



THE UNION VOICE

APWU FLASH BULLETIN



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*Flash Bulletins are paid for by members of the APWU.
Information contained in these bulletins is intended for APWU members only!*

USPS Launches National Reassessment Process (NRP)

In the last few years the USPS has been in the process of placing a special emphasis on the scrutiny of injured workers. They have implemented this process in other areas of the country and on Wednesday, September 23, 2009, we were notified that they were going to start conducting NRP employee interviews for injured workers under our jurisdiction! Once again, this is yet another eleventh hour notification on the implementation of a management action without many answers to the multitude of questions the implementation will generate. Since the Union was not given an advance notification that would enable us to flush out what would otherwise be unintended violations, we will be filing grievances if management schedules and conducts the interviews in any way that violates an injured workers rights! We strongly advise any member notified of an interview (you should get at least a two week advanced notice) to contact your steward immediately.

Although scrutiny of injured workers is nothing new within the USPS the methods they use may be changed with each new program they put into place. Additionally, injury compensation and accommodation in the USPS can be very complex and varies on a case by case basis. It has been our experience that over the years very few managers satisfy their obligations toward injured workers and thus may not be in full compliance with the contract, laws, rules and regulations that are in place to protect injured workers.

Although your steward force is trained to deal with these issues we are extremely concerned anytime they implement a new process that is driven by the western area and/or headquarters officials. Management will have a tendency to disregard the protections our contract demands but once you filter out any new terminology, directives and procedures the contract still controls what they can do and how they must do it!

Once again, members are urged to contact their steward if notified they are scheduled to attend an interview!

Legislative Priorities

The Employee Free Choice Act (EFCA), while still an active piece of legislation, has taken a back seat to health care reform. We recently passed a motion to promote identified legislative priorities of the local and encourage members, their families and friends to contact their legislators in support of those identified issue(s). We have

COPA 2009
\$15,000 -
\$12,500 -
\$10,000 -
\$ 7,500 -
\$ 5,000 -
\$ 2,500 -
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had many members and other supporters write letters in support of EFCA and other APWU priority legislation and it has been effective in getting legislator attention! Thank you to everyone who has written or contacted your legislators by any method – You are making a difference! In order to encourage contacts we have an incentive to draw two names from those who have given us their EFCA response letters for a \$50.00 cash prize! Our two winners for September are: John Moline & Jim Miller! Congratulations & keep up that contact!

Effective for October 2009 we encourage all members and family members to visit our APWU National web site at www.apwu.org and navigate to the legislative department page where you will find links to contact your legislators along with information on all the current legislative priorities for the APWU. This makes it very easy to contact the appropriate legislators. While we always encourage your participation in contacting those who have influence on issues that affect us we are temporarily suspending our monetary incentives while we review additional methods to encourage maximum participation. Until further notice we advise everyone to contact your legislators and ask them to support real health care reform that can only reduce excessive insurance profits and the skyrocketing costs if there is a strong public option! Once health care reform is passed we believe they will again take up the Employee Free Choice Act! Health care reform and EFCA are very critical pieces of legislation that if passed will benefit Postal Workers and their families immensely. Please take time to educate yourselves on these issues and to contact your legislators in support of passage!

Peer Evaluator Process

The Peer Evaluator Process is designed to address conflicts in the workplace. Although the Minneapolis Area Local is aware of the process that has been in effect for the 553 post offices, we have declined to participate due to our skepticism in the effectiveness of the program. However, with the level of stress and anxiety increasing across the board within the USPS it gives us cause to look at additional methods to address workplace conflict! Incidents of employee conflict and/or managerial improprieties have seen a significant upswing that can be extremely serious. Almost every instance of conflict results in a demand for expedient and skillful intervention by parties who are trained to get at facts and thereby lay the ground work for acceptable resolutions.

We believe that persons in positions of authority should have a higher standard of conduct than those they supervise. Unfortunately, history tells us that has not been the case in the USPS. Instead there is a systemic problem in the USPS with managers who have a track record of conducting themselves in a manner that abuses their authority in the workplace! Insulated by a system that may shroud their behavior from the same level of workplace accountability as the crafts they supervise we have continually searched for ways to expose and effectively deal with abusive managers for years with limited success. While all employees will be subject to the peer evaluator process we feel that if administered properly it could give us an effective means to curb acts of transgression and finally put a stop to repeat offenders. Because of these possibilities the Minneapolis Area Local will be participating in the initial phases and formation of the peer process in the 554 area. As we move into the process and more information is defined we will give everyone all the details. It is important to note that while we work to see if the peer process may be an additional tool to fettering abuse and inappropriate behavior nothing will take the place of or supplants the protection of our rights afforded by the grievance procedure.....Stay tuned!

COPA Contributions near \$7,500!

Please stay tuned as we will be drawing six more names when our COPA thermometer tops the \$7,500 level! COPA contributions give us new tools to forge coalitions with those who can help influence and protect our jobs, benefits and retirement!