



Colorado Mail Handlers Union, Local 321

FYI Update

January 1, 2010

NPMHU

Happy Holidays

On behalf of the Local Union Executive Board and State Council, I would like to wish each and every member and your family a joyous holiday season and happy and fruitful New Year.

As a small token of our appreciation to you for your continued Union support, we are distributing pocket calendars and a King Soopers gift card to every Colorado Mail Handlers Union member. If you have not received your gift card and calendar, please see your Branch President or call the Union hall. Happy Holidays!

Colorado Mail Handlers Named Local of the Year

I am proud to report that Local 321 has been recognized by the Mail Handlers Benefit Plan® as **Local of the Year!**

This award was given in recognition of the Local's outstanding promotional and marketing accomplishments for the Mail Handlers Benefit Plan. I would like to thank Vice President Gonzales for directing our MHPB campaign. In addition, Union officers Cindy-Hoehl Rinker, Ed Flagg, Ricardo Olivares and Phil Armendarez are deserving of our thanks. Without their time and dedication to these efforts, it would not be possible to properly promote and sell the MHBP. Our marketing goals directly affect the Local's portfolio. In these difficult times, the Local cannot afford to forgo any income opportunities.

Union Fights NDC Reassignments

On December 14, 2009 the Postal Service issued involuntary reassignment letters to approximately 10% of all craft employees in the Network Distribution Center (NDC). Management notification to 24 mail handlers and 13 clerks was ambiguous, noncommittal and bordered on worthless.

The subject of the letter reads as follows:
60 Day Employee Notification – Involuntary Reassignment within the Craft, Outside the Installation – or Outside the Craft, Outside the Installation

The body of the letter goes on to say:
This is 60 days advance notification of your anticipated involuntary reassignment from the Denver NDC and or craft to another installation in your same craft or another craft to be determined. We will provide you with additional information, as it becomes available.

It should be clear to you that management has no regard for any hardship that this action causes you. Management has a contractual obligation to minimize dislocation and inconvenience. Part of this obligation is tied to proper notification.

By contract, affected employees are entitled to an advance notice of not less than 60 days before making involuntary details or reassignments from one installation to another. This Local Union maintains that this 60 day notification should say something of substance. It

should include information that will truly help *minimize the inconvenience.*

As of now, management is only willing to say that the affected employees are being reassigned out of the NDC; *date, craft, location and installation to be determined.* The Union has initiated a Class Action grievance challenging the inadequacies of the *60 day notice* letters.

The Postal Service's initial impact statement provided to the Union in October of 2009 forecasted the elimination of 52 NDC mail handler positions. I am pleased to report that the number of those to be reassigned has been slashed by more than 50%. We will continue our fight to keep every mail handler in their installation & bid. I am optimistic that the number to be reassigned will be further reduced.

In all likelihood, any (NDC) mail handler reassignments will be to the Denver P&DC. I can make this prediction because of current withholding notices pending deployment of the FSS machines. Simply stated, the USPS does not have enough mail handlers to run these machines.

If I have enough information to make this reassignment *prediction*, then management should also be willing to reduce this information to writing. Post-Christmas volume will also play a role in these reassignment determinations.

National Reassessment Process

The Postal Service recently notified the Local Union that the **Limited Duty** Phase 2 of the National Reassessment Process (NRP) will begin in the Denver P&DC on January 4, 2010. Management initially focused their NRP attention on those in permanent rehabilitation assignments; that is those considered permanent and/or those that have reached maximum medical improvement (MMI). The District has now expanded the NRP process to include those employees on limited duty; that is those who have not reached MMI and are expected to fully recover.

The Government Accounting Office recently reported that 50,031 Postal employees occupied modified work assignments during fiscal year 2008. The GAO report went on to claim that out of the 13,708 employees in the Colorado/Wyoming District, 1375 (or 10.03%) were in a modified assignment during FY08. This 10% figure mirrors what we are experiencing in Local 321. Moreover, these 2008 figures have held true through FY2009 as well. Out of 81 Districts in the United States, our (CO/WYO) District ranked 8th highest.

The NRP process is nearly the same for those on **limited duty**, when compared to those permanently injured and **at MMI**. From what we have experienced, the biggest difference in the NRP interview pertains to the timelines of a modified job offer. Those on limited duty are being forced to accept or decline the job offer during the interview, immediately. Those permanently injured at MMI are given the opportunity to review the job offer with their

doctor and schedule a follow-up NRP interview within 14 days.

One other important development pertains to management's addendum to the (2499) Modified Assignment. Management is asserting their option to send an injured employee home anytime work is unavailable. This means that an offer of 8 hours per day does not guarantee that you will actually realize the work hours offered.

If you are summoned for a NRP interview, request a Union steward. Management is using the NRP process to reduce employee complement and force injured employees back to the floor. Many of these NRP interviews will be unpleasant.

Boulder: Centralization

On December 19, 2009 the 4 junior full-time regulars from Boulder Colorado were involuntarily reassigned to the Denver P&DC. They were placed into withheld residual positions by seniority preference. With this move, management reduced Boulder's mail handler complement by 25%.

The reassigned Mail Handlers will maintain their full craft seniority and category status. They will be permitted to bid in the P&DC with full seniority on April 10, 2010. The Union will continue to monitor cross-craft activity and file the necessary grievances in all Boulder stations.

Littleton: Centralization

On December 5, 2009 management unilaterally removed all mail handlers from Ken Caryl Ranch, Centennial, and Littleton's Main Offices. All mail handler jobs were abolished and each was reassigned to the Highlands Ranch office. With this move, management effectively gave all mail handler work to the clerk craft.

The Union will challenge all cross-craft violations and file the appropriate grievances in each station. Management has acted with total disregard to our National Agreement. Union officials spent more than 1 week in each station documenting the violations. The grievances are moving to Step 2 as this is written.

Local 321 Scholarship Update

Local 321's Executive Board unanimously approved a motion to continue funding our scholarship program for the next school year.

The Board has approved (5) five-hundred dollar scholarships for the 2010-2011 school year. The scholarships are randomly awarded to Local 321 members and dependants consistent with scholarship program rules. Applications must be received by April 16, 2010.

Applications will be distributed to every facility. This information will also be available at www.local321.org; or you can also request a scholarship packet by calling 303-455-6400.

In Unity,

Mike

Michael J Hora
President
NPMHU, Local 321