

# POSTAL CHATTER

Volume 64, Issue 1

Orlando, Florida

May, 2024

## State Of The Union



**By Joe Paul,  
President**

Firstly, as we are starting to feel the approach of summer with rising temperatures and pleasant weather, I encourage you to take this time to enjoy moments with your loved ones and prioritize safety.

Our Central Florida Area Local stands united in our dedication to ensuring that every employee, whether an APWU member or not, is treated with the respect they undeniably deserve. We will continue to champion a workplace that truly values and respects its employees. Together, we are determined to address the urgent issue of the hostile work environment that has become far too prevalent. As we navigate the path toward a workplace marked by dignity, respect, and unity, we shall endure. Our commitment to improving the work environment remains resolute. Together, we will continue to advocate for change, encouraging an atmosphere of respect and fairness for all.

Our local has seen a substantial number of Postal Support Employees (PSEs) convert to career status, thanks in large part to the '24-month automatic conversion' provision. So far, over 800 PSEs and

Part-Time Flexibles (PTFs) have made this transition, and the trend continues. We remain dedicated to facilitating PSE conversions to career status and are equally committed to transitioning PTFs to full-time positions. This effort remains unwavering!

One of our primary challenges, both locally and nationwide, is understaffing, particularly in Function 4 (Customer Service). We are actively working to address this issue, and your assistance is essential. When you see management or employees from other crafts performing our tasks, please engage with management and request a Steward. If management or other crafts take on our responsibilities and perform our work, it implies to the district that current staffing levels are sufficient, when the reality is that additional personnel are necessary. Together,

***Together, we are determined to address the urgent issue of the hostile work environment that has become far too prevalent. As we navigate the path toward a workplace marked by dignity, respect, and unity, we shall endure.***

we can advocate for the right staffing levels to ensure the efficient functioning of our operations. This is not to imply that Mail Processing (Function 1) is adequately staffed; quite the

contrary. We still observe instances where only one person is staffing the DBCS machines, just to highlight one example. Remember to request a Steward when such situations arise, as we are all aware that two individuals should be scheduled per machine.

The expiration of our primary Collective Bargaining Agreement (union contract) for 200,000 postal workers is scheduled for September 20, 2024. Commencing on June 25, 2024, negotiations will kick off. This contract governs the wages, benefits, and rights of postal workers. Extensive preparations

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# State Of The Union

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are underway by the national union: “including the review of national convention resolutions, consultation with economists, evaluation of other union contracts, and identification of priorities.” Negotiations pose challenges, with workers and management each pursuing their objectives. Every member’s participation in the upcoming contract campaign is crucial to securing a robust and equitable new contract.

I have just returned from overseeing the APWU Florida State Convention and the 2024 Spring Seminar in Miami, held a few weeks ago. The event featured a strong turnout, with a mixture of APWU National and State Officers, Stewards, Local Officers, and other representatives from all corners of Florida participating in training sessions. A wide range

of classes were provided, and attendees from our Central Florida Area Local gained valuable insights into effectively addressing contractual violations. I want to express my heartfelt thanks to all who took part; the knowledge they acquired will undoubtedly benefit our membership. Additionally, I am honored to have been re-elected as the APWU State of Florida President for my fourth term. Furthermore, Ben Love secured his second term as the State Maintenance Craft Director, and Victor Sanchez was re-elected as the Business Agent for Florida District 5, also for his second term. Congratulations to all the re-elected officials!

Make sure to ask for a Steward when participating in an Investigative Interview. This holds true for interactions with the US Postal Inspection Service as well. Regrettably, there have been cases where our members failed to seek representation. It is essential to grasp that the US Postal Inspectors are not on your side. Thus, it is imperative to consistently request a Steward without fail.

As I continually emphasize, it is vital for each employee to join the APWU. I urge you to dedicate time this week to converse with non-members and emphasize the significance of their support in upholding our organization’s strength. Workplace organization remains a paramount goal for the APWU. We face ongoing obstacles, underscoring the importance of everyone joining our ranks to safeguard our futures!

In Solidarity.



### Officers for 2022-2024

- President ..... Joe Paul  
JPaulAPWU@gmail.com
- Vice President ..... Robert “Bob” McSorley  
cfalvp@gmail.com
- Secretary Treasurer..... Peter Fournier
- Maintenance Craft Director ..... Ben Love
- Clerk Craft Director ..... Denise Larson-Fischer
- Assistant Clerk Craft Director ..... Victor Sanchez
- Assistant Clerk Craft Director ..... Gamal Hussein
- Motor Vehicle Craft Director ..... Jose Caban
- Director of Safety & Health..... Horace Nelson
- Sergeant-at-Arms/Legislative Dir ..... Jeremy Armstrong

### CONTACT NUMBERS

Union Hall: 407-854-6396  
Fax Machine: 407-854-6399

CFAL WEBSITE  
CFAL1462.org



# The Treatment Of APWU Represented Employees



**By Robert 'Bob' McSorley,  
Vice President**

As someone who has served as the local Vice President for the American Postal Workers Union in the Central Florida area for over a decade, I have witnessed firsthand the evolving landscape of the Postal Service and its impact on our members. Today, I want to address a pressing issue that has been increasingly prevalent: the treatment of APWU represented employees.

Over the years, I have encountered numerous situations that could have been avoided with better management practices. It is disheartening to see conflicts arise due to a lack of necessary skills among management to deescalate situations effectively. In my 37 years of experience, I have never seen such levels of combativeness, subterfuge, and dishonesty exhibited by USPS managers as I have in 2024. This is not to blame individual supervisors, who often lack adequate training, but rather to highlight a systemic issue within the Postal Service — a lack of professionalism and accountability.

One recurring scenario I encounter is when employees go above and beyond for management, often violating the contract themselves, only to find themselves facing disci-

plinary action while expecting quid pro quo. Please do not do this because management often fails to recognize or appreciate your contributions. This imbalance of goodwill leads to disillusionment among employees and erodes trust between labor and management.

Moreover, there is a concerning trend of management attempting to circumvent Article 8 to avoid pay-

is crucial to ensure that the rights and interests of postal workers are safeguarded throughout these transitions.

Looking ahead, I am committed to advocating for the rights and well-being of our union brothers and sisters. By maintaining a strong presence on the workroom floor and actively participating in negotiations, we can uphold the strength



ing overtime. For instance, changing an employee's schedule without proper notification or offering out-of-schedule pay to cover shifts can unfairly disadvantage workers entitled to overtime compensation. These actions not only violate the Collective Bargaining Agreement (contract) but also undermine the rights and protections of APWU members.

Additionally, the Postal Service is undergoing significant changes, including mechanization and a shift toward a younger workforce as veteran employees retire. While some changes are inevitable, it

of the union and secure a brighter future for all APWU members. Together, there is nothing we cannot accomplish.

In Solidarity.

## If You Find Mistakes . . .

. . . in this publication, please consider that they are there for a purpose. We try to publish something for everyone, and some people are always looking to find other people's mistake! . . .oops.

# Dollar\$ And Sen\$e



**By Peter Fournier,  
Secretary Treasurer**

We are fast approaching the mid-way point of the calendar year which means children will be out of school and eating us out of house and home for the next ten or so weeks. Just be aware, that usually means more kids riding their bikes on the

streets, and more teenage drivers on the roads. Stay alert while driving and be cautious in your neighborhood, look out for the kiddos!

The Central Florida Area Local, 1462, is financially sound and taking care of business, as usual. We have

a great collection of Officers and Stewards and appreciate all the members. With that being said, we have plenty of room for many more members. If you know someone who is a non-member, ask them why? There really is no acceptable answer. Simply look at the amount of our COLA's (Cost of Living Adjustments) and yearly increases just to name one such reason. Do you honestly think management would give this to you on their own? Ask your family and friends who work in the private sector what they received in the last three years. I am confident that it is far less than what we have enjoyed thanks to our National APWU bargaining on our behalf. Anyone who is still a non-member should be feeling guilty for not earning those COLA's and raises since they are not paying their fair share. Seriously, you cannot afford less than \$16.00 per week to pay your fair share.

**As a side note:** You are doing an injustice to the bargaining power of the APWU by completing those ridiculous surveys the Postal Service forces upon us. **STOP** filling them out! The Postal Service will **NEVER** make the necessary changes to resolve every employee's gripe or complaint no matter how legitimate they may be. It is simple, take the survey and rip it into pieces before throwing it away, or open the envelope

and send the postage paid envelope back empty. It is a participation survey, and no one is recording or even possibly even reading your responses.

I want to Congratulate Joe Paul and Benjamin Love on being re-elected as the State of Florida President and State Maintenance Craft positions, respectively. The APWU State Convention was held in Miami a month ago where both prevailed. Although the members may not think about it, this local has some of the best APWU representatives in the country. All too often postal employees get caught up in complaining about what they do not like rather than researching their complaint to see if it is a valid grievance. The union starts with **U** (You) **N** (and) **I**. Everyone has responsibilities as Postal employees and responsibilities as

Union members. If you are not 100% certain that the Steward is wrong, then do not bash them. If they are wrong about something, show them

in writing (black and white) how you may believe they are incorrect and offer it up as a teaching moment. We spend a lot of time working side by side with each other and we are all in this together. Stay safe and Union strong, all day long.

Hopefully, you and your family are doing well.  
In Solidarity.

***STOP filling them out! The Postal Service will NEVER make the necessary changes to resolve every employee's gripe or complaint no matter how legitimate they may be.***



# Maintenance Update



**By Ben Love,**  
**Maintenance Craft Director**

At the time of this article, a new Small Delivery Unit Sorter (SDUS) machine is being installed at the Alafaya Carrier Annex with another one scheduled to be installed in the Southcreek Station in early June. Counting the one already running in Lee Vista, that makes three so far in Orlando and I'm sure we will see even more deployed in the near future. It's no surprise why the Postal Service likes these machines so much. They are relatively simple machines that do not cost very much compared to other mail processing equipment the Service has bought. The SDUS machines also do not require very much preventative maintenance.

These machines, being package sorters, are supported by the Seminole P&DC, who sends Electronic Technicians and Mechanics out twice per week to perform the recommended preventive maintenance. This begs the question, who fixes the machine when it goes down unexpectedly while running? While the answer should obviously be the same Maintenance personnel who come out to maintain the machines regularly, the Postal Service is going to let anyone in the office willing to give it a try work on these machines.

I strongly advise all our Clerks to take great care when messing around with broken machines. Besides the fact that it is not your job to repair machinery, it also exposes you to all sorts of problems.

For example, if you were to be working on the machine and accidentally got hurt, I can assure you that management is not going to commend your willingness to go above and beyond your required

posted on it. If you find yourself working on or around these machines and one should go down, notify management and insist that they call maintenance to do the repairs. It may take a little extra time to get someone out to you, but believe me, that's much better than trying to fix it yourself and possibly getting hurt or damaging the machine even worse than it already is.




duties for the good of the Postal Service. No. They are going to immediately open an investigation into your violation of safety standards by working on electrical equipment without the proper training or authorization. Their investigation will most definitely find you guilty and discipline will be issued. Worse than that, you can be sure that they will also try to controvert your workers comp claim!

Do not put yourself in that position. Each machine has the contact information for the Seminole P&DC Maintenance Department

If you have any questions about working on the SDUS machines or mail processing equipment in general, please reach out to me as I would be happy to address them with you.

In Solidarity.



**Boxing Up The House To Move?**

Has your name changed? Are you moving? If so please submit the change to your steward or call your Union Hall so we are current on your mailing address.











# Make Sure You Know Your Rights



**By Denise Larson-Fischer,  
Clerk Craft Director**

Management is issuing discipline everywhere on a regular basis lately. I want to write a little bit about Investigative Interviews, which according to Article 16.1, must occur before any discipline is issued. This is what we call 'your day in court.' This is your chance to give explanations as to what occurred or why you were absent from work. Of course, that is about attendance but the same can be said for whatever the charge of discipline is about.

The Weingarten Rights give you the right to have a Steward present for any investigative interview and employee's rights are as follows:

- The employee can request union representation before or any time during the interview.
- When an employee asks for representation, the employer must grant the request and delay questioning until the Steward arrives, if management were to deny the request for a Steward the interview should stop, or they could give the employee a choice of having the Investigative Interview without a Steward.
- If management denies the request for a Steward and continues the meeting, the employee can re-

fuse to answer the questions. You could answer 'I am requesting a Steward.' If this does happen, let the union know as soon as possible.

## What is an Investigative Interview (II)?

• An Investigative Interview (II) is when management questions an employee to obtain information. Your answers are usually written

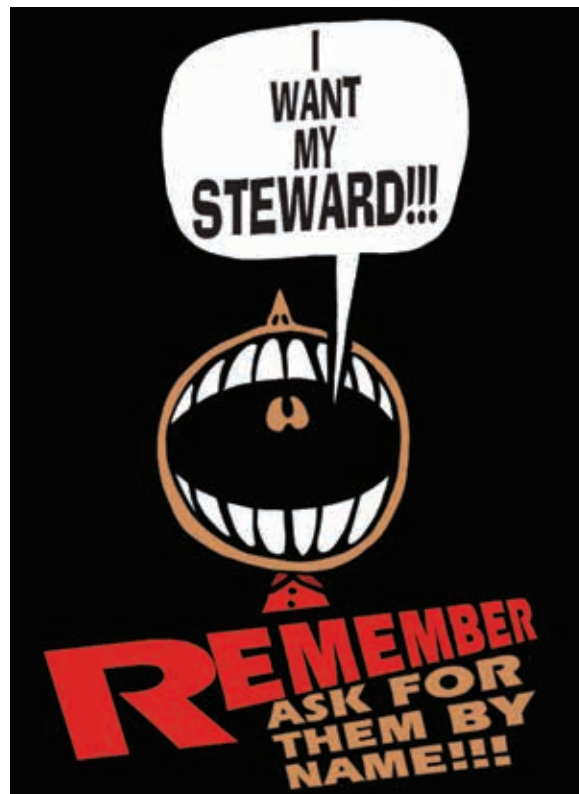
Steward to speak privately with the employee. During this time, a Steward may give some ideas to the employee when to ask to speak to the Steward in private if they are unsure of a question and/or an answer.

- The Steward may speak during an II but cannot insist the II to end.
- The Steward may object/request clarification on any confusing questions.
- The Steward can advise the employee to not answer questions that are abusive, misleading, badgering or harassing. The Steward can provide information after the II ends to justify the employees' conduct.

If you are not sure if a meeting with management is an Investigative Interview, or just a discussion, you can request a Steward if you believe the meeting could lead to discipline. You do not need a Steward present when you are receiving discipline in writing. Please sign it and request a Steward immediately afterwards and get your copy with the signatures, and most importantly, the date. Your signature is not admitting any agreement to the discipline,

it is the Unions timeline on filing your grievance. We do not get told when management issues discipline such as Letters of Warning, however, the APWU President will receive a copy of written notices to employees on suspensions of 30 days or less. Let us fight your discipline through the grievance procedure as discipline ungrieved stays active on your records for two years.

Union Strong all day long . . .



down. A Steward present will ensure that the Investigative Interview is not an interrogation, and your responses were not changed by management.

• Weingarten rights apply to Investigative Interviews. Stewards' rights during an Investigative Interview:

- Management must inform the Steward of the subject matter being investigated.
- Management must allow the

# News From The MVS/VMF Crafts



**By Jose Caban,  
MVS Craft Director**

Brothers and sister members of the APWU and Motor Vehicle Service Department in the Orlando P&DC, let me start by letting you know some of the issues that we are having with the MVS Department's management staff.

### Article 8 Hours of Work

The employees' service week shall be a calendar week beginning at 12:00 am Saturday and ending at 12 midnight the following Friday. Apparently, for some odd reason management is taking it upon themselves to start in the middle of the week because they say it is due to 'safety reasons and they cannot work a driver for 7 days.' That is not true, yet local management keeps stating that! Do not give up your right to file a grievance. If it was your turn to

work overtime and you got bypassed, then request a Steward and we will look at the scenario and file a grievance if it in fact it is a violation.

### Article 39.3.A Successful Bidder

All drivers should have a 4533-run sheet and that is your work assignment when you bid for the run. Normally, the successful bidder shall work the duty assignment as posted yet for some reason management keeps taking the spotter out of the yard and let him/her do the work assignment when somebody calls out sick from work. So, when they take you out of your bid assignment you should file a grievance so request a Steward.

As I have stated in the past, as your MVS/VMF Craft Director, I will make sure management stays within the confines of the Collective Bargaining Agreement (contract). There will be NO deals that are not within the rules and regulations, we will abide by the Contract, Handbooks and Manuals. Take care and stay safe!

## HARASSMENT DOESN'T HAVE TO BE ILLEGAL TO BE WRONG

Postal policy declares not every instance of inappropriate behavior may fit the legal definition of harassment. However, such behavior at work violates the Postal Service's standard of conduct. APWU says: Make the Postal Service commit to their policy of providing a harassment-free work environment! [apwu.org/fightingworkplace-harassment](http://apwu.org/fightingworkplace-harassment)

### Stand up for your rights! Contact your Union representative.

✓ **REPORT IT**

✓ **PURSUE IT**

✓ **DON'T TOLERATE IT**

The USPS Publication 553, Employee's Guide to Understanding Prevention and Reporting Harassment – gives general Guidelines that the USPS is committed to follow. These are the suggested steps:

1. Tell the harasser to stop. Let the person know that what they may see as friendly or joking is offensive to you, regardless of the intent. If you don't feel comfortable, take a union representative or a co-worker as witness.

2. Report the behavior to someone in authority (verbally or in writing). They must make a record of it. The Guide recommends the following list of where to report:

- a. Your immediate Supervisor or Manager
- b. The Manager of Human Resources
- c. A Special Agent of the Office of the Inspector General
- d. A Postal Service Inspector, when you believe that criminal misconduct is involved.



**Keep a written record of witnesses and everyone you speak to. Now the responsibility is management's – to investigate and make sure the harassment is stopped.**

- 3. EAP is available to provide you with emotional support.
- 4. File an EEO complaint.
- 5. In situations covered by USERRA (military rights) you can file with MSPB
- 6. File a grievance with your UNION
- 7. Knowing that management often ignores its own policies, follow up! Involve your Union representative.

Text  
**HARASSMENT to  
91990, or scan  
the QR code for  
more information**

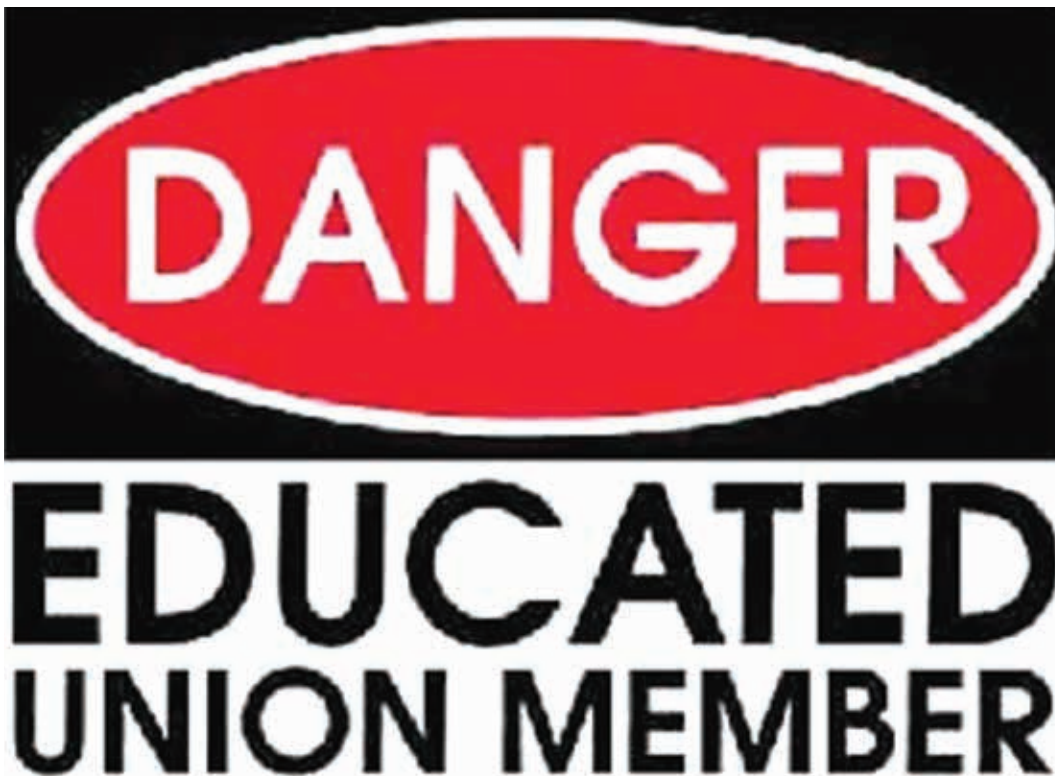




### Application and Rules

The rules and regulations of the Central Florida Areal Local Scholarship Program are as follows:

1. Applicants must be active members themselves or the child, stepchild, or one under the guardianship of an active member of the Central Florida Area Local #1462, American Postal Workers Union, AFL-CIO.
2. The applicant or the applicant's parent or guardian must be a member in good standing for at least one (1) year immediately preceding application deadline or must have been a member for one (1) year immediately preceding death.
3. Applicants must be accepted into, or attending an accredited college, university, or technical school. Applicants can not apply earlier than their senior year of high school.
4. Application for a scholarship must be made on an official application form. It must be submitted via certified mail and must be post-marked by **June 30, 2024**. Applications are to be mailed to:  
Joe Paul, President CFAL #1462  
10501 S. Orange Ave, Suite 117  
Orlando, FL 32824
5. The responsibility for submitting an application to the scholarship program rests solely with the applicant.
6. The scholarship program will provide one (1) winner annually. An alternate will be selected in the event of disqualification or rejection of the award.
7. The winner will be selected with a drawing by the Executive Board at the July 2024 General Membership Meeting.
8. The Secretary-Treasurer shall notify the scholarship winners in writing advising them of their responsibilities prior to receipt of the funds.
9. The scholarship is designated for use for tuition, books, room and board and will be in the amount of \$2000.00. After the Secretary-Treasurer receives the required information, the funds shall be disbursed within thirty (30) days into a trust account at the institution where the awardee has been approved for final enrollment. The awardee is responsible for setting up the trust account at the institution they will be attending, or the awardee can be reimbursed for vouched expenses for tuition, books, room and board.
10. In the event of the applicant's failure to comply with the rules within 30 days of being notified, he or she shall be disqualified from all rights and benefits of the scholarship program.





This application must be sent via Certified Mail, and postmarked by June 30, 2024, to the following address:

Joe Paul, President CFAL #1462  
10501 S. Orange Ave, Suite 117  
Orlando, FL. 32824

Name of Applicant: \_\_\_\_\_

Address of Applicant: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number and Email Address of Applicant: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of School Applicant is/will be attending: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of CFAL #1462 Member: \_\_\_\_\_

Address of CFAL #1462 Member: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number and Email Address of CFAL #1462 Member: \_\_\_\_\_

Work Location of CFAL #1462 Member: \_\_\_\_\_



American Postal Workers Union, AFL-CIO  
1300 L Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20005  
202-842-4211 • www.apwu.org/copa

STEP 1: PLEASE SELECT ONE OF THE FOUR METHODS

**PAYROLL DEDUCTION - ACTIVE MEMBERS**

RECURRING COPAMATIC DEDUCTION

I authorize a payroll deduction to COPA in the amount of: \$5 \_\_\_\_\_ \$10 \_\_\_\_\_ Other: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ per pay period.

*\*This contribution method is for members who receive a postal paycheck. These contributions will appear on a line identified as VBP on your paycheck. You can adjust or cancel your contribution at any time by contacting APWU at (202) 842-4211.*

**OPM ANNUITY - RETIREES**

RECURRING COPAMATIC DEDUCTION

The COPA Fund will automatically deduct the amount you choose to contribute from your monthly postal pension check. I hereby authorize the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) to begin or increase deductions from my annuity in the sum of:

\$5 \_\_\_\_\_ \$10 \_\_\_\_\_ Other: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ per month

*and forward that amount to the American Postal Workers Union, Committee on Political Action (COPA). I make this authorization voluntarily and may revoke it at any time by notifying the APWU COPA Committee in writing.*

CSA #:

*(Civil Service Annuity number issued by OPM)*

**ELECTRONIC FUND TRANSFER - ACTIVE MEMBERS & RETIREES**

RECURRING COPAMATIC DEDUCTION

The COPA Fund will automatically deduct the amount you choose to contribute, with no fee to you.

I hereby authorize my bank to deduct from my checking account the sum of:

\$5 \_\_\_\_\_ \$10 \_\_\_\_\_ Other: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ biweekly

*and forward that amount to the American Postal Workers Union, Committee on Political Action (COPA).*

*I make this authorization voluntarily and may revoke it at any time by notifying the APWU COPA Committee in writing. Bank Routing Number: \_\_\_\_\_ and Account Number: \_\_\_\_\_.*

**COPA BY CHECK - ACTIVE MEMBERS & RETIREES**

ONE-TIME DONATION

My check in the amount of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ is enclosed.

*(Make your check payable to APWU COPA and enclose it with this form.)*

STEP 2

**YES! I WANT TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE.**

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Last First MI

Employee ID # or Retiree Member ID # (on Membership Card) \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Local/Chapter \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

**Please mail your completed form to APWU Headquarters at 1300 L St, NW, Washington, DC 20005**

This COPA solicitation is paid for by the American Postal Workers Union, 1300 L Street NW, Washington, DC, (202) 842-4200; it is not authorized by any candidate or candidate's committee. Contributions or gifts to COPA are not deductible as charitable contributions for federal income tax purposes. COPA will use the contributions it receives for political purposes, including making contributions to candidates for federal, state and local offices, and addressing political issues of public importance. Contributions to COPA are voluntary. The amount given or the refusal to give will not benefit or disadvantage the person being solicited. Federal law requires political action committees to report the name, mailing address, occupation, and employer for each individual whose contributions aggregate in excess of \$200 in a calendar year.



# WHAT IS A 1767?

## A Powerful Form!

**(PS FORM 1767 – Report of Hazard, Unsafe Condition or Practice)**

- Officially documents and addresses employer's safety hazards or concerns in writing.
- Requires a timely written response during your tour by management consistent with ELM Section 824.632.

employee to use! Not locked in a supervisor's desk or any non-accessible area.

The employee must be provided a signed copy of the form (blue copy). It is also suggested you have your union representative make a copy before it is submitted to the supervisor.

This form can be used to document other safety and health related concerns as well (i.e. housekeeping issues, buildings not maintained, dirty bathrooms, bad lighting, abusive supervisors, etc.).

The form may also be completed anonymously and submitted directly to the safety office.



- It is traced and identifies abatement date.
- The Joint Local Safety and Health Committee is required to review all 1767s at their meetings.
- User friendly form that is easy to complete – instructions are clearly printed on the back of the form.  
The form must be readily available for an

**For More information and assistance in establishing your own safety and health committee, please contact  
Your Regional Coordinator  
Your Regional Safety Rep**



AMERICAN POSTAL WORKERS UNION

# POSTAL CHATTER

Central Florida Area Local 1462  
10501 S. Orange Ave., Suite 117  
Orlando, FL 32824

NON-PROFIT ORG  
US POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
PRESORT INC

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



Union Meetings are the 2nd Thursday  
of every month at 7 p.m.  
The Union Hall is located at  
10501 S. Orange Ave., Suite 117,  
Orlando, FL 32824

Please mark your calendars and attend.  
It is your Union.  
Let your voice be heard!!!



*Any members who would like to contribute articles for possible inclusion in the next issue of the Chatter are encouraged to do so. To submit your article via email please contact the Editor at [bloveapwu@gmail.com](mailto:bloveapwu@gmail.com). If you prefer to submit it in writing you can mail them to the Local Union Office.*

*All submissions will be reviewed and may be edited before inclusion in the Chatter. Please ensure that you include your full name with your submission so that we can credit the author. Anonymous submissions will not be printed for legal reasons.*

*Ben Love*