

Central Florida Area Local #1462

American Postal Workers Union, AFL-CIO

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President's Report

January 2021

Welcome to the New Year and it is great to see 2020 in our rearview mirror as we are all hopeful for a much better 2021! The COVID-19 pandemic is continuing to run rampant throughout the country, and inside many of the Post Offices within our own local. As you can see by the COVID-19 updates I send to you in separate e-mails, our local has close to 40% of the positive cases in the Suncoast District. We are now at **447** positive cases within our over 100 installations, and the numbers are continuing to rise. Continue to do your best in maintaining your social distancing, washing your hands, and wearing your masks as we all want each of us to stay safe! We must all stay on top of your local management to ensure that our employees have the proper personal protective equipment (PPE). If your office is short of the supplies needed such as: gloves, masks, hand sanitizer and so forth, inform your Stewards since we cannot afford to let our guard down during this pandemic. The safety of our employees should be, and will continue to be, the top priority!

As you may have read, there was a new Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed on December 24, 2020, that will see 5500 career positions created in 192 installations around the country, which we are told is an attempt to address the lingering understaffing at mail processing facilities (Function 1) throughout the nation. This MOU will also see 5524 Postal Support Employees (PSE's) converted to career no later than March 13, 2021, but we could start seeing some of these conversions sooner. As a union, we will continue our fight to see conversions of our Postal Support Employees to career, as well as Part-Time Flexibles (PTF's) converted to full-time, in not only Function 1 (Mail Processing), but in Function 4 (Customer Service) as well. As of today, I have been informed that there will be approximately 14 PSE conversions in the Orlando P&DC and an additional 23 in the Seminole P&DC. I have already had a brief discussion with the Seminole Plant Manager, and I will be meeting with the Orlando Plant Manager shortly. As I receive additional information, I will let everyone know.

Our Executive Board has voted to cancel this month's General Membership Meeting scheduled for January 14, 2021, due to the extremely elevated number of the positive COVID-19 cases within our local, as the safety of our membership is our chief priority. We are hopeful to have next month's meeting as normally scheduled. Between our 2 Plants and the over 100 Stations/Branches/Stations within our local, we have seen positive cases in 64 of them to date.

Local news:


- Discipline is beginning to increase once again, but Attendance is not where most are coming from. 'Failure to Follow Instructions' is the latest angle the USPS is attempting regarding discipline to our members. If your absence is COVID related (COVID symptoms), there is a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that states that those instances should not be included in any discipline. This MOU has been extended until March 26, 2021.
- We are now at **325** conversions as a local between PSEs and PTFs over the past couple of years. We will continue to strive for PTF and PSE conversions!
- Remember to **ALWAYS** provide a **written statement** to your Steward, as it will aid the APWU in the grievance/arbitration process, and **ALWAYS** request a Steward for an Investigative Interview (II). You also have the right to a Steward if you are being interrogated by a US Postal Inspector.

- **Motor Vehicle Service (MVS/PVS)** and the **Vehicle Maintenance (VMF)** Departments in the Plants have not had an overwhelming number of grievance activity over the last month, but the grievances are starting to pick up. Our role in **every** office and **craft**, is and will always be, to **PROTECT** our members and jobs. Sub-contracting issues are the most prevalent as of late.
- The **Maintenance Departments** in both Plants have been somewhat quiet within the last month, that is not to say they are not without grievances, just a little less than usual, but unfortunately, I suspect after the holidays they will once again start to increase.
- **Seminole Employees:** With regards to the re-posting of the Level 7 duty assignments, we still believe that having 12-14 Level 7 Expeditors starting at 2200-2300 is too many. We still need your assistance in tracking the following: (1) how many times management moves you from the Expeditor Operation into different work areas, (2) how many Level 6 or Level 7 employees are used (non-bid holders) in your operations, (3) how many PSEs are put into those areas. We still need to will track this to attempt to demonstrate that there really is not a need for such a drastic reposting.
- As of this Saturday, January 16, 2021, there will be some changes with **Expeditors (TME's) and Ramp Clerks**. We are advised that, *“Transfer of Supervision of Bargaining Unit Employees Assigned to Logistics Components of Dock Operations, e.g., General Expeditors and Ramp Clerks, from Mail Processing to Logistics Therefore, effective January 16, all bargaining unit employees assigned to logistics components of dock operations, e.g., general expeditors and ramp clerks, will report to a designated Logistics management official. Affected bargaining unit employees will be provided the names of their new supervisors at the conclusion of this stand-up talk.”* I have received some Q&A's on this from the National APWU, and it does not 'appear' that there will be any real changes that would affect duty assignments. As this unfolds, I will send out additional information.
- The Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFRCA), Federal Law has expired as of December 31, 2020. The position of the USPS is, *“if an employee is identified as a **close contact** to a positive **co-worker** and required to quarantine in accordance with CDC guidelines, they would receive Administrative Leave.”* What this means is that if a co-worker tests positive, and the Occupational Health Nurse (OHNA) contacts (co-worker), and the OHNA tells you to stay out of work and quarantine, then you should be paid Administrative Leave in that instance. There are however many Memorandums of Understanding that have been extended until March 26, 2021, such as the 'Liberal Changes of Schedule and Leave'. What is important to note with this MOU is that it states in part (which is on of the MOU's extended):

*“If an employee **requests leave for reasons related to COVID-19**, such leave should be treated as scheduled (as opposed to unscheduled leave). **Leave taken for COVID-19 related reasons between February 29, 2020, and May 17, 2020, may not be cited in discipline for failing to maintain an assigned schedule under ELM 511.43.**”*

Remember, it is crucial that **everyone** is a member of the APWU, so please make a point this week to let a non-member know just how much they are essential to help keep our organization robust. This is even more evident as we are going through this COVID-19 pandemic. Organizing our workplace is one of the most crucial goals of the APWU as we are under relentless attacks at every juncture, and we need everyone to help in the battle for our futures! Thank you all for being members of our Central Florida Area Local and proud APWU members.

In Solidarity,



President

Cc: APWU Bulletin Boards