

The Twig of the Branch



Branch 1477 West Coast Florida Letter Carriers



Serving:

**St. Petersburg — Largo — Dunedin — Pinellas Park — Indian Rocks Beach
Punta Gorda — Englewood — Bradenton Beach — Palmetto — Ellenton**

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

By President Joe Henschen

Twitter @JaHe1

Since its inception, the National Agreement has recognized and permitted NALC branches to engage in negotiations with local postal officials over the items identified in Article 30. These rights and benefits are incorporated in the Local Memorandum of Understanding (LMOU), or Local Agreement.

Upon the ratification of the 2019-2023 contract, LMOU negotiations between NALC branches and USPS installations can commence on April 29 and end on May 28, 2021. During this 30-day period, NALC and management representatives at the local level may negotiate to either create the LMOU or modify the terms of an existing local agreement.

Only YOU, the members of the Branch/City can decide what's best in your workplace. In the coming weeks we will ask the Branch Stewards to take the responsibility for direct communication with the members. I urge you to

visit **Branch1477nalc.org** and review the 2016-2019 LMOU for your city. Each of the 10 current LMOUs are accessible. Review them and if you have thoughts on how the bargaining committees can improve your working conditions let your Steward know.

The following 22 items are specified as items for local implementation:

1. **Additional or longer wash-up periods**—In addition to the National Agreement language that grants reasonable wash-up time to employees who perform dirty work or work with toxic materials, the local parties may negotiate to establish what is "reasonable washup time," such as when, how often and how long wash-up time occurs or lasts.

NEXT BRANCH MEETING HELD VIA ZOOM: THURSDAY, MAY 13, 2021

2. The establishment of a regular workweek of five days with either fixed or rotating days off—

All of the Cities that comprise Branch 1477 currently have rotating days off.

3. Guidelines for the curtailment or termination of postal operations to conform to orders of local authorities or as local conditions warrant because of emergency conditions—

The idea here is to negotiate language that calls for reasonable decisions to be made with consideration for the safety and health of letter carriers.

4. Formulation of local leave program—Among the items that may be negotiated are date of notification for making choice period selections, method for making choice selections, quota of carriers off during nonchoice period, re-posting of cancellations, transferring with leave and posting of leave schedules.

5. The duration of the choice vacation period(s)

—The LMOU typically sets forth a system where the leave year is divided into times known as the “choice vacation period” (also called “prime time”) and other times that are outside the choice vacation period (“non-prime time”).

7. Whether employees, at their option, may request two selections during the choice vacation period, in units of either five or 10 days—

The local parties can simply state whether there will be one or two selections during the choice vacation period.

8. Whether jury duty and attendance at NALC national or state conventions shall be charged to the choice vacation period—

The local parties negotiate whether a member absent to attend a national or state convention shall be charged against the total number of employees off during any week of the choice period.

9. Determination of the maximum number of employees who shall receive leave each week during the choice vacation period—

Key LMOU provisions may establish the percentage of carriers (or a fixed number of carriers) to receive vacation each week, both during the choice period.

10. The issuance of official notices to each employee of the vacation schedule approved for each employee—

Local parties may negotiate LMOU provisions indicating how management must give employees official notice of their approved vacation schedule.

11. Determination of the date and means of notifying employees of the beginning of the new leave year—

This language provides that the employer must post on bulletin boards, etc., the beginning date of the leave year no later than November 1. Some Branch 1477 Cities have changed the dates of the selection period.

12. The procedures for submission of applications for annual leave during time periods other than the choice vacation period—

This item allows branches to negotiate procedures for obtaining leave during periods of the year other than the choice vacation period.

13. The method of selecting employees to work on a holiday—

This item determines the order in which employees will be selected to work on a holiday.

14. Whether “overtime desired” lists in Article 8 shall be by section and/or tour—

In some offices, the overtime desired list (ODL) covers the entire facility; while in other offices, each section (Zone/ZIP code) may have an independent ODL. During LMOU negotiations, local branches may choose whether the ODL is for the entire facility or by specific sections.

15. The number of light-duty assignments within each craft or occupational group to be reserved for temporary or permanent light-duty assignment—

The office’s needs in the past have been assessed and the abnormal circumstances that might require more light-duty assignments than have generally been required.

16. The method to be used in reserving light-duty assignments, so that no regularly assigned member of the regular workforce will be adversely affected—

As part of the method to be used in reserving light-duty assignments to minimize the impact of these assignments on the regular workforce.

17. The identification of assignments that are to be considered light duty within each craft represented in the office—

Management typically finds limited-duty work for city letter carriers injured on duty.

18. The identification of assignments comprising a section, when it is proposed to reassign within an installation employees excess to the needs of a section—

This item

allows the local parties to identify separate sections within an installation when the need to involuntarily reassign (excess) a letter carrier due to the elimination of a full-time assignment.

19. The assignment of employee parking spaces. The intent of this item is for the parties to negotiate the number of existing parking spaces that will be allocated to letter carriers—It is not, and has never been, the intention to negotiate about the construction of additional spaces.

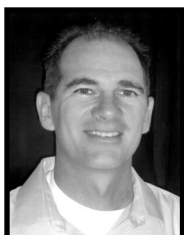
20. The determination as to whether annual leave to attend union activities requested prior to determination of the choice vacation schedule is to be part of the total choice vacation plan—It is important to note that “union activities” in this item differs from the “national and state conventions” referenced in Item 8.

21. Those other items that are subject to local negotiations as provided in the craft provisions of this Agreement—Items 21 and 22 incorporate areas that overlap with one another, these items are usually negotiated together.

22. Local implementation of this agreement relating to seniority, reassignments and posting—Some categories that should be negotiated are frequency of posting, the scope and method of posting and bidding, and whether or not a branch chooses to incorporate Article 41, Section 3.O into its LMOU.

The Branch Committees may be negotiating 10 LMOUs at the same time over the 4-week period.

I look forward to your input.



Hubble's Troubles

By Executive Vice President,
Chris Hubble

CCA Conversions to Career Status....

On May 8, 2021, CCAs will be converted to PTF under the following timelines. *CCAs with 24 months of relative standing on March 8, 2021 and those that reach 24 months relative standing after March 8,*

2021 but on or before April 9, 2021 will be converted to part-time flexible career status effective May 8, 2021. For those CCAs who reach relative standing on/or after March 27, 2021, will be converted to part-time flexible career status the first day of the third full pay period that follows the date a CCA achieved 24 months of relative standing.

PTFs are part of the regular work force, with a designation code of 43-4 which will be reflected on their PS Forms 50. Another differentiation between CCAs and PTFs is instead of relative standing, a PTF has seniority. Seniority comes into play with many contractual rights, e.g. annual leave scheduling, opting, bidding, filling vacant higher level assignments per Article 25 (T6 Carrier Technician), among others. In addition, PTFs earn sick leave, which is governed under ELM Section 513, which reads in part:

513.11 Sick Leave for Employee Incapacitation

Sick leave insures employees against loss of pay if they are incapacitated for the performance of duties because of illness, injury, pregnancy and confinement, and medical (including dental or optical) examination or treatment.

When a CCA is converted, any annual leave earned will be paid out. Newly converted PTF letter carriers will continue to earn annual leave at the same rate as they did as a CCA for the first three years as a career employee. After three years, the rate at which a career employee earns leave increases.

As a career PTF letter carrier, you are entitled to participate in the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program (FEHBP). You have 60 days from the date of your conversion to enroll in a FEHBP plan and should receive via the mail a package listing all available health plans and the costs associated therein. Similarly, once converted, a PTF is automatically enrolled into the Federal Employee Group Life Insurance, which takes effect on the first day in a pay status following their conversion.

In addition, Employees are enrolled in the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS) after conversion. Career employees have total control over their own Thrift Savings Plan, which is one of three (3) components of FERS, i.e., Social Security, FERS basic plan and Thrift Savings Plan. Important to note, the USPS contributes 1 percent

of your base pay and will match up to 5 percent of base pay.

Another important distinction between PTF and CCA is how the employer schedules employees.

JCAM page 7-6 supplies in pertinent part:

Over the course of a service week, the Employer will make every effort to ensure that qualified and available part-time flexible employees are utilized at the straight time rate prior to assigning such work to CCAs working in the same work location and on the same tour, provided that the reporting guarantee for CCA employees is met.

As noted above, the Employer must make every effort to ensure PTFs are utilized at the straight time rate prior to assigning CCAs working in the same work location. Although Article 8 of the National Agreement describes the workweek, work hours and work schedule for letter carriers...PTFs work a flexible schedule and most of scheduling/work hour guidelines for PTFs are similar to CCAs; however, there is one important difference, found in Article 8 Section 6:

JCAM page 8-23 Section 6 provides:

Sunday Premium Payment: Each employee whose regular work schedule includes a period of service, any part of which is within the period commencing at midnight Saturday and ending at midnight Sunday, shall be paid extra compensation at the rate of 25 percent of the employee's base hourly rate of compensation for each hour of work performed during that period of service. An employee's regularly scheduled reporting time shall not be changed on Saturday or Sunday solely to avoid the payment of Sunday premium payment.

PTFs may be required to work on Sunday but will receive an additional 25 percent of the base hourly rate for each hour worked.

As a PTF you will not receive holiday pay, rather a PTF's hourly pay rate is based on a 2,000-hour work year, which results in a higher hourly wage.

JCAM pages 11-5 and 11-6 read:

*HOLIDAYS Section 7. Holiday Part-Time Employee
A part-time flexible schedule employee shall not*

receive holiday pay as such. The employee shall be compensated for the ten (10) holidays by basing the employee's regular straight time hourly rate on the employee's annual rate divided by 2,000 hours. For work performed on December 25, a part-time flexible schedule employee shall be paid in addition to the employee's regular straight time hourly rate, one-half (1/2) times the employee's regular straight time hourly rate for each hour worked up to eight (8) hours.

The conversion from CCA to PTF offers many advantages and benefits, which is why our National Officers have fought so hard to ensure CCAs are converted to career status with this MOU. This new conversion process will go a long way towards limiting the time spent in a non-career status, guaranteeing letter carriers enjoy the benefits and rights associated with career status.

Minutes of April 8, 2021 Membership Meeting



**Recording/Financial
Secretary**
Ken Grasso

Meeting called to order at 7:00 p.m. by President Joe Henschen.

Invocation by: O.D. Elliott

Pledge of Allegiance: led by President Joe Henschen.

Minutes of previous meeting: Motion to accept last month's minutes as printed in the Twig by Brian Andrews, seconded by Chuck Cavicchio.

Reading of Official Correspondence: by Ken Grasso: None

New Members: None

Branch by the Numbers: As of P/P 4 the Dues Roster has 759 Active Members with 732 paying dues. We have 27 members with no deductions, 5 are on Military Leave. 5 paying direct, 4 other

OWCP accepted claims were sent letters, with 14 on LWOP. We have 27 members that do not appear on the dues roster, (we are working with NALC to correct this) 85 Gold Cards, 1339 Total Members.

I would like to welcome Kelly Bins from Absolute Quality Interpreting Services LLC.

Treasurer: Chuck Cavicchio—President Henschen read the account balances this month. Motion to send to Trustees by Shiela Bradley, seconded by Clay Hansen. Motion passes.

Director of Retiree Affairs: No Report.

Director of Insurance: Tom Phillips—A lot of Covid 19 vaccine shots being given.

Political District 13 Liaison: Tom Phillips—Read a letter written by Senator Duckworth.

Trustee Report: Brian Andrews—Audits were done, will be going over March books.

Sergeant at Arms: Clay Hansen—No Report.

Editor/Webmaster: Judy Dorris—Articles due on the 10th; because the date falls on a Saturday, will extend the deadline to Monday, 4/12/21.

Vice President Report: Zulma Betancourt—Getting a lot of dog bites at Gulfwinds.

Executive Vice President: Chris Hubble—Second week in April is Dog Bite Prevention week. 38% of Homeowners have dogs.

Welfare Reports:

Sad:

- Harry Strzyzynski, St. Petersburg Retiree and former Branch Officer—Passed away.
- Jackie Genes, Carrier St. Pete Beach —Uncle passed away.
- Bobbie Okorowski, Carrier Gulfwinds—Father passed away.
- Shannon Whiting, Carrier Pinellas Park—Mother passed away.
- Alicia Gary, Carrier Pinellas Park—Aunt passed away.
- Zulma Betancourt, Branch Vice President—Mother hospitalized.

Glad:

Brian Fazzino, Carrier Indian Rocks Beach—Birth of daughter, Camden Reese.

Presidents Report:

- COVID-19 Suncoast Numbers/Information:
- 1605 Total Cases +28 from 3/11 General Meeting
- 1603 Confirmed Cases (+28)
- 2 Current Unconfirmed/Under Investigation
- 1483 Confirmed Positives have RTW (+7)
- 120 Active Cases
- 2210 Total Employees on Survey (+9 from 3/11 General Meeting)
- 1,888 Employees returned to work
- 322 Employees still on quarantine
- 145 Required quarantine
- 177 Self quarantine

On today's telecon we were informed of the 2nd District COVID-19 death. The Supervisor of Logistics in the Tampa Plant's Transportation Operations.

Several COVID-19 Related MOUs Extended and Agreed Upon by joint agreement (**M-01942**), several COVID related memorandums extended through **June 4, 2021**. Memorandums of understanding have been further extended.

Temporary expanded sick leave for dependent care (**M-01910**).

Temporary use of the 7:01 rule (**M-01913**).

Temporary workplace changes to promote social distancing (**M-01915**), and temporary use of CCAs (**M-01916**).

NALC and the Postal Service also agreed to another temporary time limit extension on Step B and arbitration appeals (**M-01943**), with a few changes from the last such agreement, and an agreement giving local parties the **ability to develop a sign-up process** for full-time employees who previously did not, or could not, place their names on either the overtime desired list or work assignment list (**M-01944**). Both of these agreements will expire on June 4, 2021, as well.

Also extended through June 4, 2021, is a USPS memorandum (**M-01914**) which instructs managers and supervisors to allow liberal changes of schedule. The memorandum also provides for liberal sick leave usage for employees who are sick

and liberal annual and leave without pay (LWOP) and directs that leave taken for COVID-19 related reasons during this time not be cited in discipline for failing to maintain an assigned schedule.

Furthermore, with the understanding that under the American Rescue Plan Act, CCAs may be granted up to 600 hours of paid **Emergency Federal Employee Leave (EFEL) for COVID-19 related reasons**, the parties have also agreed to a new MOU (**M-01941**) that suspends MOU Re: **Temporary Additional Paid Leave for CCAs (M-01911)**. This MOU will expire on June 4, 2021 as well.

Additionally, as was previously agreed upon for leave year 2021, NALC and USPS have agreed (**M-01940**) to allow regular work force career employees covered by the USPS-NALC National Agreement to carry over 520 hours of accumulated annual leave from leave year 2021 to leave year 2022.

TEST: The parties agree that the Postal Service will conduct Employee Screening & COVID-19 Testing Pilots at the Morgan Processing & Distribution Center (P&DC) in New York, and the Michigan Metroplex P&DC. The purpose of the Pilot is to promote employee health and safety during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. The Pilot will include both temperature screening and COVID-19 testing. The pilot will run from April 26, 2021 through May 26, 2021, unless otherwise mutually agreed to by the parties.

Temperature Testing: If after an initial temperature screening, an employee presents with a high temperature as defined by the CDC, they will be required to re-test. Based on the results of a second test, the employee may be placed on administrative leave to await further instruction.

COVID-19 Testing For COVID-19 testing

Employees with two high temperature readings on a particular day will be offered COVID testing and will be sent home for the day on administrative leave.

An employee who tests positive for COVID-19 during the course of this pilot will be placed on administrative leave and will be allowed to return to work once they complete all of the appropriate return to work protocols as contemplated by the Postal Service's Return to Work Protocol.

Two memorandums of understanding related to the

MOU RE: City Carrier Assistants – Conversion to Career Status

MOU RE: Implementation of CCA Conversions to Career Status (M-01946) MOU RE: **City Carrier Assistants – Conversion to Career Status**. To protect principles of seniority, the parties agree to a conversion date of May 8, 2021, for CCAs with 24 months of relative standing on March 8, 2021 and those that reach 24 months of relative standing after March 8, 2021, but on or before April 9, 2021.

Additionally, a lump sum payment will be made to CCAs that reach 24 months relative standing between the dates of **March 9, 2021, and March 26, 2021**. Any issue or dispute regarding implementation of this agreement will be resolved through an alternate dispute resolution process.

MOU Re: Reassignment Opportunities (M-01947) in accordance with the terms of the MOU Re: City Carrier Assistants – Conversion to Career Status. The agreement modifies certain terms of the MOU Re: Full-time Regular Opportunities – City Letter Carrier Craft in order to continue providing such opportunities for career employees to reassign.

Local Implementation MOU RE: Local Implementation—The local implementation period will be April 29, 2021, to May 28, 2021.

I have given notice to a number of Stewards and Officers asking them to participate in a 10:00 AM LMOU Training Sunday. April 11 @ 10: AM.

A few last mentions, we have been experiencing a large number of Carriers being denied Sick Leave because the Leave “**Quota is Full**” Let me clarify this: the 14% outlined in the LMOU does not relate to Sick Leave. Planning for a Doctor’s appointment should include whenever possible retuning to work after the appointment or scheduling the appointment in the afternoon. The requests should be made as far in advance as possible so that if this misinformation is spread to other offices, we can initiate a grievance or try and correct the issue.

OWCP: Last Month we discussed COVID entitlements and OWCP if you contract COVID-19 the DOL has been instructed to Presume it was contracted at work. eComp has been updated to accept these claims. Set up a Profile and fill out a Ca1.

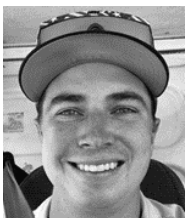
NALC Urgent Care Tele-health: If a Carrier uses the Emergency Federal Employee Leave for a vaccine you should indicate on the Leave slip Code 86-10. You should only ask for the time to travel and get the vaccine, (there is an observation period as well 10-20 minutes) depending on if there are episodes of Allergic reactions. If you wake the next day, if symptoms that prohibit you from working, then call the office. You will be asked for medical documentation only due to Supervisor harassment. Download the NALC Tele-help app and contact a doctor. They will email you a note.

Branch Finances/Hall Repair

We had gotten Metro Air to come out to get the back unit working again until we replace it. The owner came out and is going to put a bid in and hopefully this will be one that's in line with the others. He measured everything and counted the windows and kind of lights. He did say we didn't need as big a unit as we have now up front. Hopefully we will have an update next month.

*****Glad News*****

**Joyce Keller, President of Auxiliary 181
Received her 50 Year Gold Card
from NALC Auxiliary.**



Sergeant at Arms

Clay Hansen

Hello brothers and sisters I am back to work after a month of paternity leave, and finally get a break from being on diaper duty! Being out of an LLV for that long has reminded me just how important the mirrors being adjusted properly can really disrupt your line of sight. I returned to work at the tail end of Spring Break (in a beach office) so I was tested quickly. I want to use this short article to remind all carriers, especially the new CCAs to please use the mirror station to ensure that the mirrors are adjusted properly, and don't forget the blind spots. While stopped or turning into traffic be sure to do the head bob to look beyond the door jam and side mirrors, also checking the front bumper mirrors helps with any blind spot in front or on the left side of the truck where pedestrians and bikes tend to pass. As

always, if there is anything that needs to be covered more in Carrier Academy please reach out. Stay Safe!

Claybranch1477@gmail.com



Retiree Update

***By Director of Retiree Affairs,
O.D. Elliott***

It was recently brought to my attention that OPM might be having problems relative to processing Retirement Applications. One of our members seeking a Disability Retirement for an extremely serious condition reported to me that she sent her Disability Application by Certified, Return Receipt to OPM and received the signed receipt indicating it had been received. After two weeks, she contacted OPM to find the status of her application, only to be told they didn't have it. She told them about sending it and receiving notice that it had been received. She was then told that if she had copies of her original request, she should fax them. Having kept copies, she went to her office and her and her Supervisor faxed them to OPM. After a couple of days, she called OPM again for a follow-up. She was told again that they didn't have her application. When she told the person she had faxed the copies a few days before per OPM's request, she was told, "well, they're probably here somewhere, we're having quite a backlog." She was also told that an OPM Supervisor would call her within 2 days. That hasn't happened.

Another situation involves a carrier seeking a regular retirement. He too, sent his application by certified receipt and received the signed receipt within a week. That was over a month ago. As of yet, he has not received any retirement pay. He contacted OPM and was told there was a backlog.

I've asked the member seeking a Disability Retirement to contact her Congressional Representative. At the same time, I will be contacting Senators Rubio and Scott and my Rep., Charlie Crist. If this happened to two of our members, I could surmise that this problem is likely more widespread.

Recently, Branch 1477 lost two good Union Brothers. First, was Scott Tyler, a retiree from the

Open Air Station, St. Pete. Scott served Branch 1477 for a number of years as Steward and Alternate Steward of the Open Air Station. He also served as delegate to many State and National Conventions, often at his own expense. Scott was never shy about speaking up to management in support of the members he represented. More recently, we lost Brother Harry Strzynski. Harry served Branch 1477 as Recording Secretary from 1997 through 2016. He also served as delegate to many State and National Conventions. He also served as our go to person for EEO Representation. Both of these Brothers served important roles as Representatives of our members and will be missed. There is a term used at the closing of Congressional sessions, State Legislative sessions, and National Conventions. The term "Sine Die" is a Latin term which means "until we next assemble." Therefore, I say "Sine Die" to Brothers Scott and Strzynski.

Region 9 Updates 2.0



NALC
National Business Agent,
Region 9

Greetings sisters & brothers of Region 9!

It's spring of 2021, the trees and flowers are blooming, the temperatures are warming, and the days are getting longer. It's the sign of new growth and new beginnings. Over the last few weeks, NALC has also achieved new growth and new beginnings. To start, you the members ratified the 2019-2023 National Agreement (NA). Contained in the National Agreement are many wonderful new provisions:

Four general wage increases - 1.1% retroactive payments for 2019 & 2021; in addition to 1.3% increases in November of 2021 & November of 2022. (NA - page 23)

Cost of Living Adjustments were retained. The first two will be paid retroactive, the first COLA effective 2/29/2020 equates to \$166 annually with the second COLA effective 8/29/2020 paid at \$188 annually. The remaining five will be calculated based on the

Consumer Price Index and paid in the following months:

March 2021/September 2021

March 2022/September 2022

March 2023 (NA - page 24)

Changes to the Wage Tables (both 1 & 2):

Effective November 2022 the new top step will move from O to P adding \$444 annually to career employees. Those carriers with 46 weeks at Step O on 11/19/2022 will elevate to Step P, those with less than 46 weeks at Step O on that date will elevate to Step P upon satisfying the 46 weeks. The CCA entry rate Step CC (\$17.29/hour) will be eliminated on 6/21/2021, replaced with the new CCA rate Step BB (\$17.79/hour). (NA - page 179) A new PTF rate Step AA (\$19.23/hour) to compensate for not receiving Holiday pay. (NA - pg. 26-27)

New 24-Month Automatic CCA Conversion to Career once 24 months of relative standing has been satisfied. Those CCAs meeting this criteria at the time of ratification (3/8/2021) will be converted to career status as soon as practicable, but no later than 60 days from the date of ratification or the first day of the third full pay period following the date a CCA achieved 24 months of relative standing, whichever is later. Absent a residual vacancy at the time of conversion, the career status will be as part-time flexible (PTF). Upon conversion to full-time regular (FTR), the employee will be placed into the FTR step with full credit for weeks spent as a PTF. (NA - page 160)

Health Insurance Premiums in 2020 & 2021 the Postal Service's share will remain the same for career carriers at 73%. In 2022 & 2023 the Postal Service's share will decrease to 72%. (NA - page 91). In 2022 the Postal Service will pay 75% of the CCA Health Insurance Premiums for self only, self plus one or self and family.

Uniform Allowances will increase 5% in 5/2021 to \$487 and 2.5% to \$499 in the remaining years of the Agreement. (NA - page 97)

Holiday work and Holiday pay now the carrier may elect to exchange the Holiday pay for annual leave credit. All annual leave provisions will apply to the usage of this leave. (NA - page 31)

Job Security for career letter carriers with six credible years of service due to the retention of the no-layoff clause and continued prohibition against contracting out city carrier work. (NA - page 8; NA - page - 256)

No Later than 60 Days from ratification of the National Agreement all street MSP scans will be removed. (NA - page 254)

CCAs with 90 days of service upon conversion will be exempt from the 90-day qualifying period in ELM 512.313 prior to taking annual leave. (NA - page 188)

Memorandum of Understanding(s) creating two National Level Task Force Teams: The City Delivery & Workplace Involvement task force was created to seek joint resolutions to improve the cultural and operational environment in the workplace. The second task force was established to improve the efficiency and accessibility of the uniform program, as well as the overall quality of the uniforms. (NA - page 232; NA - page 216)

With the ratification of the 2019-2023 National Agreement comes the Local Memorandum of Understanding (LMOU) negotiation period for all branches effective April 29, 2021 through May 28, 2021. It was great to see all of you on the LMOU virtual training presented by Region 9.

Also, NALC and the Postal Service jointly extended many of the COVID19 Memorandums of Understanding (MOU's). These MOU's can be found at [nalc.org](https://www.nalc.org) under Workplace Resources in the MRS section:

M-1940 - allows career city carriers to carry over 520 hours of annual leave from leave year 2021 to leave year 2022, expiring 12/31/2022.

M-1941 - the MOU regarding - Temporary Additional Paid Leave for CCAs is suspended due to the recognition under the American Rescue Plan Act, CCAs are entitled to 600 hours of paid Emergency Federal Employee Leave (EFEL) for COVID19 related reasons. This suspended MOU expires 6/4/2021.

M-1942 - due to the continued effects of COVID19, four (1910, 1913, 1915 & 1916) MOUs have been extended until 6/4/2021: M-1910 - allows for a temporary expansion of sick leave dependent care in the event sick leave usage is required to care for a child due to daycare closures, school closures, or unavailability of the child's primary caregiver. M-1913 - agreement to institute the use of the Employee & Labor Relations Manual (ELM) Section 432.53 City Letter Carrier 7:01 Rule. M-1915 - agreement for the local parties to implement workplace changes to promote social distancing. M-1916 - allows the Postal Service to employ Temporary Carrier Assistants (TCAs).

M-1943 - extends time limits for Step B and arbitration appeals. This extension is effective **3/26/2021 thru 6/4/2021**.

M-1944 - the local parties may mutually elect to develop a sign-up process for full-time carriers to sign the overtime desired list who could not sign for any reason during the two-week period provided in Article 8.5.A of the National Agreement. This MOU expires 6/4/2021.

Additionally, on March 12, 2021 The American Rescue Act was signed into law providing a new leave category for all Federal Employees. This leave is titled the Emergency Federal Employee Leave (EFEL) for COVID19 related absences. Full time employees are entitled up to 600 hours of paid EFEL, capped at \$2800.00/pay period. Part-time employees can receive up to the proportional equivalent of 600 hours, capped at a proportional equivalent of \$2800.00/pay period. Please note EFEL does not count as credible service towards an employee's retirement benefits, nor can the employee contribute to TSP while on EFEL. Federal Employees are entitled to take EFEL for the following reasons:

1. Subject to Federal, State, or local quarantine or isolation orders related to COVID19.
2. On the advice of a health care provider to self-quarantine due to COVID19 related concerns.
3. To care for someone who is subject to item 1 or item 2.
4. Experiencing COVID19 symptoms and seeking a medical diagnosis.
5. To care for the employee's child if the school is closed, the school requires or offers the option a hybrid in-person or virtual learning or the childcare provider is not available due to COVID19 precautions.
6. Experiencing any other substantially similar condition.
7. Caring for a family member with a mental or physical disability or who is 55 years of age or older and incapable of self-care regardless of whether or not another individual is available to care for the family member. Or if the place of care provider for this family member is unavailable due to COVID19.
8. obtain immunizations related to COVID19, or recovering from injury, disability, illness, or condition related to the immunization. PLEASE NOTE IT IS THE USPS POSITION LETTER CARRIERS WILL NOT QUALIFY FOR REASONS 1 & 6. THE TACS CODE TO REQUEST EFEL IS **086-21**.

In closing, the Region 9 Rap Session will be held virtually on October 1-2, 2021, additional information will be provided to all branch Presidents for distribution. The Regional Rap will consist on one day of training and one day of General Session. I

hope to see you all there! Until then stay safe, stay informed and wear your mask!

In unity,

Lynne Pendleton



Director of Insurance

By Tom Phillips

Over the last few months, I have heard some comments about getting the Covid-19 Vaccine from carriers. They do not plan on getting it because they do not trust it or simply do not want to get for some political reason.

Here are some Benefits of Getting a Covid-19 Vaccine.

It is understandable that some people may be concerned about getting vaccinated now that Covid-19 vaccines are available. While more Covid-19 are being developed as quickly as possible, routine processes and procedures remain in place to ensure the safety of any vaccine that is authorized or approved for use. Safety is a top priority, and there are reasons to get vaccinated.

COVID-19 vaccination will help keep you from getting COVID-19.

All COVID-19 vaccines that are in development or are being distributed are being carefully evaluated in clinical trials and will be authorized or approved only if they make it substantially less likely you'll get COVID-19.

Based on what is known about vaccines for other diseases and early data from clinical trials, experts believe that getting a COVID-19 vaccine may also help keep you from getting seriously ill even if you get COVID-19.

Getting vaccinated yourself may also protect people around you, particularly people at increased risk for severe illness from COVID-19.

COVID-19 vaccination is a safe way to help build protection

COVID-19 can have a serious, life-threatening complications, and there is no way to know how COVID-19 will affect you. And if you get sick, you

could spread the disease to friends, family and others around you.

Clinical trials of all vaccines, including COVID-19 vaccines, must first show the vaccines are safe and effective before they can be authorized or approved for use.

Getting COVID-19 may offer some natural protection, known as immunity. But experts don't know how long this protection lasts, and the risk of severe illness and death from COVID-19 far outweighs any benefits of natural immunity.

COVID-19 vaccination will be an important tool to help stop the pandemic

Wearing masks and social distancing help reduce your chance of being exposed to the virus or spreading it to others, but these measures are not enough. Vaccines will work with your immune system so it will be ready to fight the virus if you are exposed.

The combination of getting vaccinated and following the CDC's recommendations to protect yourself and others will offer the best protection from COVID-19.

CDC Center for Disease Control

Steward Meeting Attendees

Meetings are held at the Hall and on Zoom, led by Joe Henschen and Chris Hubble

March 18th:

Tom Phillips, Shiela Bradley, Cheryl Anderson, Ben Hamilton, Anthony Roger, A.J. Pollard, Eric Short, Anne Winkelbauer, Donny DeMilta, Chris Kotonski, Anthony Bowser, Alicia Gary, Brian Andrews, Josh LaGrew, Harry Nieves, Patrick Jacques, Tonya Lee, Tiffany Naughton, Zulma Betancourt, Scott Holderbaum, Bert Lewis, Christina Johnson

April 15th:

Tom Phillips, Shiela Bradley, Cheryl Anderson, Ben Hamilton, Anthony Roger, A.J. Pollard, Eric Short, Anne Winkelbauer, Donny DeMilta, Chris Kotonski, Anthony Bowser, Alicia Gary, Brian Andrews, Jim Grazioso, Patrick Jacques, Ken Domingos, Harry Nieves, Christina Johnson, Tiffany Naughton, Scott Holderbaum, Bert Lewis

BRANCH 1477 PHONE DIRECTORY

UNION HALL: (727) 531-1477

UNION FAX: (727) 531-1478

EMAIL: branch1477@tampabay.rr.com

WEBSITE: branch1477nalc.org

OFFICERS OF BRANCH 1477

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Joe Henschen. (727) 608-6772

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT

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RECORDING/FINANCIAL SECRETARY

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TREASURER

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EDITOR

Judy Dorris. (727) 403-2173

DIRECTOR OF RETIREE AFFAIRS

O.D. Elliott. (727) 608-6027

DIRECTOR OF INSURANCE

Tom Phillips. (727) 458-4127

SERGEANT AT ARMS

Clay Hansen. (727) 744-2456

TRUSTEES:

Willie Cochran. (727) 687-4163

Brian Andrews. (941) 748-5594

Joel Baez. (787) 629-3596

STEWARDS OF BRANCH 1477

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Crossroads 10	Ben Hamilton	(727) 735-5125
Euclid	Wanda Clark	(727) 408-0600
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Gulfwinds 15	" "	(727) 531-1477
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St. Pete Main 14	Alan Pollard	(727) 667-4254
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Auxiliary 181		
President	Joyce Keller	(727) 541-2194

Congressional Liasons:

District 13: Tom Phillips (727) 458-4127

District 15: Gene Carroll (727) 742-1640

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Branch 1477, N.A.L.C.
5369 Park Boulevard North
Pinellas Park, FL 33781-3421

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2	3	4	5	6 Executive Board	7	8
9 Mother's Day	10	11	12	13 General Membership (Zoom)	14	15
16	17	18	19	20 Steward's Meeting (Zoom)	21	22
23 30	24 31 Memorial Day	25	26	27	28	29