

Central Florida Area Local #1462

American Postal Workers Union, AFL-CIO

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President's Report

June 10, 2021

Our contract negotiations will commence on June 22, 2021, for our 'new' Collective Bargaining Agreement, as the current one is set to expire on September 20, 2021. Our National Negotiation Team is prepared and eager to negotiate on your behalf. Preparations have been ongoing for these negotiations for quite some time and the APWU is ready! As these negotiations progress, I will report on them in my next article and/or through e-mail and posting updates.

By now most, if not all our members, are familiar with the '*American Rescue Plan Act—Emergency Federal Employee Leave (EFEL)*'. If you have any disputes with the USPS not properly paying you, speak to your Stewards and/or local Officers so that these issues are straightened out as expeditiously as possible. This Act goes back from **March 11, 2021**, and will go through **September 30, 2021**, or until the money runs out. Below are some tidbits of information regarding the '*American Rescue Plan Act—Emergency Federal Employee Leave (EFEL)*'

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The Money--\$570 million

- There are at least 2.9 million federal employees eligible for this leave (not just USPS employees)
- There will not be enough money for every employee to use all 600 hours each
- 1.74 billion eligible hours to be paid
- If everyone is paid the maximum allowed (\$2,800 bi-weekly or \$35 per hour) that equates to \$60.9 Billion Dollars, and \$570 million is less than 1% of the eligible hourly pay,
- Once the \$570 million is gone—EFEL (Emergency Federal Employee Leave) will not be granted barring Congress authorizing additional funds
- As of end of April 2021, Postal Employees had used about 13% of the fund.

We see that the USPS is once again sending out the 'Postal Pulse' survey to many employees and we have already been seeing USPS postings in many facilities attempting to persuade employees to participate. Remember that these surveys are sponsored by the USPS and the APWU is against our participation in such a survey. Managers and supervisors are rewarded for how many employees take the survey, and not just for how well they score on them. We are also advised that if you submit a blank survey, or if your responses are negative, sending in a blank survey is considered as a participating survey.

We have seen plenty of these surveys in recent times, not just the 'Postal Pulse', that have been used against us, and applied as an attack on our jobs and livelihoods. The APWU does not believe that these surveys have the best interests of our membership. Our voices are stronger

when we as the APWU, battle the fight together for improvements in matters such as wages, benefits, safety, and the overall working environments at the United States Postal Service. I remember a few years ago one of the questions on this survey asked, “*If employees were satisfied with their pay*”, and many employees responded, ‘Yes’. So fast forwarding to contract negotiations and the Postal Service applied that answer and sought to persuade the Arbitrator that there does not need to be any increases in salaries, since the employees were satisfied where they were. Here we are gearing up for our contract negotiations and the USPS is once again sending out this Postal Pulse survey!

One of our major issues, not just within our local, but throughout the country, is short staffing, mostly occurring in Function 4 (Customer Service). This short staffing is forcing non-OTDL (Overtime Desired List) employees to work 10-12 hours per day 6 days per week in many installations on a regular basis. We are trying to put an end to that, and one of the best ways in which you can assist us is when you see management or other crafts performing our work, is to speak to management and then request a Steward. It is crucial that we can establish, with just our crafts performing the work, that there is a need for additional duty assignments. If management or other crafts perform our work it appears to the district that everything is being accomplished with just the correct employees, and there is no need for more employees, and we all know that is not the case!

Discipline is again on the rise as we are seeing numerous (i) Letters of Warnings, (ii) 7 and 14-Day Suspensions, (iii) as well as Removals. These elements of discipline have been mostly for attendance, so try your best to keep track of that as well as being on time, as tardiness occurrences count the same as missing whole days.

Our Maintenance Crafts and Motor Vehicle Crafts (MVS/PVS) have had less grievance activity this past month, but that is probably a fluke if we are to go by our past experiences.

The Vehicle Maintenance Facilities (VMF) are still a bit short staffed, but we are hoping that a few more employees are brought on board in the not-too-distant future.

Remember, it is crucial that everyone is a member of the APWU, so please make a point this week to speak to a non-member and let them 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 important goals of the APWU, as we are under relentless attacks at every juncture, and we need everyone to assist in the battle for our futures! Thank you all for being members of our Central Florida Area Local and proud APWU members.

In Solidarity,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Joe Paul". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "J".