



American Postal Workers Union, AFL-CIO
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Don Shandor
Plant Manager
Orlando P&DC

Re: PS Form 3971's

Don:

I wanted to bring something to your attention that has re-surfaced within your installation, specifically, the handling of PS Form 3971s. It has been voiced to me by several employees and APWU representatives alike, that when employees report back to work after an absence, his/her supervisor is presenting the employee(s) with a pre-printed PS Form 3971. In many instances these have erroneous information printed on them. There is nothing that I can find that states employees must sign the pre-printed PS Form 3971, but rather, the employee should fill this form out in writing and receive a copy back. I have also been advised that on occasion employees are given a handful of pre-printed PS Form 3971s to sign days/weeks after the absences. Employees should not be signing the PS Form 3971's in bulk, management should return a copy of the PS Form 3971 back to the same employees the same day.

As you may or may not be aware, there have been many Letters of Warning being handed out recently for attendance related issues in the P&DC. What we are finding out is that many of these employees have not been given discussions prior. It is our belief that the employees should be given discussions 'prior', advising them of their requirements and expectations to avoid these issuances of discipline. It was reported to me that one of your staff is stating something to the effect of, "*he [supervisor] speaks to his clerks about their attendance when he presents them their 3971.*" Considering that many times the employees do not receive a copy of the PS Form 3971 back, as is the requirement, this statement doesn't seem accurate.

The Employee Labor Relations Manual (ELRM) reads as follows:

Chapter 511.23 Postal Employees

Postal employees:

a. Request leave by completing PS Form 3971, Request for or Notification of Absence



513.34 PS Form 3971, Request for or Notification of Absence

513.341 General

Request for sick leave **is made in writing, in duplicate, on PS Form 3971.**

Article 10 of the 2012 JCIM:

*In an emergency, a bargaining unit employee need not obtain advance approval for leave, but must notify management as soon as possible about the emergency and the expected duration of the absence. The **employee must submit PS Form 3971** and explain the reason for the absence to the supervisor as soon as possible (ELM, Section 512.412).*

I would appreciate your checking into this situation so we can discuss this as soon as possible. Prior to the issuance of discipline for these types of scenarios, the position of the APWU is that there must to be some sort of progressive steps in 'advance' of punitive actions taken against the employee(s). Thank you in advance.

Sincerely,



President

Cc: Robert McSorley, Vice President

