

The Local Line

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The Official Voice of the
Northwest Illinois Area Local

Floor Edition

Update by: Jackie Engelhart

Palatine Violating USPS Tulino Directive for Approving EFEL

Palatine management is telling employees who request EFEL for time off due to COVID-19 vaccination reactions that they must go to a doctor and provide a medical. This makes no sense as it is common knowledge that some people get sick for a day or two after being vaccinated for COVID-19. Why would they go to the doctor and what would the doctor tell them except go home and rest until it passes. Not only does this make no sense but it is also in violation of the USPS Tulino policy letters dated 1-12 and 1-30-2021. Doug Tulino is a senior USPS Labor Relations Manager and he states in the 1-30-2021 letter: "As noted in my 3-12 memorandum, employees seeking to use leave for one of the eight qualifying reasons should submit a PS Form 3971 indicating the reason they must take leave, and employees must affirmatively state that they are unable to work because of the qualifying reason."

OPM Guidelines

USPS is waiting for guidelines from OPM, regarding what documentation will be required for Emergency Federal Employee Leave, EFEL. We hear that USPS did not get fully reimbursed for all leave requested under the first stimulus bill, the FFRCA, so they are now being told to be very cautious in approving EFEL. That does not mean they can request documentation in violation of the national Tulino directive. I sent an email to Palatine A/Plant Manager Charlesten Anderson on 4-2-2021: "We are being told that management is requiring medical documentation for employees requesting EFEL when they become incapacitated after being vaccinated for COVID although they are providing a copy of the vaccination card. This action is in violation of the USPS interim policy from Doug Tulino, which states the employee must affirmatively state they were incapacitated due to one of the 8 qualifying reasons. Palatine is in violation of this policy and needs to come into compliance with it ASAP." No response.

Limiting to 80 Hours

Employees submitting for EFEL are being told they cannot submit for leave beyond 4-14-2021 because management is waiting for OPM to issue guidance for approving the leave and what documentation will be required. OPM said they would issue their guidelines by 4-1-2021 but extended the time frame until 4-14-2021. Until then they are telling employees they can only submit for 80 hours. The interim process to be followed by USPS is outlined in the Tulino letter. **Notifying 3971's** Vice President Dave Baskin reports that a Palatine MDO told him they have been instructed by the A/Plant Manager not to notify 3971's. He said she said notifying the 3971 means accepting the 3971. He said there is a new sheriff in town and new rules and Dave said the LMOU requires them to notify 3971's and she cannot change the LMOU. **Skills Bank Forms** Palatine has new Skills Bank forms available for Clerks who are interested in having their names in the Skills Bank for details of 5 days or more. See management or the union.

April 8, 2021

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Special points of interest:

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In Memory of Alan Ferguson

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E-Reassign for Transfers

In the old days we could write a letter to the plant manager if we wanted to transfer to another office but that changed years ago. The contract now requires employees seeking a transfer to apply on e-reassign. Residual vacancies are jobs that were posted at the facility and nobody bid on them. Residuals first go to unencumbered Clerks within the facility. Unencumbered means they don't have a bid and are unassigned. If there are no unencumbered the job is posted on 21 day e-reassign with preference to employees in a facility affected by excessing. At that point the residual can be used to either convert the senior PSE in the office or to the employee who was first to submit an e-reassign request for that office. When a job gets posted on e-reassign it may have several people already on a list requesting a transfer to this office. For larger offices management must accept a minimum of 1 transfer for every 3 PSE conversions and in smaller offices the rule is 1 in 6 must be a transfer. Management can decide to accept a transfer or convert a PSE unless they have already accepted a transfer in that contract period. The clock starts over every contract for the transfer to conversion ratios of 1 in 4 and 1 in 6. PSEs cannot transfer, only career employees can use e-reassign. These transfers are first in and first out so if your are #1 on the list you are at the head of the line. To transfer to another office you must apply on e-reassign. If you are selected, management will contact your installation to get information regarding your discipline record, attendance, and safety record, any accidents filed. E-reassign transfer requests expire in one year so you have to go back and update. You can decline a transfer if you change your mind.

Clock to the Operation

600 CCD Marcia Lloyd asked me to remind employees to clock to the right operation when being moved. You start your day on your base but may be moved to other operations, especially Manual clerks to Automation. If you are moved from your base (bid) operation, clock a move so your clock-rings will show where you worked and for how long. If you have a Manual bid but work in Automation for most of the day, we cannot prove that you worked in Automation unless you clocked to that operation when you were moved. Clock-rings are used to document grievances filed for crossing crafts, overtime and holiday violations, as well as to document grievances filed when management reverts (eliminates) a bid. When other crafts, Carriers in Associate Offices, and Mailhandlers in the plants, are assigned to perform Clerk work they should clock to the right operation or it's **fraud**. In some offices Carriers clock to the parcel sorting operation, 079, when sorting parcels, enabling us to document the cross-craft violation with clock-rings. **Crossing Crafts in the AOs** Most Associate Offices are continually short of Clerks and use Carriers as back-up to sort parcels and perform other clerk work. Many AO Clerks are afraid to say anything or write a statement for fear of management retaliation. They think the Carriers are helping but in reality they are helping the Clerks out of their jobs. When another craft is performing your job they are stealing your work and ensuring that more Clerk jobs will be eliminated. I am told a Clerk at Buffalo Grove signed a document stating she would not file a grievance after she asked the supervisor for help because she could not get all the work done by herself, and he assigned Carriers!

Delaying CA-1's

Management does not like to fill out accident reports and CA-1's when an employee is injured at work, but that is their job and when they don't do their job the employee pays a price, not them. If you are injured at work, report it to your supervisor immediately. They should send you for medical care and fill out a CA-1 form for a traumatic injury. They should also provide you an information packet explaining your right to file a claim and your entitlement to Continuation of Pay (COP) which is paid for 45 calendar days minus the first three days which is on you per the law that was changed under President George W. Bush. If your claim is denied management will send you a letter of demand for the COP you received. The employee should be given a Form CA-16 if they are sent for medical care so that the health care provider knows to bill OWCP and not the injured employee. We continue to hear of employees whose CA-1 has been delayed because the supervisor did not fill out the CA-1 in a timely manner. Supervisors don't like filling out paperwork but its part of their job. If you have a problem getting a CA-1 filled out contact your Union Steward who will assist you. Vivian Henderson is our Human Relations Director and she does an amazing job helping our members with their injury claims. Other Stewards with knowledge of OWCP are Elaine Bartlet-Walker and Erika Williams at Carol Stream, Christopher James and Latara Collins at Palatine, Yolanda Safsaf at Busse, and Arlene Thomas at Franklin Park. **In Memory of Alan Ferguson** Former Carol Stream MVS Steward Alan Ferguson passed away last week. Alan had some health issues but he did not let that stop him. Thank you Mr. Ferguson...

