

The Local Line

"A PPA Award Winning Publication"

The Official Voice of the
Northwest Illinois Area Local

Floor Edition

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Update by: Jackie Engelhart

Excessing Delayed until February 2018

The National Postal Mailhandler Union put out information on their website on 7-14-17 stating that the "move date" will be moved back from 9-16-17 and that no Mailhandler would be involuntarily re-assigned out their installation, in all likelihood, until at least 2-2018.

When excessing occurs management determines move dates and there could be up to four per calendar year. The next move date is 9-16-17 but USPS is delaying moves until February of 2018. On 7-20-17 APWU put out a bulletin on the website stating the same thing, that USPS agreed to a five month delay in moving any employees targeted for excessing. The next regular move date would be in 2-18. Both Unions worked together to stop the excessing and were able to get it delayed, but they say USPS is determined to downsize the staffing. This delay has nothing to do with bid changes based on the Function 1 Scheduler in the plants. Carol Stream has given out letters already.

Sections are Incorrect

Carol Stream provided copies of the in-section bidding for Flats and the AFCS, which are units not sections. Flats is part of the Manual Section and AFCS is part of the Automation Section. I informed management that there were errors and if they proceed as is that grievances will be filed. Letters have been sent out based on the incorrect sections and we will be meeting at Carol Stream this week to give input. The Union does not agree with these changes generated by a computer program called the Function 1 Scheduler that inputs mail volumes and trip times and outputs the new schedules. The only reason being given for proposed excessing and the changes in schedules is mail volume decline. Letter and Flat volume is in decline but the parcel volume is increasing because of e-commerce. Most of the plants and post offices have cut the staffing over the years to the point where they rely on year-round overtime and PSE Clerks to get the mail out. At Palatine and CS career employees leave/retire every month.

Constant State of Flux!

CS management informed us that USPS intends to run F-1 Scheduler yearly! It seems they want to create a constant state of flux and turmoil for workers. Their alleged reason for this is declining mail volume but it does not follow you would have to re-staff every plant every year. In 2014 USPS realigned staffing in the plants based on reduced service and the elimination of overnight. Since 2014 they have said they do not need bids in tour 1 Automation and used PSEs to finish DPS. Now they want to post bids in tour 1 Automation. Palatine told us if we did not agree to repost some residuals to tour 1 Auto, they would do a mass abolish and repost of bids to accomplish their goal. We agreed to change six weekday vacancies in tour 2 and 3 Automation to tour 1 weekend bids, but didn't agree to change tour 3 IPP bids to tour 1 Auto. Management told me they only needed six bids for tour 3 IPP and they want to change their time from 12 to 4pm because they said there is no mail at 12. That is not true, there is mail in IPP at 12, and the IPP vacancies are needed.

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Palatine and Carol Stream

Palatine has not started their bid changes yet but will be posting some tour 1 Automation jobs in August. There is still an impact for Palatine for six (6) Clerks which everybody from the Plant Manager on down knows is ridiculous based on an almost 20% overtime rate for the last 3 years. This is another brainstorm from headquarters co-signed by Area. It is doubtful that any Clerk will be excessed out of Palatine on the next move date in February 2018. Management has not scheduled a meeting with us on this impact. Before USPS can issue 60 day letters to employees for excessing they must meet at the Area level with Regional Coordinator Stone and Local Union representatives. Palatine has not informed us of what bid changes will be made but The In-Plant Support Manager, Jill Dewey, said they have the changes but are not approved yet. Carol Stream had an impact for 35 Clerks but Plant Manager Mike Kotula said he would reduce PSE hours and not excess any Clerks. The contract states that management must separate to the extent possible, PSEs working in the affected craft and or installation before excessing career employees. Normally, USPS ignores this contract language and keeps PSEs. Both plants have injured on duty Clerks who are either not at work or unable to work in their bids. CS has about 40 Clerks off work and about 40 on Limited Duty . The CS Clerk complement in April was 379 with 362 earned. The Palatine Clerk complement in April was 335 with 317 earned. Clerks have retired since then. Palatine also has injured on duty Clerks so neither plant is over-staffed and PSEs are still needed to backfill for the injured Clerks. Decreasing mail volume should not require massive bid re-posting.

Busse No Changes, Impact of 5

Busse is not a P&DC and works Priority packages on the APPS and Non-Machineable Outsides on The High Speed Universal Sorter. Busse lost 600 mail since Palatine started running an APPS machine in May of this year. Busse lost APPS mail which is staffed by Mailhandlers so why is there an impact for five (5) Clerks? While USPS says there is a 20% decline in mail volume that decline does not apply to package volumes, so why excess Clerks out of Busse? This is the only impact we have met on and they could not explain the need to excess Clerks when PSEs work close to 40 hours. During the Busse meeting they cancelled the impact for 36 Clerks at Cardiss Collins because they had 150 PSE Clerks and residuals. The Union has requested Busse PSE clock-rings to show that no Clerks should be excessed but Labor Relations Manager, Ms. Barbara Singleton likes to play games with information requests. We have had to filed Labor Board charges several times because we cannot get information from them. The Busse impact makes no sense and we will fight it all the way.

AO Impacts...

Most of the Associate Offices are under-staffed and rely on PSEs. Many of the offices where they have issued impacts for excessing have recently hired PSE Clerks or more PSEs than they need based on the 20% decreased volume. They hired PSEs and then issued impacts to excess regular Clerks. This is exactly the opposite of what the contract calls for, which is to reduce PSEs and hours to the extent possible, not to hire more. The excessing and reduction in career jobs based on "earned" complement is bad for regulars and bad for PSEs who will have to wait longer to be converted to career as USPS eliminates positions.

Retirement Seminar on 9-9-17

Human Relations Director Vivian Henderson and committee will be hosting our annual Retirement Seminar on Saturday, 9-9-17 at the Elmhurst Union Hall with apwu guest speaker Yoggi Riley. Civil Service is from 9am to 12pm and FERS is from 1 to 4 pm with lunch being served at 12 noon. Registration deadline is 8-28-17. Our members are fortunate to have such a knowledgeable and hard working Director as Vivian.

Why be a Retiree Member?

NWIAL Retiree Chapter President Bob LaFoe reminds us that it only costs \$36.00 to remain a member. We have thousands of members nationwide who can be mobilized when politicians propose a budget that will reduce our retirements such as the 2017 Trump budget. We distributed flyers for the Call-in Day of Action on July 18th. Retirees need to stay involved because politicians want our money.

T-Shirt Contest...

We will be purchasing shirts for every NWIAL member this year and there is a contest for the best design to be used for the shirt. The best design will be decided at the August 13th union meeting and the winner receives a \$100.00 gift card. Personally, I like the red shirts that say "I am union". The deadline to submit is 8-10-17. Send to Ray Wience at PO Box 86200, Carol Stream, IL 60188.

NWIAL Scholarships 2017

Four \$750.00 scholarships will be awarded this year. Applications are available at the union room and must be received prior to the membership meeting on **8-13-17**. **Management is not your Friend** Imagine you are a new PSE Clerk in an AO and management tells you to stay away from the Union Steward (or a Clerk) who they say are a bad influence. After awhile you find out management is the problem, not the Union Steward.

