

The Local Line

"A PPA Award Winning Publication"

The Official Voice of the
Northwest Illinois Area Local

Update by: Jackie Engelhart

OPM Finally Issues Guidelines for EFEL...

On 4-30-2021 OPM finally issued guidelines for approval of EFEL, Emergency Federal Employee Leave under the American Rescue Plan. Effective immediately, Employees requesting EFEL must provide the following information:

1. A completed PS Form 3971, Request for or Notification of Absence;
2. COVID-19 EFEL Employee Notification and Leave Request Form and all documentation required by the specific qualifying circumstance as indicated on the request form;
3. A signed Employee Agreement in Connections with EFEL. The employee agreement is required only for the first use of EFEL. The Employee Agreement indicates that approval of EFEL is conditional and subject to the availability of FEEL funds. All employees who were conditionally approved for EFEL leave under the Postal Service's interim

policy, which started on March 11, 2021, must complete an Employee Notification and Leave Request Form, supply additional related documentation, and complete the Employee Agreement retroactively for FEEL that was previously approved. This information must be submitted to their respective supervisor within ten (10) days of receiving these forms. Failure to provide these completed, signed forms will result in a denial of EFEL. In such cases, the employee's EFEL will be converted to leave without pay (LWOP) and the employee will be liable for repayment of the FEEL taken or the employee may elect to convert the EFEL used to another applicable, paid type of accrued leave. Management is responsible for distributing the forms to all employees who have used EFEL. All forms must be maintained on file for a period of at least four (4) years. We will be providing a standup talk on FEEL to management and employees. This material will also be available on the COVID-19 website on blue and liteblue.

An employee must submit the following additional documentation for each qualifying reason:

1. *the governmental quarantine or isolation order applicable to the employee*
2. *The name of the health care provider who advised the employee to self-quarantine due to COVID-19*
3. *The governmental quarantine or isolation order applicable to the individual*
4. *No generally required additional documentation*
5. *The name of the son or daughter being cared for, the name of the school, place of care, or child care provider and a brief description of the situation (i.e. closure, use of on-line instruction, unavailability of the child care provider), a written explanation regarding why the employee's circumstances (e.g., ages of children, number of children, special needs of children, lack of other adults in the home) make the employee unable to work during the requested hours of leave*

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Special points of interest:

OPM Finally Issues Guidelines for EFEL...

USPS Closing 18 Plants

From the Legislative Director

NWIAL Organizing Incentive

Former 600 CCD Jack Pyssler



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OPM EFEL Guidelines

6. Any documentation the Director of OPM requires:

7. The name of the family member with a mental or physical disability, the name and age of the family member that is 55 year or older, the name of the place of care that is closed or the direct care provider that is unavailable due to COVID-19, a written explanation regarding why the employee's care responsibilities make the employee unable to work during the requested hours of leave.

8. No generally required additional documentation.

Signing the Employee Agreement in connection with EFEL means the employee agrees to pay for the EFEL used should funds run out. Employees must fill out this form retroactively to March 11, 2021 for EFEL already taken, or the EFEL will be changed to LWOP and the employee will be liable for repayment. We expect that USPS would then issue a Letter of Demand. Employees must file a grievance within 14 days upon receipt of a Letter of Demand, and filing a grievance prevents USPS from taking any money from your check until grievance is settled. The most recent number of total COVID cases for Palatine and for Carol Stream is 103. The last Busse number I have is 23.

USPS Closing 18 Plants

On 4-27-2021 APWU was notified by letter of the USPS plan to close 18 plants by consolidating their mail into larger plants.

"The USPS will implement operational mail moves in 18 facilities nationwide that were previously the subject for Area Mail Processing (AMP) considerations. The USPS previously paused 62 AMP consolidations in 2015. In 24 of those facilities, a major portion of the mail moves was completed, however, the remaining

limited operations in those facilities continued in place. As part of its 10 year plan to achieve financial sustainability and service excellence, the USPS will implement the remaining additional operational mail moves in 18 of the 24 facilities previously paused.

Of the remaining 6 facilities, 2 facilities will be reevaluated for further possible action and 4 facilities will have no action taken at this time. It is anticipated that the mail moves will commence in early August and be completed by November 2021. Employee impacts resulting from these operational changes will be handled in accordance with our negotiated contract provisions. These employee impacts will not result in layoffs." None of the 18 plants to be closed are in Illinois, but the possible closing of Fox Valley previously paused is still on pause due to processing capability and space constraints at the proposed relocation site. Fox Valley lost DBCS machines years ago but still processes flats and parcels. **From the Legislative Director** Retiree member Janet Street was appointed Legislative Director and she has been writing Legislative Reports for the past few months. She reports: "The National Convention for the current year is cancelled, however there will be a virtual meeting for the All-Craft Conference. Because of the efforts of the "Save the Post Office Campaign", the Consolidated Appropriations Act was passed in December 2020 which made available to USPS a 10 billion Treasury loan which does not have to be repaid. On 3-23-2021 a 10-year plan was issued called "Delivering for America" This plan provides steps to enable the USPS to "bridge the projected \$160 billion financial shortfall projected over the next 10 years".

The local APWU chapter web site, NWIAL.org has been in the making. Be sure to check NWIAL.org for current articles of concern. Also check under Local News for the new Retirees page...

NWIAL Organizing Incentive

Years ago the national union started a 50-50 incentive program to sign up new members. The new member got \$50 for signing up and the organizer who signed them up got \$50. The national paid \$50 and the Local paid \$50 but the national ended that program after a couple of years. We decided to continue this but to change the amount to \$25 and \$25 as the national was no longer paying half. Any member who signs up a new member is entitled to the \$25 payment as is the new member they sign up. This applies to all NWIAL employees including PSEs. If you sign up you get \$25 and the person who signed you up (the organizer) also gets \$25.

If you are not a member, you are part of the **Free Riders Club**. If you know someone who is always badmouthing the woes of the world on organized labor, then you might want to give them this statement and ask them to sign it and you'll see just how strong their convictions really are. "I am opposed to all unions, therefore I am opposed to all benefits unions have won through the years, such as: paid vacations, paid holidays, sick leave, seniority rights, wage increases, insurance plans, overtime pay, and job security. I refuse to accept any benefits that were won by the unions and therefore authorize my employer to withhold the amount of all union-won benefits from my pay check and donate it to charity." **Former 600 CCD Jack Pyssler** Jack Pyssler passed away recently and he will be missed. He was a former Steward and the 600 CCD, and a very fun and funny person.

