



# The New Contract



As you all probably know by now a tentative agreement regarding the terms of a new contract have finally been reached. The 2011 National Agreement expired in May of 2016 and the National Union has been hard at work negotiating the terms of the successor agreement. However, the process is not quite finished. As required by our governing constitution we, the members, have the final say on either accepting the terms negotiated or rejecting those terms. Very soon Contract Ratification packages will be sent to all members of the NPMHU along with a ballot for voting. This is arguably the most important right we have as members of the bargaining unit and we encourage each and every member to let their voice be heard. The Ratification package will contain the full text of all of the changes to the 2016 National Agreement for your consideration. There is much to review with the major provisions including a forty-month term with contractual raises of 1.2%, 1.3%, and 1.3% beginning in November of 2016. And yes, if we ratify, retroactive pay increases will be due, including a Cost of Living Allowance (COLA) increase that was effective last September. Speaking of the COLA, this agreement will include a total of seven potential cost of living increases as well. The third critical tier of our tentative agreement continues the all-important no lay-off clause. Raises for Mail Handler Assistants will amount to 2.2%, 2.3%, and 2.3 % over the same 40-month period as well as a \$.50 increase phased in over three years. MHA pay increases do not include the COLA.

In terms of contractual changes, much has been improved for our career path Mail Handler Assistants and maybe the most significant includes an automatic conversion to career status for all Mail Handler Assistants in 200 man-year facilities who have been employed for two and a half years or more as of the effective date of ratification. Within Local 308 this will effect close to one hundred MHAs. The effective date of this conversion is expected within 60 days of ratification. In addition, Mail Handler As-

sistants who are converted to career and who have served at least one 360 day appointment will not be subject to a probationary period. Currently, in order to avoid the new career probationary period at least two 360-day appointments are required. Our MHAs will also now enjoy six paid holidays which include New Years Day, Memorial Day, Fourth of July, Labor Day, Thanksgiving, and Christmas. The annual leave exchange for these holidays will also be available under the new Agreement.

While the employer's contribution toward health care premiums will not change in 2017 for Mail Handlers it will decrease by 2% of the weighted average in 2018 and 1% in 2019. As was the case for the previously arbitrated contract for the APWU, by the end of the contract a total of a 3% decrease in the amount contributed by the employer will be implemented. For comparison a 1% decrease in employer contribution will amount to approximately a \$70 per year increase for self only and between \$100 to \$160 per year for self and family. As a reminder these premiums are paid with pre-tax dollars.

Clothing allowance amounts will increase 2.5% each year over the life of the contract.

There are a number of important changes to Article 12 as well as the continuation of the critically important Article 32 MOU on subcontracting.

In my view our National Negotiating Team lead by National President Paul Hogrogian has delivered an excellent agreement fully worthy of our support and ratification. Having said that, this is a democratic process and each and every member has the right to vote her or his conscious in a secret ballot format and we encourage all members to participate. If you have any questions or concerns on the terms of this tentative agreement or any other Union related matter please do not hesitate to contact this office at your convenience.

In Union Solidarity,  
John Gibson

## New Steward Training

National Shop Steward Trainer, Brother Tim Dwyer recently led a two-day steward's seminar for our newest Union representatives. The responsibility for defending the rights of our members on the workroom floor is no small matter and we greatly appreciate the work shop stewards do on a day to day basis.

Pictured from L to R: Scott Fayter-NDC, Bill Mulvenna-NDC, John Gibson, Tim Dwyer, Angel Bloxom-Trenton P&DC, Kris Keehn-Trenton P&DC, & David Sagui-Trenton P&DC.



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