



# COVID POLICY



There are very few out there that have not had just about enough of everything related to COVID-19. We are all sick and tired of masks, distancing, lock downs, and the personal tragedies endured by far too many during these trying times. However, we must carry on with the protections put in place to keep others safe and in return keeping those we care about the most, safe as well. Unfortunately, this is a message that seems to continue to be lost on many in management. These failures come in many forms from wearing masks around their necks, failing to demonstrate the leadership they claimed they had when they applied for the promotion, by allowing HCR drivers and others to ignore the rules, to failing to conduct the “mandatory” Stand Up Talks to those employees under their charge. There are exceptions, but as a whole, the employer has failed to lead in these uncertain times, and in turn, have failed in their responsibility to maintain a safe workplace.

As we have reported, each of the three Districts within the jurisdiction of Local 308 (Central PA, Philadelphia Metro, & South Jersey) conduct multiple weekly Zoom briefings with the Postal Unions, where information is shared, and concerns are voiced. This office has long maintained that Plant Managers and District Managers alike often get more truth from Union leadership than their own operations folks and we all know why. It seems week after week reports from the Union asserting that operations management simply do not enforce the rules equitably and sometimes do not follow them at all, go unaddressed. Invariably, as these concerns are raised the Plant Managers ensure that they will “get the message out”. I have no doubt that they do, but it’s the same issue the following week. The only conclusion that can be drawn here is that they fail to enforce compliance among their own ranks. Oh, I am aware that craft employees have been the target of “enforcement”, and I am sure you are as well. While we, in the strongest of possible terms, support compliance with safety rules and regulations, including the wearing of masks, we have not waived your due process rights or the just cause requirements of the collective bargaining agreement. If you are the target of enforcement or corrective action for non-compliance please request Union representation.

For those unfortunate Sisters and Brothers who have been exposed to the virus or, god forbid, contracted the virus, the employer has recently issued new policy.

## MHA Conversion

As a result of the recently negotiated national agreement to convert more than 5,000 Mail Handler Assistants to full-time career status, Local 308 will see 299 of our Brother and Sister MHA’s become Full-Time Regular Mail Handlers. With this promotion comes a vast improvement in wages, benefits, and working conditions for the newly converted which is scheduled to be effective no later than March 13, 2021. In addition, the agreement requires management to create new bids for every conversion “as soon as practicable”. **THESE NEW BIDS WILL BE OPEN TO EVERYONE!**

(Visit [npmhu308.org](http://npmhu308.org) for the USPS COVID Decision Tree) Postal Headquarters has made significant changes to who and how one is granted administrative leave. If an employee has been confirmed positive for the virus the employer is to direct you to stay “home on Annual Leave or Sick Leave. If leave balance is insufficient, Administrative Leave may be granted on a case by case basis.” We realize that this language in the hands of management is far less than a guarantee and we have inquired on more than one occasion if they have any set criteria for this “case by case” stuff. No surprise, we’re still waiting. However, Union reps across this Local have been instructed to file grievances if you are not granted administrative leave. This applies to those with “sufficient” leave balances as well. So, to be crystal clear, if you test positive, ask for administrative leave, if you don’t get it, let us know.

Second, if you share a household with someone who tests positive and you do not have symptoms the USPS says “Employee stays home on Annual Leave or Sick Leave. If leave balance is insufficient, Administrative Leave may be granted on a case by case basis.” If you do exhibit symptoms under this scenario the employer says you stay “home on leave in accordance with ELM Sec. 513”. ELM 513 includes the provisions for Sick Leave. Again, request administrative leave in both cases, if it is not granted please see your Union rep.

Lastly, if you have been identified as exposed to a COVID positive individual outside of work and exhibit no symptoms the employer instructs that the “Employee stays home on Annual Leave or Sick Leave. If leave balance is insufficient, Administrative Leave may be granted on a case by case basis.” If you are exposed in this scenario with no symptoms management instructs that you stay “home on leave in accordance with ELM Sec. 513”. Again, request administrative leave, if it is not granted please see your Union rep.

As you might expect, the bottom line here in the eyes and minds of the USPS, trumps the safety of its employees. Instead of creating a financial disincentive for those infected and potentially infected employees from reporting for duty, they have managed to create the opposite effect and in doing so are endangering those who actually move the mail.

If you have any question at all about COVID policy please see your Union representative.

In Solidarity - *John Gibson*

## Dues Adjustment

As a reminder, the retroactive dues increase associated with the PP 25-20 salary increase was implemented in pay period 3. Dues were increased by one dollar and a dollar was deducted retroactively for pay periods 25-20 through pay period 02-21. The dues for members of Local 308 are now \$26.50 per pay. Dues HAVE NOT increased by \$5.00. The dues amount reflected for your pay period 4-21 earnings statement should be \$26.50, if it is higher than that please contact your Union rep immediately. If you have any questions please let us know.