In case you don't know how to check your pay and hours on LiteBlue here are the instructions.

How to Check Your Clock Rings Instructions:

1. Go to <https://liteblue.usps.gov/> and log in using your USPS Employee ID and USPS Password.
2. Click on Virtual Timecard in the Employee Apps.
3. Agree to the terms of use.

This will take you into your active pay period. Be sure things look correct. Pay special attention to your daily work hours. To see details on pay and benefits you'll need to look at your last pay statement. To do that, in LiteBlue, follow these instructions.

How to Check your Pay Statement Instructions:

1. Go to <https://liteblue.usps.gov/> and log in using your USPS Employee ID and USPS Password.
2. Click on ePayroll in the Employee Apps.
3. Enter Application.
4. Sign in.
5. Select your pay period for what you want to review.

Hasta Luego,
Brandon McCabe

The Time has Come to Act

Hello all. It is almost October and is starting to become the busy season for all Postal Employees. Everyone has to work safely and know when they need to take breaks according to the contract. We cannot allow this to happen. We as a union have many friends across this country in the House of Representatives and in the Senate. It is time to call to arms and stop this attack on our jobs!

I just met with John Beaumont the National Director of Retires at the Branch 82 meeting in Portland. He

George Wallenstein

was telling me now more than ever we as a Union need to donate money to the Letter Carrier Political Action Fund. Donate whatever you feel comfortable within your budget. The current administration is trying to privatize and void the contract, reduce our wages, take away our health benefits, and retirement.



Outstanding Letter Carrier of the Year Award

Many Letter Carriers go beyond their job of delivering mail to donate their time and energy to their communities. Other Letter Carriers work hard for their union siblings. Some Letter Carriers do both. Do you know any Carriers like this in your office or branch? These Carriers may have been employed for many years or may be CCAs; length of service is not important. Let us know about these amazing Letter Carriers. The NALC Oregon State Association wants to give them the honor and recognition they deserve for going beyond the call of duty. We need your help to make sure that these Letter Carriers are recognized. Send us a letter including all the detail about their: Service and volunteer work in their community, NALC positions and volunteer work. Any other details that make them outstanding Letter Carriers would be great as well. Nominees must be NALC members in good standing. Send your letter to the following address. Be sure to include your name and contact information in case the committee has any further questions. This award will be presented at the annual NALC Oregon State Convention. The Deadline for the 2026 nominations is February 1st, 2026. The nominations are good for five years and must be legible to be considered. Send your nomination letters to:

Abe RedCloud,
2114 NE 36th Ave
Portland, OR, 97212

What to Know About S&DCs

Sorting and Delivery Centers (S&DCs) have been and are still popping up all over the Country. S&DCs are consolidations of carrier and rural unit post offices and zip codes moved into larger buildings. The thought process is that if everyone is in one spot, it will be cheaper to transport mail by semi-truck rather than many small trucks dropping off at all the different offices. They must have forgot that carriers need to go back to those areas to deliver the mail and its much farther now than the quick 5–10-minute drive. It now takes some carriers almost 30-40 minutes to get to their first delivery. The new Postmaster General Steiner says he will keep the “10 year Delivering for America” plan in place to continue to optimize financial and service performance. We are nearing the five-year mark on this “plan.”

When the announcement came to the separate offices that they would be moving to an S&DC in Salem, it was taken with a grain of salt until move in day came closer. The building renovations and walk throughs of the building on 25th St became familiar as National NALC and USPS District representatives would visit regularly to make sure the inside of the building was up to par. The parking lot for postal and personal vehicles did not get completed until 8-9 months after moving in which was not supposed to happen.

What was failed to be mentioned was what was going to happen on the workroom floor when everyone was in one building. There are 88 City routes and 24 Rural routes and growing. Lucky for us, was that we were still going to be under the same LMOU, as it had been known that other S&DCs were going to have to combine or take on another LMOU. Included in the over-staffed management, there were a handful of EAS from Western area, who were supposed to be there to help management navigate their new desks, hand-held electronic devices, and new reports to run. Carriers were not allowed to engage in conversation with them, yet we found they had wandered onto the street doing improper driving observations on carriers. This, along with a multitude of other issues on the workroom floor, had stewards managing 23 investigative interviews in the first two weeks. The move-in happened in February

and by July, improper daily mandates began. Management tried to fight back that because it was an S&DC with a new finance number that any prior DRT was thrown out and could not be used in any new grievance from the S&DC. Through the grievance procedure, they learned that the DRTs were still part of the installation and could be used.

Route adjustments were made and four new full routes and two auxiliary routes with no vehicles, through peak mind you.

It's been about a year and a half since Salem became the first S&DC in the State. The investigative interviews are still happening but not in large amounts. The District Area people left and then a few came back. And again, had another one doing an improper driving observation recently. The improper daily mandates are still going on along with the mismanagement and treatment of carriers. One would think that “One Team, One Dream”

would alleviate the delay of mail but it has not, and some routes and/or sections do not get delivered that day. The 100ft parcel sorting machine breaks down at least once a month and the clerks are overwhelmed to sort by hand.

All S&DCs were supposed to get the electric NGDV (New Generation Delivery Vehicle). Salem has received some NGDV's that are gas powered. Carriers have been getting their training on them, but they have not been released to the routes yet. E-Transit vehicles (can be considered a giant Metris van type) are also coming to the S&DC. There are charging stations ready to go in the finally finished parking lot.

Being in an S&DC is no easy task, as it now houses more people, more personalities, and more problems on a grand level. I applaud my stewards for taking this all on daily. If anyone needs information or help on how to navigate their S&DC, please don't hesitate to reach out.

In Sisterly Solidarity,
Valerie Castillo



Safety is in Our Hands

In each of our offices safety is touted loudly, proudly, and often just as lip service. I would say from all the offices I've visited most safety issues I have seen are the result of a lack of maintenance. The neglect of maintenance issues is a dangerous line USPS constantly skirts. Partly from logistics and partly from mismanagement. It's a constant source of frustration for carriers and stewards. The postal service has an obligation to maintain a safe work environment, Safety must be a daily practice. If done wrong it can be the difference between a two hour wait for VMF and a career-ending accident.

So, imagine you have found a hazard, maintenance issue, etc. What might it be? There are three big types: Physical, Ergonomic, and Environmental.

1. Physical are the most straight forward: Structures, equipment, vehicles. A blocked emergency exit, a package leaking detergent on the floor, a broken or faulty headlight. Mostly things that prevent us from doing the job or could cause an injury if not attended.

2. Ergonomic issues are a little more obscure. These are about how things are done: Posture, motions, tool setup. The way you sit in an LLV, the repetitive motions of getting in and out during Hops/Scoots/etc., or a case that is too tall for the carrier. Some of these may not seem reportable or 'worth' a formal report because we are so used to making things work in the confines of our day-to-day. However, they can have some long-lasting, far-reaching medical consequences.

3. Environmental issues are the most likely to be dangerous; these are temperatures, weather/chemical exposure, and air quality. A heatwave or wildfire smoke pollution, a backed-up sewage line, or a hostile work environment (which is a whole other can of worms I don't have the space or the knowledge to write about). Improper protection in these situations can be deadly.

Once you identify a hazard or safety issue a formal report is the first effective method of dealing with it. PS FORM 1767 is a 'Report of Hazard, Unsafe Condition or Practice.' Contractually, all offices should have these forms available, in triplicate, with yellow and pink copies; they will be either in a supervisor's office or a safety bulletin board, but, like all things postal, some are more available than others.

I have been to too many offices that have had a vehicle or vehicles with engine shut off issues. It's so easy for carriers to become complacent over issues because dealing with them and pushing through becomes routine. It's so important that we look out for others in our office as well. USPS views safety from some pretty flawed rose-colored glasses; Management views safety from the perspective that

all accidents and injuries are preventable. This is simply not true. Shit happens. It's that view, though, that tends to leave all culpability with the carrier. Things fall apart. We often encounter situations that compromise our safety and well-being. Because of this, each carrier has a personal responsibility to identify, report, and protect yourself from these issues and hazards. Verbal reports are a good practice, but in my experience, passing the buck on to someone else almost never solves the problem itself. Supervisors must be hounded to make progress when a 1767 is filed.



Supervisors are never proactive with maintenance. All too often management's solution to an issue is a temporary jury-rigged fix. My office and many others are littered with them. Once their solutions become inadequate or are too untimely the grievance process must start. It requires stewards to be firm and unrelenting.

Article 14 of the contract lays out the exact process for reporting and it explicitly states that it is the responsibility of management to provide safe working conditions in all present and future installations. But it also says that the union are partners in this, advocating for a safe workplace and cooperating to make it happen. Part of that is the creation of and participation in Joint Labor-Management safety and health committees at national, area, and local levels. Very few people have seen EL-809 guidelines to establish Area/Local committees, even fewer have read them. It is another tool we can deploy to improve safety in the office.

The two most powerful tools you have are 1767 form and the grievance process.

Article 14 lays out the exact process start to finish, but there is another one. A dysfunctional tool often of last resort that can have powerful results in serious situations: OSHA (Occupational Safety and Health Administration). OSHA can take speedy and striking action to resolve severe or dangerous situations. OSHA can of course be difficult to contact, getting an OSHA inspection can be a literal lifesaver but can also be undermined by quick fixes.

At the end of the day our goal should be a workplace where everyone gets paid well, goes home at the end of the day, and is just as healthy as when they arrived. No matter how frustrating or how ingrained routine safety is a burden all of us bear and it's only by working together can we keep ourselves safe.

-Scott Menzer

Heat Related Comfort Breaks

It is the middle of summer; cloudy overcast and you've been feeling great all morning. It's only 75 degrees with a slight breeze; it should be an easy day. You're now halfway done with your route, and you feel dizzy, nauseous and you get a muscle cramp. You continue working, thinking you just need to drink some water, or maybe it was that gas station food you had for a quick lunch. You're now at the last hour of your route and you have a headache, sweat dripping off your forehead like a waterfall, body temperature feels hot and you can barely keep your eyes open. You only have an hour left, right? You keep delivering the mail. Next thing you know, you're laying down in somebody's yard, in and out of consciousness. Luckily, one of your customers finds you and calls 911. You get to a hospital and find out you had a heat stroke.

Do any of these symptoms sound familiar? They are all signs of heat exhaustion and heat stroke. It may only be 75 degrees outside and cloudy, or even 100 degrees and the sun beating on your back; heat-related illnesses can affect you at different temperatures. If you are taking any medications or have any medical conditions, the heat can also affect you and cause these same heat-related illnesses. Every carrier should have a HIPP (Heat Illness Prevention Program) card with their employee ID and in their vehicle. A HIPP poster should also be posted in every single office. Management should be giving standups regarding heat periodically as well. At this point, everyone should be aware of all symptoms related to heat exhaustion and heat stroke and should know how to act. Take as many breaks as you need to help keep cool in the heat. If Management is pushing you to work faster and get done in 8 hours, remind them that you are doing the best you can and working as safe as possible.

It is management's duty to address any heat-related illnesses under the National Agreement provisions of Article 5, which incorporates OSHA (Occupational Safety and Health Administration) regulations. Article 14, Safety and Health, Section 1 states in pertinent part:

Section 1. Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of management to provide safe working conditions for all present and future installations and to develop a safe working force. The Union will cooperate with and assist management to live up to this responsibility.

Article 19, Handbooks and Manuals, also incorporates OSHA regulations through Chapter 810 of the ELM (Employee and Labor Relations Manual).

Chapter 811.21, Management Commitment, Involvement, and Accountability

Managers must demonstrate commitment to providing safe and healthful working conditions install Postal Service-owned and -leased installations, become involved in day-to-day safety performance, and be held accountable for safety performance and compliance with OSHA standards and regulations.



Management focuses on DOIS (Delivery Operations Information System) or PET (Performance Engagement Tool) when projecting workloads for carriers. These programs do not consider any hazards, such as weather, when projecting their times. If a carrier suffers from a heat-related injury, it is your Steward's job to investigate the cause of the injury and determine if it was due to management failing to provide safe working conditions.

If you know you are going to need more breaks during the day to prevent any heat-related illnesses, fill out PS Form 3996. When asking for auxiliary assistance, you should be specific for your reason, such as 'Following proper heat precautions' or 'Comfort stops due to hydration' are great examples. Do not hesitate to fill out this form. It is your job to work in a safe manner while performing your duties as a letter carrier, even if this means you are working overtime due to safety precautions.

There are many resources at your disposal to help you in grieving violations due to heat-related injuries. Aside from the National Agreement previously mentioned, some additional resources are listed below:

- ELM-Chapter 8 Safety, Health, and Environment
- OSHA Regulations-29 CFR (Code of Federal Regulations) 1900-1910.99
- Handbook M-39, Management of Delivery Services, Sections 115.4 and 134.5
- Handbook EL-802, Executives' and Managers' Safety and Health Program Transmittal Letter and Compliance Guide

Letter carriers have died due to heat-related illnesses. Symptoms should never be ignored just to finish delivering mail in an 8-hour day. It is important for you to stay hydrated throughout the day and take as many comfort stops as you need to keep cool. Safety always comes first!

In Solidarity,
Tiffany Miller

Denial of LWOP: Know Your Rights

Denial of leave without pay has been an issue in my office lately, so I wanted to talk about the grievance procedure and some of your rights regarding getting this approved.

At some point, you will want to protect your leave and use leave without pay (LWOP) for various things including personal need. It is true that it is up to management's discretion whether the LWOP is approved or denied. But they need to give you a good reason. In most cases management is doing this to try to burn your annual leave so you may not be able to take your full vacation, especially during the end of the year. Or it's an order from district that they have received and have no idea why it's being implemented.

Elm 514.22 states that each request for LWOP is examined closely, and a decision is made based on the needs of the employee, the needs of the Postal Service, and the cost to the Postal Service. When you submit a 3971 make sure that if it's denied, you get a reason from management so you can tell your Steward. Make sure that management signs off on it, and that you copy it. Unfortunately, the carriers at my station had no choice but to change their leave to annual or sick leave depending on the reason they needed the time off. That's why your Steward is going to grieve it and try to get the time back for you.

Once you get a reason from management, the next step is writing a statement for your Steward explaining why you needed the time, and why it would be a burden for you to use AL or SL, (maybe you have a vacation coming up).

These next steps are for the Steward. If possible, interview management so you can understand the reason the leave was denied. You will need a copy of the carriers 3971 and their statement. Pull the TACS for the date the carrier wanted off. Was there auxiliary assistance available? Was auxiliary assistance provided for the carrier? If you have ODL or CCAs/PTFs it's also good to note the number you have and if they were utilized/maxed on that date.

This grievance demands a high burden of proof from the union. You will need to prove that Management did not give due consideration to the needs of the service, the cost to the service and the needs of the employee.

You already have the 3971, the interview, the employees' statement, and TACS. You should also attach a copy of arbitration M-01235. Now for what to write in your grievance-

Issue statement

Did management violate article 19 of the national agreement via Elm 514.22 in its denial of an LWOP request from carrier (name) for the (date) If so, what is the remedy?

Undisputed facts

On (date) (carrier name) submitted a 3971 requesting (number of hours) of leave without pay for (date) so they could attend a (reason) their request was denied and instead they were told that they needed to use a different form of leave.

Contentions

1. Elm 514.22 states that each request for LWOP is examined closely and a decision is made based on the needs of the employee and the needs and cost to the Postal Service. (Also see attached arbitration M-01235)
2. In their statement, (carrier name) says that (reason denied) as to why they were being denied LWOP.
3. (Station name) has x number of odl and x number of CCA/PTF. On (date) auxiliary assistance was available and provided to carrier (name). Proving that the post office did not need them for (time they requested).
4. The cost-instead of granting (carrier) LWOP, management insisted on paying (carrier). Thus, the cost to the post office was not an issue.

Remedy

1. That management cease and desist violating article 19 of the JCAM, Elm 514.22 and M-01235 by examining each LWOP request. The needs of the employee, the needs of the service and the cost to the service and consider such when reaching a decision in terms of approving or denying LWOP.
2. That all leave inappropriately charged to the carrier be recorded to LWOP on a PS form 2240 and that the grievant be made whole for the improper balance charges.

I hope this will help you fight back against management stealing our leave and having some nuance when it comes to granting LWOP. We may not always win but I feel strongly in grieving things for carriers when they have been harmed. As always feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Best,
Theresa Dunas

YOU DON'T HAVE TO CARRY IT ALL BY YOURSELF

Over the past few weeks, I've been visiting offices in my area and having real, honest conversations with fellow letter carriers. I didn't go in with an agenda—I just wanted to listen. And what I heard was powerful, sometimes heartbreaking, but always real.

- People feeling overwhelmed by rising living costs and falling behind

- Carriers burned out from heat, forced overtime, and short staffing

Many of us are going through challenging times—mentally, emotionally, and physically. Some are dealing with family issues, others with financial pressure or personal loss. Some are quietly struggling with anxiety, depression, or substance use. And some are plainly burned out from the workload and stress that comes with this job.

If any of this sounds familiar to you, please hear me: **you're not alone**, and you **don't have to carry it all by yourself**.

A Resource Many Forget: EAP

The Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is a free, confidential service available to all USPS employees and their families. You don't need permission to use it, and no one in management needs to know you called.

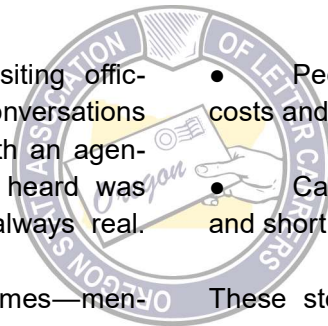
Whether you're dealing with mental health struggles, relationship issues, grief, financial stress, or substance use, EAP is there to help.

- 1-800-EAP-4-YOU (1-800-327-4968)
- www.EAP4YOU.com

You can talk to a trained counselor over the phone, by video, or in person. They also offer resources for legal help, financial counseling, and family support.

What I Heard From Carriers While visiting offices, I heard stories that reminded me how much we all carry:

- Someone silently struggling with addiction and afraid to ask for help
- A young carrier dealing with grief from losing a sibling



These stories aren't rare. They're happening everywhere. But what struck me most is how many of us feel like we have to keep it all bottled up. We don't.

This Is a Union Issue

We fight for fair pay and better working conditions, but we also must fight for our well-being—and that means talking openly about mental health and using the resources available to us. The EAP is part of what we've fought to keep in our contract. It's not a weakness to use it, it's a smart, healthy decision. One carrier told me, "I called EAP, and it helped me get through something I thought would break me." That's the kind of strength we need to normalize.

You're Not Alone

If you're reading this and you're struggling, please reach out. Whether it's EAP or a fellow carrier you trust, don't suffer in silence. There is help. There is hope.

And if you're doing okay right now, look around, someone else might not be. Check in. Ask how they're doing. Sometimes just knowing someone cares makes all the difference.

Wendy from our District EPA office has shown up to our State Convention and shared information. She is always willing to help.

This job is tough. Life can be tougher. But one thing I've learned from visiting so many of you is that we're stronger when we face things together.

Let's keep looking out for each other. Let's use the resources we've earned. Let's remind every letter carrier out there: you're not alone—not in this job, and not in life.

T.J. Sanders



Why join NWPCU?

NW PRIORITY CREDIT UNION is owned by its membership. That means members can count on...



LOW LOAN RATES, HIGH DEPOSIT RATES

NWPCU delivers its earnings back to you in the form of lower rates on loans and higher rates on deposits.



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Your checking account is totally free. And you can use your no-annual-fee Visa debit card at 30,000 free CO-OP Network ATMs nationwide.



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search: Oregon State Association of Letter Carriers

Oregon Letter Carriers: Building a Life of Significance

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

Take Action!!

That's right everyone, it's time to TAKE ACTION with legislation. The NALC currently has several bills, other bills and the budget in Congress that will affect all Letter Carriers, retired or Active!

So, we need you to please complete the following steps which will make contacting your house representative and/or our two senators an ease. Once you register, all you have to do is click on the bill and a form letter is generated and sent. It's that easy. So, we are asking you to please complete the following steps:

Go to NALC.org. Then on the main page, on the right side, under the automatic changing current info, you will see "Take Action." Click on "Contact Congress." If you haven't registered yet for "Take Action," then on the right in blue you will see "click here to register," click on that. After registering (or if you already have and are logged in), near the top, click on the "Take Action" tab.

You can now read about all our current issues we need to contact our congresspeople about or just click "Take Action" on all of them and complete the few simple steps. We are asking for your help, please register and TAKE ACTION today!

UPCOMING EVENTS FOR NALC

RAP Regional Convention 2025
Being held in Suncadia Washington
November 10th - 13th

State Convention 2026
Being held in Corvallis
at Spirit Mountain Casino
April 24th and 25th

NALC NATIONAL CONVENTION 2026
Being held in Los Angeles, CA.
August 3rd through 7th.