

The Local Line

"A PPA Award Winning Publication"

The Official Voice of the
Northwest Illinois Area Local

Floor Edition

Update by: Jackie Engelhart

May 19, 2020

OSHA Complaint RE: Covid-19 at Palatine

On 5-15-2020 I received an email regarding an Opening Conference for an OSHA complaint filed at Palatine P&DC. The OSHA Compliance Officer's name is Gary Weil and his phone # is 847-815-9924, and he said anyone who has information regarding the issues raised in this complaint can call him. This is a formal, not a non-formal inspection. He said something about a referral from a local government authority. Palatine has 29 positives, and four deaths from COVID-19. Our deceased co-workers are custodians Ed Lewis, and Kyaw Nyunt, clerk Abe Gujardo, and Mail Handler Helen Sylvestri. It is time that OSHA looked at Palatine in regards to COVID-19. Many employees are afraid to come to work, and ask why the facility has not been shut down for cleaning/sanitization. Management says there are still contract cleaners in the building cleaning where Maintenance tells them to, but they are in the front office a lot.

Complaint Allegations:

1. 18 employees tested positive and 2 have died. (The real numbers are 29 and 4)
2. 50 or 60 are positive.
3. The employer is not enforcing social distancing.
4. Workers who tested positive are still coming to work.
5. Areas where positives worked have not been sanitized.
6. No gloves or masks are being provided.
7. Management is not being transparent.

Management was asked a series of questions...

1. How many Palatine employees? (922)
2. Any confirmed cases? (yes)
3. Any reports of sickness that could be related to COVID? (unknown)
4. COVID related hospitalization or fatality?
5. Deep Cleaning? (no) Sanitization of the work area after a positive? (yes) Closing of facility? (no) Sent home personnel (yes) Self-quarantined 14 days? (yes)
6. Anything else done? (Masks, hand sanitizers provided, stand-up talks being held)

7. When CDC guidelines are implemented what dates implemented? (don't have dates)
8. Shift changes (no)
9. Frequent hand washing (yes)
10. Frequent cleaning and sanitizing? (yes)
11. Gloves and masks provided? (yes)
12. Masks mandatory? (no)
13. Infectious disease plan? (yes, part of emergency plan)
14. Temperature checks being taken?(no)
15. Training on signs of COVID? (Yes)

Management answered "yes" in regards to frequent cleaning and sanitizing and I disagree. Is this happening on the floor or only in the front office? Are the Hand-Sanitizer Stations always filled? On 5-13-2020 we were called to Automation at 1500 to see there was no hand-sanitizer and no paper towels on the APC, and were told this is not unusual because they do not want the bottles filled. If you have information you would like to share with OSHA regarding this complaint please call Gary Weil at 847-815-9924. Managers, why are you not wearing masks?

Jackie Engelhart
President
Walter Elerby Jr.
Vice President
Alan Czerwinski
News Director

Special points of interest:

OSHA Complaint RE:
COVID-29 Palatine
Complaint Allegations:
Contract Retro Pay on 9-4-20
Palatine Bid Realignment,
Not a Good Time for it...
Open and Closed Sections
We Offered to Review...
Carol Stream had 2 in 2017

Northwest Illinois Area Local
American Postal Workers Union
194 W. Lake Street
Elmhurst, IL 60126
Phone: 630-833-0088
Fax: 630-833-0248
Email: nwial7140@yahoo.com
Web: nwial7140ayahoo.com

Contract Retro-Pay on 9-4-20

Retroactive pay for the pay increase for the 2018-2021 contract are to be paid in pay period 18 on the paycheck dated 9-4-2020. This payment will include a 1.3% raise from 11-24-2018 and a 1.1% raise from 11-23-19, and COLAS of \$624 and \$166 for all regulars. PSEs will get retro pay for a 2.3% raise from 11-24-2018 and a 2.1% raise from 11-23-2019. The pay date is 9-4-2020 barring issues or unexpected systems changes.

Palatine Bid Realignment, Not a Good Time for it...

600 CCD Marcia Lloyd told the management team pushing these Clerk bid changes that this is not a good time to be taking away bids. You can thank A/Plant Manager Allen Mitchell who is throwing 100 clerks out of their bids, and his assistant In-Plant Support Manager Kenya Moore, and her assistant Mr. Walter Rodriguez. Management has little signs on the front doors saying "Heroes Work Here" but they take AFSM Lead Clerk jobs so they can save \$.61 per hour. The Lead Clerks can work on the machine so there is no reason to take their jobs except as Mr. Rodriguez stated "We don't need Lead Clerks, I don't know why they were posted. They can't wait until these few jobs are vacated to change them to level 6? That's the payback these clerks get for taking more responsibility. A few clerks have retired in the last few weeks or plan to retire by the end of May which should save a few more Clerks and allow them to be matched with their bids, but no, they are reverting these jobs. Their lists show 281 current bids and 270 bids after the changes. Then we found out by asking questions that they are only posting 254 clerks bids based on the "authorized complement" so that leaves 41 clerks without bids!

This management group is abolishing two out of the three review clerks in the facility, all of whom are on tour 3 in the Nixie unit. It was reported to me last week that the Review Clerks were instructed to close the Nixie unit down, and that mail was taken to Maintenance to be destroyed but Maintenance returned it to Nixie. Now, A/A Plant Manager Kenya Moore is telling supervisors not to send Nixie mail to the Nixie unit and to work it on the machines. They are also reducing the number of manual flat and letter bids so there are not many places to go.

Open and Closed Sections

1. AFSM-AI, tour 3 is open, tours 1 & 2 are closed
2. Automation, tour 1 & 3 are open, tour 2 is closed
3. FSS, tour 1 is eliminated, tours 2 & 3 are closed
4. General Clerks, no changes
5. General Expeditors, tours 1 & 3 are closed, tour 2 is open
6. Postage Due, no changes
7. Review Clerks, tour 3 closed, no review clerks on tours 1 & 2
8. Bulk Mail Clerks/Technicians, Data Collection, no changes. not part of Function 1
9. Manual, tours 1 & 3 are closed even though they are adding bids, because there are clerks with sectional retreat rights. Tour 2 is open.

If the section is not being reduced the section is **open** so Clerks either match with their NS days or they don't. If the bid is reposted it is posted for everyone to bid on and there are no retreat rights. If the section is being reduced the section is **closed** with the junior clerks excessed out of the section with retreat rights. Those that remain in the section stay in their bids until the first person does not match with the new NS days, at which point everyone below them is reposted in closed section for all remaining in the section to bid on.

We Offered to Review...

Marcy and I offered to review all of the changes with them section by section but they did not have time for that. The letters were sent out on 5-11-2020 with copies to the union as they were sent out. We got the copies on 5-13-2020. We informed them of problems as we found them and will see what they correct and where grievances will have to be filed.

Carol Stream Had 2 in 2017

Carol Stream had 2 realignments in 2017 based on the Function 1 Scheduler but these were pushed by USPS Headquarters, and Local Management said they were not allowed to make any changes. The second round of changes was made to correct mistakes made in the first round of changes so CS was "realigned" twice in one year. Palatine was not realigned in 2017 thanks to In-Plant Support Mgr. Jill Dewey who has since retired. Even former Plant Manager Liz Wulf did not make any major changes in schedules with the exception of consolidating tour starting times to 0700, 1500, and 2300. The Palatine changes are coming from the A/Plant Manager and affect 100 Clerks who will lose their bids and 41 will have no bid. What kind of realignment leaves 41 Clerks without a bid knowing that bids have to be posted for FT Clerks unencumbered (without a bid) for 120 days? They are in a hurry to throw clerks out of their bids and did not want our help. Busse has not done a realignment in years but they just keep trying to revert Clerks out of existence. Busse also has not posted bids for the newly converted Clerks and will have to post bids for them within 120 days of their being converted to career on 5-9-2020. If you have questions or concerns about being thrown out of your bid contact Marcy at Palatine or call me at 630-253-0118.

