



MAIL HANDLER UPDATE

NATIONAL POSTAL MAIL HANDLERS UNION

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John F. Hegarty
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WAGES INCREASE EFFECTIVE NOVEMBER 21, 2009

Dues Increase to Be Implemented with Negotiated Wage Increase



Mark A. Gardner
Secretary-Treasurer

The fifth of six general wage increases to be paid to all mail handlers under the 2006 National Agreement will be implemented effective November 21, 2009, and will be reflected in paychecks on December 11, 2009.

As required by Article XIV, Section 3 of the National Constitution and Article VIII, Section 2 of the Uniform Local Union Constitution, mail handlers will see an automatic membership dues increase of fifty cents (\$.50) per pay period, effective with this November 2009 negotiated wage increase.

Of this amount, forty cents (\$.40) per pay period will be sent to the Local Union, and ten cents (\$.10) per pay period will be retained by the National Office in the form of increased per capita tax.

MAIL HANDLER WAGE CHART

Effective in PP25-2009, all Mail Handlers will receive the fifth of six guaranteed general wage increases negotiated in the 2006-2011 National Agreement. This wage increase will become effective

on November 21, 2009, and will first appear in paychecks dated December 11, 2009. Printed below is the updated wage chart reflecting this wage increase.

Mail Handlers (RSC M) Schedule | Full-Time Annual Basic Rates | Effective November 21, 2009 (PP 25-2009)

Full-Time Regular - Level 4					Full-Time Regular - Level 5					Part-Time Regular and Flexible Employees Hourly Basic Rates - Level 4 (Part-Time Regulars)(Part-Time Flexible)			
Step	Yearly	Hourly	BiWeekly	Overtime	Step	Yearly	Hourly	BiWeekly	Overtime	Step	Hourly	Step	Hourly
AA	31,641	15.21	1,216.96	22.82	AA	33,169	15.95	1,275.73	23.93	AA	15.21	AA	15.82
A	35,970	17.29	1,383.46	25.94	A	37,500	18.03	1,442.31	27.05	A	17.29	A	17.99
B	41,406	19.91	1,592.54	29.87	B	43,308	20.82	1,665.69	31.23	B	19.91	B	20.70
C	43,977	21.14	1,691.42	31.71	C	45,949	22.09	1,767.27	33.14	C	21.14	C	21.99
D	47,759	22.96	1,836.88	34.44	D	48,503	23.32	1,865.50	34.98	D	22.96	D	23.88
E	48,062	23.11	1,848.54	34.67	E	48,833	23.48	1,878.19	35.22	E	23.11	E	24.03
F	48,374	23.26	1,860.54	34.89	F	49,168	23.64	1,891.08	35.46	F	23.26	F	24.19
G	48,675	23.40	1,872.12	35.10	G	49,490	23.79	1,903.46	35.69	G	23.40	G	24.34
H	48,985	23.55	1,884.04	35.33	H	49,823	23.95	1,916.27	35.93	H	23.55	H	24.49
I	49,290	23.70	1,895.77	35.55	I	50,157	24.11	1,929.12	36.17	I	23.70	I	24.65
J	49,603	23.85	1,907.81	35.78	J	50,485	24.27	1,941.73	36.41	J	23.85	J	24.80
K	49,905	23.99	1,919.42	35.99	K	50,813	24.43	1,954.35	36.65	K	23.99	K	24.95
L	50,214	24.14	1,931.31	36.21	L	51,140	24.59	1,966.92	36.89	L	24.14	L	25.11
M	50,520	24.29	1,943.08	36.44	M	51,475	24.75	1,979.81	37.13	M	24.29	M	25.26
N	50,826	24.44	1,954.85	36.66	N	51,806	24.91	1,992.54	37.37	N	24.44	N	25.41
O	51,131	24.58	1,966.58	36.87	O	52,132	25.06	2,005.08	37.59	O	24.58	O	25.57
P	51,440	24.73	1,978.46	37.10	P	52,462	25.22	2,017.77	37.83	P	24.73	P	25.72

Open Season Opportunities Now Knocking

The months of November and December present several financial opportunities for all mail handlers.

First, the Federal Benefits Open Season provides an opportunity for mail handlers to make any necessary changes to their health insurance coverage through the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program (FEHBP). During this open season, employees may make any one, or a combination of, the following changes to their health insurance: enroll if not enrolled; cancel enrollment; change from one plan to another or from one option to another; and change from Self to Self and Family, or from Self and Family to Self. All of these open season changes may be made using PostalEASE, which may be accessed online at www.liteblue.usps.gov or by calling 1-877-487-3273. The FEHBP Open Season period is scheduled for November 9 through December 15, 2009 at 5:00 pm (Central Time).

Also currently available to all mail handlers, as well as all other federal and postal employees, are supplemental dental and vision insurance programs offered through the Federal Employees Dental and Vision Insurance Program (FEDVIP). These plans are optional, with all

premiums paid by the employee without any subsidy from the Postal Service. Questions can be addressed to the customer service representatives at 1-877-888-3337, or you can find more information, including enrollment details, at www.benefeds.com. The FEDVIP Open Season runs from November 9, 2009 through December 14, 2009 at 11:59 pm (Eastern Time).

Supplemental dental and vision plans also are sponsored by the Mail Handlers Benefit Plan (MHBP) and Coventry, and may be used by mail handlers who are members of the NPMHU even if they do not enroll in health insurance sponsored by the MHBP. More information on the MHBP supplemental plans is available at the MHBP website, www.mhbp.com, or at 1-800-254-0227.

Second, similar but lengthier open season dates (November 9, 2009 through December 27, 2009 at 5:00 pm (Central Time)) are applicable for mail handlers who seek to participate during 2010 in one or both Flexible Spending Accounts. FSAs allow employees to set aside a portion of their pre-tax earnings for certain types of out-of-pocket health care expenses and dependent care expenses that may be incurred during the next year. FSAs are an excellent opportunity for all mail handlers to

save money for health care and dependent care, and all members are urged to investigate this program if you expect to have eligible expenses in these areas.

If you don't have an FSA, try one next year. Start small, if you like. But you can put up to \$5,000 into a Health Care FSA and/or up to another \$5,000 per family into a Dependent Care FSA. Using the FSA Program can give you significant tax savings. In basic terms, the FSA gives you a percentage discount (depending on your tax rate) on all of your out-of-pocket health care costs, such as braces, eyeglasses, hearing aids, deductibles, co-payments, drugs (including prescription and certain over-the-counter medication), and other expenses not covered by health insurance. The same is true for your dependent care costs, which can include day care at a center or from a private sitter, late pickup fees from child care, nursery school, and summer day camp, or adult day care for an elderly parent.

The amount of money you put into an FSA is entirely up to you. Be advised, however, that you must utilize all of the funds in your FSA, or you lose that money under rules adopted by the Internal Revenue Service. Also remember that you have additional time after December 31 of

each year (until March 15 of the following year) before any unspent money in an FSA would be lost. Complete your enrollment through PostalEASE by visiting www.liteblue.usps.gov or by calling 1-877-487-3273; questions should be directed to the FSA Customer Service Center at 1-800-842-2026. Again, the FSA Open Season runs from November 9, 2009 through December 27, 2009 at 5:00 pm (Central Time).

Third, eligible employees may use the Annual Leave Exchange Option to receive a lump-sum payment in their paychecks dated January 22, 2010 in exchange for a portion of the annual leave that otherwise would be advanced to them at the beginning of the 2010 leave year. To be eligible, mail handlers must have an annual leave balance of 440 hours at the end of the 2009 leave year and have used less than 75 hours of sick leave during the 2009 leave year. Mail handlers who meet the eligibility criteria and want to exercise this option under the Annual Leave Exchange Option must use PostalEASE to make elections no later than December 15, 2009 at 11:59 pm (Central Time).

Mail handlers who would like additional information about any of these programs are urged to use the resources listed in this article.



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