

The Philadelphia POSTAL WORKER

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Abusive Management Styles

And How to Combat Them



Nick Casselli,
President

Just about every postal worker has come across a bullying, abusive supervisor or manager in their postal career. If you have not, count your blessings. No manager or supervisor has the right to mistreat workers, harass them or bully them, ever.

Far too often employees try to ignore a manager or supervisor's abusive and bullying tactics. While USPS Headquarters have installed "Safety Ambassadors" throughout the country, they have done very little to enforce this policy with these individual bullies that lurk on our work floors. Postal regulations that prohibit this culture of bullying and abusive behavior include the following:

- Administrative Support Manual 273.132: To assure postal safety, employees must report any disturbance or improper conduct on the part of individuals while on Postal premises.
- Post Office Operations Manual 124.51: Dis-

turbances, disorderly conduct, loud and unusually noisy conduct, or conduct that tends to impede or disturb public employees while working is prohibited.

· Employee and Labor Relations Manual 811.23: The guiding principles of the Postal Service are that employees are our most valued resource. Our employees must be provided a safe and healthful workplace.

· Employee and Labor Relations Manual 665.24: The Postal Service is committed to the principle that all employees have a basic right to a safe and humane working environment. In order to ensure this right, it is the unequivocal

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Knowledge is Power



Nancy Rolling,
Vice President

Do you know what a Union is and its function? A Union is an organization of workers who join together to advance their common interest for better pay, benefits, and working conditions. It is an

organization of workers, not union representatives. We all must work together to continue to make strides in bettering our work conditions, wages, and benefits. Without the collective of workers how do we move forward?

Your contract is available on the union's website (apwu.org) along with other very important information. You can download the APWU App to your phone. This way you always have your contract on hand when needed. Imagine if the workers knew some of the basic rights achieved for them through the contract; how minor issues could be resolved at the time they happen.

Here are just some basic contract provisions the workers should know:

The Joint Contract Interpretation Manual (JCIM) is a mandatory interpretation and application agreement between the APWU and the USPS. If the issue in dispute is addressed in the JCIM, the union should not have to file a grievance; the issue is to be resolved in accordance with the JCIM.

Article 15 deals with the grievance-arbitration procedure, you don't need to know how to process a grievance, but you do need to know what is required of you, the member, when a grievance needs to be filed. The JCIM Article 15 page 1, Filing a Grievance states, "The grievant or the union must discuss the grievance with the employee's immediate supervisor within 14 days of when the grievant or the union first learned, or may reasonably have been expected to learn, of the alleged violation."

A grievance is defined as a dispute, difference, disagreement or complaint between the parties related to wages, hours and conditions of employment. Don't let what you believe are contractual violations go unaddressed for more than 14 days. Always bring this matter to your union's attention as soon as you are made aware of the issue or alleged violation so the union representative can address the matter with your immediate supervisor. Article 17

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Send all communication to the Editor at the above address or via e-mail to Editor@phillyapwu.com.

Articles must be submitted by the second Thursday of the month. They must be typed. Letters must be signed. Name withheld upon request.

Visit our web site at
<https://phillyapwu.org>

Abusive Management Styles

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policy of the Postal Service that there must be no tolerance of harassment, intimidation, threats or bullying by anyone at any level. Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action up to, and including, removal.

With such strong anti-harassment rules in place why do abusive and bullying managers and supervisors still exist at work; because we continue to tolerate them and their bad behavior. We have to expose them and then dispose of them. We need to fight against these abusers. Report their misconduct on a PS Form 1767. Cite chapters six and eight of the ELM, and describe the harassing and bullying behavior. Follow through on the process. If not resolved on site by the end of the tour file a grievance directly to Step 2, in accordance with Article 2, 14, 15 and 19 of the contract. Make sure the case is fully developed (who, what, when, where and how).

If everyone does what is right, and follows these easy steps, arbitrators will find in our favor and put rulings in place that actually punish the managers and supervisors who fail in their responsibility to respond to complaints of abusive and bullying management styles that cause workplace harassment grievance and create hostile work environments. We must fight together and follow through on these issues to

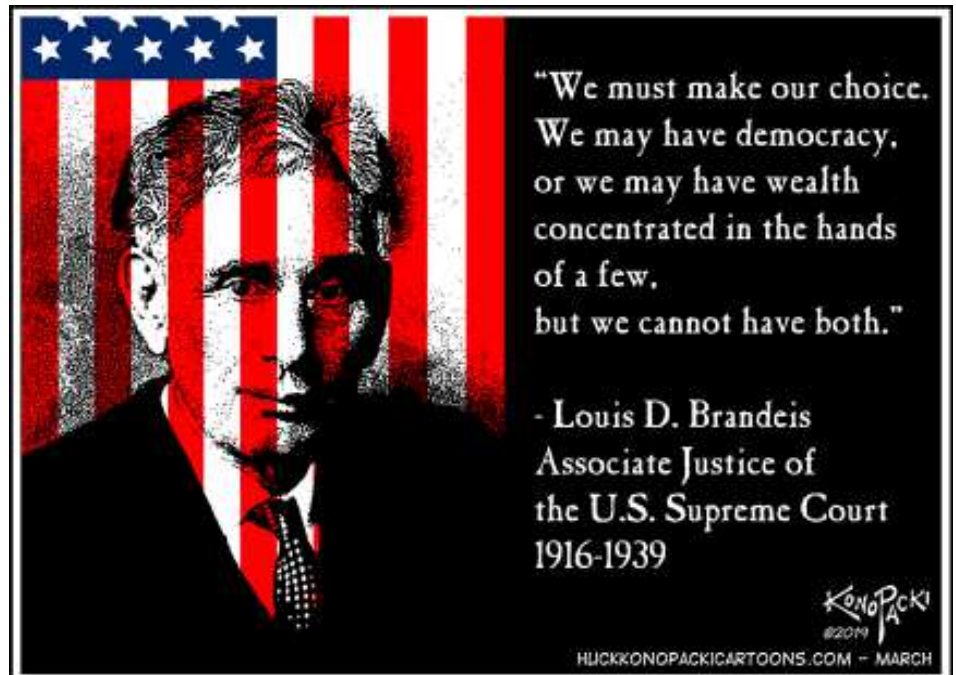
ensure no postal employee ever has to put up with the mental abuse being inflicted upon us by certain postal management personnel.

Contract update

The APWU will be going to interest arbitration to obtain a new contract. Our current contract expired on September 20, 2018. After mutual agreements made to extend national negotiations, the National APWU negotiation team sent a tentative agreement to the Rank and File Advisory Committee for acceptance and their decision whether to send to the membership for ratification vote.

The committee ultimately made the decision not to send the tentative agreement to the membership for ratification. The last time a Rank and File Advisory Committee voted not to send a tentative agreement out for ratification was during the 1978 national negotiations. If the committee vetoed the proposed tentative agreement it did so because a majority of the committee members had justifiable reason to be concerned that accepting the tentative agreement, as proposed, would not be in the best interest of the membership.

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Treasurer's Report



**Donna
Alvin,
Treasurer**

I would like to introduce myself; I am your newly appointed Treasurer, Donna Alvin. I have been a union representative since 2014 and was elected to the position of Chief Steward for the Northeast Stations in 2017. I have been a postal

employee for 26 years. I graduated from Cardinal Dougherty in 1989 and completed two years of community college.

I look forward to the challenge of serving the membership in the capacity of Treasurer. I believe if we all work together there are no limits to how great we can make this Local moving forward.

We must look at our union as a business. We must increase the bottom line for our members by making the postal service pay for contractual violations. In doing this we must ensure we are not leaving any money on the table when dealing with management.

Last year we brought in over a million dollars in grievance settlement money for our mem-

bers, but we probably left just as much on the table by not filing grievances over every violation of our contract. It's not that we didn't try, we did.

What we really need is the participation of every single union member to help us identify contractual violations every single time so we may pursue them.

We need our members to get involved by writing statements, contacting their union steward when they witness a violation, by becoming active in their union by attending the general membership meeting and volunteering to become stewards.

The union is only strong if you, the members are involved. □

Abusive Management Styles

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page 2)*

The APWU will now begin preparing for interest arbitration while continuing attempts to achieve a voluntary agreement. This includes possibly invoking the federal Mediation and Conciliation Service (FMCS) process prior to interest arbitration. The following explanation of mediation can be found on the FMCS.gov website; collective bargaining mediation is the voluntary process in which a neutral third party assists labor and management in reaching agreement on a negotiated collective bargaining agreement.

During negotiations, a mediator uses his/her knowledge of the industry, similar negotiated settlements, the parties, and the issues to guide negotiators past potential barriers to settlement. Mediators may offer procedural or substantive suggestions and recommendations throughout the process. However, a mediator does not have the authority to impose a settlement, or determine contract terms.

In grievance mediation, parties are responsible for determining the resolution of the matter at hand. Rather than making a binding decision as an arbitrator would, a mediator guides parties to their own mutually acceptable resolution of the grievance by identifying the underlying interests of labor and management, and exploring potential avenues of settlement.

It is important to remember that almost all the provisions, rights, and benefits contained in the current union contract remain in full force and effect until we obtain a new contract. This includes the no lay-off protection for those career employees with six years of employ-

ment. We will continue to fight for a fair agreement and will keep you updated as this process proceeds. □

General Membership Meetings

**Third Thursday of every
month except July, August
and December**

**7:30 p.m.
864 Main Street
Darby, PA 19023**

**Light Refreshments Will be
Served**

Serving Those Who Served Our Country



**Drew
Stevenson,
Editor**

As a Veteran of the United States Army it is nice to know that when I have problems or issues in my life, whether medical or financial there is somewhere I can turn for assistance or information; the

United States Department of Veterans Affairs or as most people know it, the VA.

The VA services every man and woman who ever served in any branch of the uniformed armed services of the United States. The mission statement of the VA is to fulfill President Lincoln's promise "To care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow, and his orphan" by serving and honoring the men and women who are America's Veterans.

The core values of the VA are to act with high moral principle, maintain the trust and confidence of those they serve, with the highest professional standards; to advance the interests of the Veterans and other beneficiaries they serve, and to provide world-class benefits and services.

Veterans Crisis Line

Many Veterans are not aware of the many different services available to them through the VA. One of the most important services offered by the VA is the "Veterans Crisis Line: Suicide Prevention."

Suicide is a very serious issue whether you are Veteran or not. According to the VA, approximately 16 veterans die each day due to suicide. Please, if you are a Veteran in crisis, or are concerned about somebody who is, call the Veterans Crisis Line at 1-800-273-8255, and press 1; or text 838255; support for deaf and hard of hearing call 1-800-799-4889.

This service is free, confidential, available 24/7 every day and serves all Veterans, active duty service members, National Guard and Reserve, and their family members and friends.

Veteran ID Cards

Many retail service providers offer discounted goods and service to Veterans. There are many types of identification cards you can use to show you're a Veteran. One of the most common is the Veteran ID Card, which is a photo ID that all businesses accept as proof you are a Veteran to get the discounts offered. To be eligible for this card you must have served on active duty, in the Reserves, National Guard or the Coast Guard and received an honorable or general discharge (under honorable conditions). You may apply for a Veterans ID Card online at va.gov/records/get-veteran-id-card/vic. Instead of the Veterans ID Card you may also obtain a Veteran's designation on your state issued drivers license or ID. All 50 states and Puerto Rico offer the designation. Please

contact your local DMV office for information on obtaining a Veteran's designation on your license or state issued ID.

VA Home Loans

One of the most useful benefits provided to Veterans is the VA Home Loan guaranty program. VA Home Loans are provided by private lenders and VA guarantees a portion of the loan, which allows the lender to provide better terms such as good interest rates, often without requiring a down payment or private mortgage insurance.

Your length of service or service commitment, duty status and character of service determine your eligibility for specific home loan benefits. Prior to applying for a VA Home Loan you must first obtain a Certificate of Eligibility from the VA or your lender if they provide that service on your behalf. You can apply for your Certificate of Eligibility at your local VA Office or online at the eBenefits portal on the VA web site. You will need to provide a copy of your DD Form 214 to obtain a Certificate of Eligibility.

Burial Benefits

Burial benefits available include a gravesite in any of our 136 national cemeteries with available space, opening and closing of the grave, perpetual care, a Government headstone or marker, a burial flag, and a Presidential Memorial Certificate, at no cost to the family. Some Veterans may also be eligible for Burial Allowances. Cremated remains are buried or inurned in national cemeteries in the same manner and with the same honors as casketed remains.

Burial benefits available for spouses and dependents buried in a national cemetery include burial with the Veteran, perpetual care, and the spouse or dependents name and date of birth and death will be inscribed on the Veteran's headstone, at no cost to the family. Eligible spouses and dependents may be buried, even if they predecease the Veteran.

Post Traumatic Stress Disorder

One of the most common issues Veterans face, especially those who survived combat situations, is PTSD. It is normal for people who have experienced or witnessed a life altering event to have trouble sleeping, feel edgy or have

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No Postal Service Privatization



**Cindy
Heyward,
Legislative
Director**

The United States Post Office Department has its founding principles in the United States Constitution. On July 26, 1775, the Second Continental Congress agreed that a Postmaster General be appointed.

To this day it remains a national treasure belonging to the people of this country. The United States Postal Service, as it is known today, came into being on July 1, 1971, when the Postal Reorganization Act took effect.

The Postal Service has remained a self-sustaining entity, which does not receive one penny of taxpayer funding ever since reorganization. It relies solely on its own revenue, which is generated from the sale of postal services and products. The Postal Service employs more than 500,000 people. The agency serves the needs of more than 157 million business and residential customers through its affordable universal network; providing services seven days a week.

The Postal Service remains the nation's second largest employer of military veterans and consists of union jobs and equal pay for workers from all backgrounds. These employees are dedicated public servants who do more than process mail. They serve as the eyes and ears of the nation's communities and often respond first in situations involving safety and crime.

While there are many unknowns when it comes to the privatization of the Postal Service, we know that if it is privatized, in whole or in part, the decision to provide services will be based on whether a company can make a profit rather than what's good for the citizens of this country. It will lead to increased rates and diminished services for all customers, especially in rural communities and low income urban areas.

Recently, the White House and Office of Management and Budget unveiled a plan for privatization of the Postal Service promoted by billionaires and corporate influence in the Trump Administration and Congress. The good news is that we are not alone in this fight. As a member of "A Grand Alliance to Save Our Public Postal Service," the AFL-CIO has gone on record stating they will actively engage in the fight to save the Postal Service by mounting a serious defense of this threat and encouraging central labor councils and state federations to join with labor and community allies in actions against privatization.

The APWU is asking all union members to take a moment to contact their elected Senators and Congress-person to let them know the United States Mail is not for sale!

New Social Security Legislation Introduced

On Feb. 13, Sen. Bernie Sanders (I-VT) introduced S. 478, the "Expand Social Se-

curity Act," legislation that would expand benefits and add almost 50 years of solvency to the program. Social Security, in its current form, is paying out more money to recipients than it takes in, and will no longer be able to pay out full benefits by 2034. A companion bill, H.R. 1170 was introduced in the House on the same day by Rep. Peter DeFazio (D-OR-4).

This looming problem is due to the cap on payroll taxes at \$132,900, meaning each person only pays the 12.4 percent Social Security tax up to that amount, no matter how much income they earn. The vast majority of workers pay the full 12.4 percent on most of their income - Jeff Bezos, by comparison, pays about .00028 percent of his income.

Sen. Sanders's bill, first introduced in the Senate in 2017, would remove this cap, and require those making over \$250,000 per year to pay full Social Security taxes. The bill also includes a new 6.2 percent tax on single people with investment income above \$200,000 and couples above \$250,000.

In addition to keeping Social Security fully solvent, the bill would increase benefits for all Social Security recipients, provide higher cost-of-living and prescription drug cost adjustments, and provide an additional \$1,300 per year to low income seniors. The bill would also allow children of those with disabilities to receive benefits until they turn 22, provided they are in school full time - a four-year difference from current law.

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Knowledge

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(Representation) in the JCIM says the employee has the right to request a steward immediately. Did you know that our brothers and sisters who work in other federal agencies are having their collective bargaining rights attacked? Trump signed executive orders to strip their unions of the right to represent the workers on the clock. These attacks to break the union were beaten back through a federal lawsuit. But union busting is still at the top of Trump's agenda. We are still fortunate to be able to request a steward and process grievances on the postal clock. Times are changing. The struggle continues. Are you willing to change and to help build a stronger union? AN INJURY TO ONE IS AN INJURY TO ALL. □

Safety First



Calvin Smith,
MVS Director

Hello Brothers and Sisters! This is my first safety talk of this quarter. We should all be aware of safety! It has been brought to my attention some employees are not wearing their safety vests. We should always wear a safety vest; it is for your

protection and for those driving so they can see you. Remember, the accident you prevent by wearing your vest may just save your life.

As we all should know, the Postal Service is big on scanning these days. It is very important to make all our scans, all the time. It is important for our customers because they want to know all the information they can about their packages and scanning is how we provide information to them about where their mail is at a given point in time. For our part in MVS we must scan in and out of our locations.

If you run into any scanner issues or problems you must report them to your supervisor. Make sure you write down all defective scanner information on your log sheet. If you need training, go to your supervisor and let them know you need the proper training.

PVS drivers will be allowed sufficient time to perform scanning duties. When PVS drivers make a scan, it will accurately reflect the date, time and location of the required scan point and drivers shall not be given instructions contrary to this. Don't give the supervisor any ammunition to write you up. Make your scans count.

MVS Contract Issues

The MVS Division entered national contract negotiations with a clear understanding of the current political climate and USPS concessionary demands.

Despite the adversity, we will push forward to protect and grow our craft by challenging contracting out efforts and bringing work back into the bargaining unit. We will also continue to demonstrate the value of our skilled workforce and showcase what the MVS Craft brings to the table.

Our first proposals exchanged with management emphasized training, establishing new positions, a staffing model for the VMF and the elimination of 204Bs.

These are the MVS Division's first round of proposals: (1) Include the General Clerk, Office Clerk, and Schedules Examiner as senior qualified positions. (2) Create a new VMF position "Level 10 Diesel Automotive Technician." (3) Create desirable duty assignments using the language "Every effort will be made to create desirable duty assignments from all available work hours for career employees to bid." (4) Require the USPS to provide structured training for all Vehicle Maintenance employees. (5) Incorporate a staffing package for VMF employees into the Collective Bargaining Agree-

ment. (6) Amend the MVS Jobs MOU and add back sections 1, 3, and 4 negotiated during the 2010 Agreement. (7) Negotiate additional language to eliminate the use of 204-Bs in the MVS Craft. Amend Article 39.1.H so that the VOMA position is assigned to the jurisdiction of the Motor Vehicle Craft.

I will keep you updated as things progress through the contract negotiations process. Stay strong, stay united, stay union! ☐

Serving Those Who Served Our Country

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upsetting memories of the event. If these symptoms last more than a couple of months you may have PTSD. In some cases the effects of PTSD may start long after the traumatic event, or come and go over time.

There are effective treatments for PTSD, from self help to therapy. All VA Medical Centers, and many VA clinics, provide PTSD care; some VA centers have specialty programs of PTSD. For additional information on PTSD and all the help and benefits available to Veterans please contact your local Veterans Administration office or check their website at va.gov. Thank you for your service! ☐



High blood pressure threatens your health and quality of life

In most cases, the damage done by high blood pressure (HBP, or hypertension) takes place over time. Left undetected (or uncontrolled), high blood pressure can lead to:

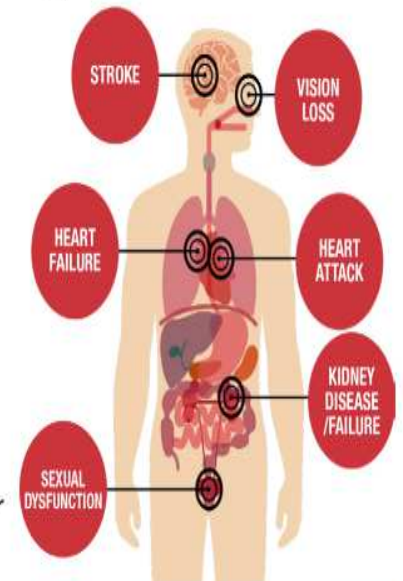
- **Heart attack:** High blood pressure damages arteries that can become blocked and prevent blood flow to the heart muscle.
- **Stroke:** High blood pressure can cause blood vessels in the brain to clog more easily or even burst.
- **Heart failure:** The increased workload from high blood pressure can cause the heart to enlarge and fail to supply blood to the body.
- **Kidney disease or failure:** High blood pressure can damage the arteries around the kidneys and interfere with their ability to filter blood effectively.
- **Vision loss:** High blood pressure can strain or damage blood vessels in the eyes.
- **Sexual dysfunction:** High blood pressure can lead to erectile dysfunction in men or lower libido in women.
- **Angina:** Over time, high blood pressure can lead to heart disease or microvascular disease (MVD). Angina, or chest pain, is a common symptom.
- **Peripheral artery disease (PAD):** Atherosclerosis caused by high blood pressure can cause a narrowing of arteries in the legs, arms, stomach and head, causing pain or fatigue.

Your best protection is knowledge, management and prevention

- **Know your numbers:** The best way to know if you have high blood pressure is to have your blood pressure checked.
- **Understand the symptoms and risks:** Learn what factors could make you more likely to develop high blood pressure and put you at risk for serious medical problems.
- **Make changes that matter:** Take steps to reduce your risk and manage your blood pressure. Make heart-healthy lifestyle changes, take any medication as prescribed and work in partnership with your doctor.

High blood pressure and hypertensive crisis

- If your blood pressure readings suddenly exceed 180/120 mm Hg, wait five minutes and then test your blood pressure again. If your readings are still unusually high, contact your doctor immediately.



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No Postal Service Privatization

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Sen. Sanders's bill is cosponsored by multiple 2020 Democratic candidates.

"The APWU wholeheartedly supports the strengthening and expansion of Social Security benefits," said National APWU President Mark Dimondstein. "It would be good for all working folks including for postal workers who are now mostly covered by the Federal Employee Retirement System (FERS) of which Social Security is a core component."

"APWU members should reach out to their Representative and Senators and urge them to sign on to these vital pieces of legislation," said National Legislative & Political Director Judy Beard. □