

COLORADO



LOCAL 321

NATIONAL POSTAL MAIL HANDLERS UNION

Division of the Laborer's International Union of North America,
AFL-CIO

1833 WEST ELK PLACE - DENVER, COLORADO 80211

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~ ~ FOR YOUR INFORMATION ~ ~

September 9, 2008

Attendance Control Responsibilities to be Returned to the Immediate Supervisor

Thanks to a pre-arbitration settlement signed this week, which is consistent with a National Level arbitration decision; management must CEASE the practice of regularly assigning attendance control supervisors with the responsibilities of issuing attendance related discipline to Mail Handlers.

This means that normally one's immediate supervisor should conduct the due process interview, determine whether or not to issue discipline, and if they elect to issue discipline, it should come from, and be issued by the immediate supervisor.

The National award issued by Arbitrator Das granted the authority of Attendance Control Officials to issue discipline, but more importantly the decision ALSO defers to locally established practices (if they exist). The Union proved this past practice did exist and should continue. In Denver, the immediate supervisor must once again be involved in every aspect of attendance control. Discussions should also be conducted by the immediate supervisor.

Let me warn you, this does not mean SDOs cannot or will not get assistance. Rest assured, Attendance Control officials will likely continue to monitor your attendance from behind the scenes, but it is the responsibility of the immediate supervisor to handle, control and manage related responsibilities. This should bring an end to the ridiculous discipline that is currently being issued by Attendance Control officials. This settlement takes attendance control out of the autonomous flow-chart vacuum it was in, and returns it to proper case-by-case determination by the immediate supervisor.

When a supervisor wants to conduct a due process investigatory interview, ALWAYS request a Union steward. The Union will ensure that our craft enjoys full compliance with this settlement.

Help the Union Restore T-2 Automation Positions in the Denver GMF

Management's quest to cut costs has brought about reckless changes across Colorado. In the Denver GMF, management recently excessed and abolished everyone in the Tour 2 automation pay section. This was effective on August 15, 2008.

On August 16, 2008 management found themselves in a predicament; they had no automation mail handlers. DUH! The day after abolishing all automation mail handlers, management proceeded to require T-2 tow motor drivers and other out-of-section mail handlers to perform the automation duties of the excessed mail handlers. Never refuse

this instruction. However, the Union does need your help.

If you are ever moved to (Tour 2) automation and told to perform automation duties, (whether on overtime or straight-time), please make a move on the clock. It is imperative that you move to an automation operation so the Union can track the hours and prove that management improperly abolished and excessed necessary mail handler positions in automation. In addition, I am asking you to write a statement; if you are moved to automation, request to see a Union steward. Take the time to write a statement and help us document and prove the violations. It is the only way we will prevail.

The Union has filed an ongoing grievance challenging management's improper action whereby excessing and abolishing necessary mail handler positions in T-2 automation. We need your help documenting the extent of the violation. Union Steward Andy Lovato is the point of contact for this grievance. Please submit your statements to Brother Lovato or Branch President Cindy Hoehl-Rinker.

USPS Conducting Statewide Customer Service Mail Handler Workload Reviews

The Union has been advised that the Postal Service is reviewing all mail handler positions in customer service offices. In their words, "This workload review is being done to ensure work is being performed in the most efficient manner."

Management has indicated that a member of the management team will "shadow" mail handlers for the entire tour while recording all work performed. Management is reviewing Boulder, Brighton, Colorado Springs M.O., Englewood, Ft. Collins, Golden, Holly Station, Littleton and Longmont.

This should go without saying, but I am going to say it anyway... the best way to protect your job is to stay busy doing your job. This should be especially obvious when you have a manager tracking and documenting everything you do, minute-by-minute, for an entire shift or more.

Management is looking to save a buck wherever they can. These reviews are (in our opinion) an attempt by management to justify future mail handler reductions in the smaller facilities.

The union has requested, or will request any and all information documented by these review teams. The union will also be requesting to be present at any pre-review or post-review meetings that may occur. Grievances will be filed challenging all inaccurate findings and adverse actions.

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Five Day Delivery Week: Fact or Fiction?

Many employees recently heard stand-up talks wherein management delivered some shocking news. Denver managers recently proclaimed that the USPS is counting on approval of the 5 day delivery week to save millions of dollars. The talk went on to presume difficulty in getting this to pass (Capitol Hill), acknowledging that it is an election year and politics would certainly come into play.

Management went on to suggest wage concessions in the next contract if the 5 day delivery week does not come to fruition. They also hinted that the USPS is near their statutory debt threshold.

Currently, there is no legislation pending to support a 5 day delivery week. However, Georgia Representative Lynn Westmoreland (R) has proposed a study to evaluate the effects of a 5 day delivery week. It should not shock you to know that this is something also being studied by the powers of the Postal Rate Commission.

Management's predictions of wage concessions are without merit. Yes, the USPS reports their dire financial condition on a weekly basis, but for anyone to predict future wage concession 21 months into a 60 month contract is irresponsible. It is true that the Postal Service continues to champion consolidations as a way to save money and cut costs, and when a manager says that "the MPA will close *sometime in the future*," this is probably true, but the future is a distant opportunity saddled with uncertainty. We are in turbulent times. The Denver GMF is scheduled to receive 5 FSS machines. These machines will dramatically affect flat processing personnel, particularly in associate offices. Management has delayed receipt of machines 4 and 5 by a few months.

If we ultimately only get 3 FSS machines, this would create a lot of available floor space at the GMF; these options create concerns. This would create an opportunity for more changes. The MPA is a leased property. The Postal Service would obviously prefer to operate P&DC and BMC functions in owned facilities, but there have been no discussions about closing the MPA at this time.

Changes are also rumored for our BMC operations. The Postal Service is looking at their options. By issuing a Request for Proposals (RFP), the USPS made it clear that they are entertaining the thought of privatizing the parcel business, to include private contracting for work traditionally performed by NPMHU bargaining unit employees at the BMCs. This will be aggressively fought at the Local and National levels.

As additional information becomes available, it will be shared with the Union. We are doing everything possible to preserve mail handler presence in each of the 11 offices we currently occupy.

Creation of BMC Task Force to Defend Mail Handler Work at the BMCs

At our recent National Convention, the delegates passed a resolution calling for the creation of a Bulk Mail Center Task Force which will meet to coordinate the Union's efforts to fight any attempts to subcontract or otherwise privatize the mail processing currently being performed at the BMCs. Combined with earlier resolutions aimed at legislative efforts to stop or limit subcontracting, the delegates at this National Convention solidified the Union's commitment to oppose privatization of the Postal Service.

I have appointed BMC Branch President Mark Lofthouse to this National task force. Brother Lofthouse's knowledge and insight into the BMC system will be an asset to the task force. Mark will coordinate the details of the project with the Local Council and BMC stewards. We will do everything possible to preserve the work performed by the mail handler craft in the Denver BMC.

Change of Schedules

In recent weeks, the Union has learned of situations where management has asked mail handlers to submit changes of schedule to satisfy Postal Service staffing shortages. In one example, a mail handler was told that their leave would be approved for Sunday if they submitted a change of schedule requesting to be off Sunday/Monday, (working Tuesday/Wednesday). This increased necessary staffing on the Tuesday after a holiday.

Another example had mail handlers submitting changes of schedule to hours that were just taken from them by way of an involuntary change in report time.

If management wants to temporarily change your (FTR or PTR) hours, you are entitled to out of schedule premium pay. Never submit a voluntary change of schedule at management's request. If management makes this request, please ask to see a Union steward.

Out-of-schedule premium is paid to eligible full-time bargaining unit employees for time worked outside of and instead of their regularly scheduled workday or workweek when employees work on a temporary schedule at the request of management.

You are not entitled to out of schedule premium when a request for a schedule change is made by you for personal reasons.

In Unity,

Mike

Michael J Hora
President,
NPMHU Local 321