

## Emergency Federal Employee Leave



By *Tony D. McKinnon, Sr.,  
President*

### AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN (ARPA)

Sisters and Brothers,

Last edition I reported to the membership the hard ship being suffered by many members because of the ending of the Families First leave program that gave members out of work because of COVID-19 school closures 2/3's their salary. We all agree that seemed unfair when the action was something uncontrollable by you as a employee. In January 2021, all employees were required to use their own sick leave and annual leave or be on LWOP. We all were hoping a better way would soon be found and it appears it has.

Under the new stimulus bill called American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) there is a new leave for Federal employees added called Emergency Federal Employee Leave (EFEL). Postal

employees qualify for the leave. The USPS shared the information to their leadership and the APWU received notification soon thereafter. The content was as follows:

**Effective March 12, 2021 the American Rescue Plan (Act) provides employees with up to 600 hours of paid emergency Federal Employee Leave (EFEL). This leave is available to employees beginning March 12, 2021 and continuing through September 30, 2021 – or until funding established in the Emergency Federal Employee Leave Fund (Fund) for reimbursement is exhausted. The leave is available to eligible employees who are unable to work due to one of eight qualifying reasons as summarized in the below.**

### EMERGENCY FEDERAL EMPLOYEE LEAVE

#### Qualifying Reasons

An employee is entitled to take EFEL related to COVID-19 if the employee is unable to work because the employee:

1. Is subject to a Federal, State, or Local quarantine or isolation order related to COVID-19.
2. Has been advised by health care provider to self-quarantine due to concerns related to COVID-19.
3. Is caring for an individual who is subject to such an order as in (1) or has been so advised.
4. Is experiencing COVID -19 symptoms and seeking medical diagnosis.

5. Is caring for the employee's son or daughter if the school or place of care of the son or daughter has been closed, requires or make optional a virtual learning instruction model, requires or makes optional a hybrid of in person and virtual learning instructions models, or if the childcare provider of the son or daughter is unavailable, due to COVID-19 precautions.

6. Is experiencing any other substantially similar condition.

7. Is caring for a family member with a mental or physical disability or who is 55 years of age or older and incapable of self-care, without regard to whether another individual other than the employee is available to care for such family member is closed or direct care provider is unavailable due to COVID-19.

8. Is obtaining immunization (vaccination) related to COVID-19 or is recovering from any injury, disability, illness, or condition related to such immunization.

### LEAVE ELIGIBILITY

1. All career and non-career employees, regardless of tenure, are immediately eligible for EFEL.

2. Full-time employees can receive up to 600 hours of paid EFEL, capped at \$2,800 per pay period.

3. Part-time employees can receive up to the proportional equivalent of 600 hours, capped at a proportional equivalent of \$2,800 per pay period.

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# Emergency Federal Employee Leave

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## OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

1. EFEL DOES NOT COUNT AS CREDITABLE SERVICE TOWARD AN EMPLOYEE'S RETIREMENT BENEFITS.

2. EMPLOYEES CANNOT CONTRIBUTE TO THRIFT SAVINGS PLAN (TSP) WHILE ON EFEL

As a reminder, the Postal Service provides an essential federal government service as part of the nation's critical infrastructure. Therefore, postal employees are generally not subject to Federal, State, or Local quarantine or isolation orders related to COVID-19, so employees will generally not be eligible to use EFEL for qualifying reason (1)

above. Additionally, no substantial-similar condition has been identified that would qualify an employee to use leave for qualifying reason (6) above.

In the interim, employees seeking to use EFEL should submit a PS Form 3971 indicating for which of the eight qualifying reasons they must take leave, and employees must affirmatively state that they are unable to work because of the qualifying reason. In conclusion make sure that when you affirm that you are taking the leave for one of the eight reasons that it is what you are doing. Affirming is a form of swearing you in to tell the truth so do not let the postal inspection service catch you in their web.

## SUMMARY OF THE AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT (H.R. 1319)

There is a lot to learn about the American Rescue Plan Act known as (H.R. 1319). Postal Federal Workers just read above what benefit we immediately received from the passing of this very contentious bill for the American people. To follow is a summary of some of the bills intended actions to get the American people back on their feet and the country through these dark times. The summary appears to provide much needed relief for working men and women something that was left out of the very first covid relief package.

Below are some highlights of the  
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# If There Is No Work For Postal Clerks, Why Are Supervisors And Carriers Doing Our Work!



By Sandra Hill,  
Vice President

## ARTICLE 1.6 BARGAINING UNIT WORK

In Post Offices with less than 100 bargaining unit employees, supervisors are prohibited from performing Bargaining Unit Work except under the following circumstances:

1. AN EMERGENCY
2. FOR THE PURPOSE OF TRAINING OR INSTRUCTION OF EMPLOYEES
3. TO ASSURE THE PROPER OPERATION OF EQUIPMENT
4. TO PROTECT THE SAFETY OF EMPLOYEES
5. TO PROTECT THE PROPERTY OF THE USPS

In smaller offices, supervisors may only perform such work under the listed conditions or when such duties are included within their job description.

An “emergency” is defined, in Article 3.F, as “an unforeseen circumstance or a combination of circumstances which call for immediate action in a situation which is not expected to be a recurring nature.”

The supervisors performing bargaining unit work and Carriers assigned Clerk craft duties have increased. Clerks are not replace when they retire or separate for other reasons. Their duty assignments are re-

verted and PTF’s hours are reduced. Clerks are being excessed outside their installations. FTR’s have been detailed to other Offices. Employees on limited duty are being told there is less than 8 hours of work within their medical limitations, or in other cases no work available.

At the same time, supervisors and carriers are waiting on customers at will-call windows. They are unloading mail from arriving trucks down for distribution and putting it on Carrier routes. Managers and Carriers are setting-up the equipment and moving it to the dock, and preparing mail for dispatch. Supervisors and Carriers are assigning accountables to other Carriers, and clearing them in the afternoon.

What is wrong with this picture? Clearly there are not enough **CLERKS** in these offices to perform our work and/or management does **NOT** want to pay overtime needed to accomplish the work. Clerks are sometimes being told they will be involuntarily reassigned up to 200 miles away because Customer Service Variance (CSV) data shows they are “excess” to the needs of the office, supervisors are performing their work. Clerks are told that there is no work for them because of their medical restrictions. Carriers are assigned work they are fully capable of doing.

This is theft at its highest level. They are stealing work hours from the bargaining unit and the Clerk craft. Even if you are not a PTF, on limited duty, or on the Overtime Desired List, management’s conduct threatens your duty assignment and the hiring of future employees. If we allow the employer to get away with taking our work from us collectively, we may each be harmed individually.

Management always has an excuse for supervisors or carriers working, like blaming attendance. But the contract puts the burden on management.

When a supervisor works, a union member loses their chance to get extra hours and extra money in their paycheck.

**EVERY time you see a supervisor perform bargaining unit work** (i.e., work that a bargaining unit employee should perform), you should write a statement for the Union. Each time you witness an employee of another craft being assigned work in the Clerk Craft, you should similarly record your observations. Such statements should include the **name of the supervisor or Carrier, the date and time during which the work is performed, and the specific duties he or she does.** We are in this together and with your help, the Union will combat these egregious violations of our Contract and seek compensations for the affected Clerks.

**EMPLOYEES will not complain about other crafts or supervisors performing their work believing that this is somehow making their job easier. This behavior CAN NO LONGER BE CONDONED. THE NEXT JOB THEY SEEK TO ABOLISH MAY BE YOURS! THE NEXT JOB YOU SAVE MAY BE YOUR OWN!**



# Do The Paperwork Right The First Time



*By Louis P. Forrasi,  
Human Relations Director*

Happy Saint Patrick's Day to all the brothers and sisters on the NC-CAPWU. Hope you are all staying safe and protecting yourselves and your brothers and sisters on the workroom floor by wearing your masks and trying to use distancing. We will get together again in May and hopefully this will be behind us.

I want to stress that OWCP is an agency which is not part of the Postal

Service. It is actually an agency to accommodate all federal agencies when it comes to workers comp. The secret is to do the paperwork right the first time and you will have less problems getting approved. I know you are all tired of me saying this but it is the basics. People are paranoid to use the online system to file. Mark my words it is the same thing but new. Make sure all your T's are crossed and all you're I's Dotted. By this I mean your statement of facts gives the evidence of occurrence. Your job description should be included for a lot of examiners are not familiar with our job so it is like a picture for them to determine what happened so they can connect the dots in the diagnosis and prognosis. **THE MOST IMPORTANT THING IN THE PROCESS IS ASK FOR YOUR STEWARD AND KEEP TRACK OF WHO WITNESSES IT.** Please keep copies of everything. The more you listen the better off you will be and the faster and easier you will get approved.

Don't wait 2 months to file an injury claim. It should be reported immediately. If it is occupational you can wait but even then you can file aggravation of a problem and have a paper trail. I know you probably think I'm a nag but I keep getting the same issues over the phone and that's why I keep repeating these facts in every article I write. If it doesn't get approved the first time they will give you the reasons. You have time to correct or add what they want and usually it is your doctor who had to correct his paperwork. Don't panic, just do what they ask for and resubmit it.

Well I think I bored you enough but it is important and I can't stress it enough. Please make sure your PSE brothers and sisters are aware also. My number is 919-616-3170 my email is [unionapw@embarqmail.com](mailto:unionapw@embarqmail.com). Feel free to contact me at any time that's my job. I don't grieve it for you but I can give you advice and also your steward advice. Don't wait till they are ready to discipline you.

## Your Commitment Has Been A Shining Light During Some Dark Days



*By D. Regina Butler-Jones,  
Clerk Craft Director*

Hello Brothers & Sisters of NC.

I am Regina Jones and I'm the Clerk Craft Director of NC COUN-

CIL. I hope each of you and yours are healthy and safe. Our state has endured so many shut downs of many, many businesses such as restaurants, bars, hotels, mass hospitalizations, school closings, prison consolidations and some post offices with skeleton crews BUT through it all your commitment has been a shining light during some dark days. I would like to personally thank each and every one of you for your unwavering selflessness to provide a dependable service for the citizens of the USA. The American Postal Workers Union is proud to serve you. The Headquarters offices of USPS & APWU have negotiated

some agreements to assist during the pandemic and hopefully those provisions have helped you during COVID. Being that you are VERY essential and on the front line please protect yourself with social distancing, hand sanitizers and masks. Be proactive so that you're not in harm's way not only at work but at drug stores, grocery stores, doctor's offices and even the gas stations. I commend each and EVERYONE of you for what you bring to us by mail. (Communication with family and friends) May we have COVID behind us soon with health and wealth. Thank you again and I know there are better days ahead.



# There Is Always A 'But'



*By Glenn Meadows,  
District 1 Representative*

First, I would like to welcome all of our new board members on board and say HI to all of the ones who have been here. And say hello to all my friends in the offices that I represent. These are the ones that make all of the small offices in the state work. These are the members who are on the front lines every day. These offices run the whole spectrum of what is right and wrong with the USPS, some are great places to work with good employees and postmasters. But and there is always a but, some of the PMs and SCS think they are the greatest thing in the USPS and treat their employees like they owned them servants or worse. Thank goodness the powers to be are weeding out a lot of them and not soon enough. The USPS figured out how much these ----- are costing in terms of money, sick leave lost production and all the other things. They finally found out that a happy employee is a much better employee. There are 3 of the "BUT" group in 287 with a few more not so bad but could be better. The others range from good to very good, great places to work. The good ones outnumber the "BUT" GROUP MANY TIMES OVER.

Now to the 286 offices, there are

more "Buts" there. The reason I think is that some of the prior managers appointed PM like themselves. When a "but" is appointed a PM it could and sometimes does take 30 or more years to get them gone.

I have done this for 48 years now, in the plant, stations and small offices so I know what a Butt is.

The last year for us all and the last two for me have been rough, this bug has made a lot of our members sick and some have lost their lives. I would like to extend my most heartfelt condolences to all of our Union family who have lost a loved one.

The mask mandate is still in effect, if you go into an office and they are not following the safety rules call the state President Tony McKinnon or if you can't get him call me.

Now for some contract issues, as a lot of you know some of the offices are understaffed, some of them a lot. What happens then is the PM in level 18 offices start working more than 15 hours per week and level 20 offices the PM or SCS start performing our work.

It also forces our members to work many hours of unwanted OT, some are working 60 or more hours per week. The only way to stoop this is to file grievances and make

management pay the clerks what they owe them. Some in the Union think that to settle for a cease and desist is good, that has been tried many times and we got screwed a lot of times. I say get the money or go to arbitration.

The Union only need to show 30 hours per week for a NTFT job, we can use all of the PTF hours all of the OT hours all the hours non clerks perform clerk work. RCAs and PM or SCS are not clerks, RCAs cannot work any of the clerk duties, boxing, sorting carrier packages, flats or letters or taking mail to the carrier cases.

PMs in lever 18 offices can only perform clerk duties for 15 hours per week, if there is a SCS in the office only the PM or the SCS can perform clerk duties not both even if it's less than 15 hours per week.

PMs from other offices cannot work any in your office.

PM in level 20 cannot perform any clerk work.

I know that there are a lot more issues out there that need to be addressed and all will be in turn.

Thanks to all of the members for all of your hard work, never give up things will get better the PMG is at the out door.



*March Is Women's History Month*

# Emergency Federal Employee Leave

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\$1.9 trillion pandemic relief package enacted this week:

**Public Health.** Provides \$48.3 billion for testing, contact tracing and personal protective equipment (PPE); \$7.5 billion for vaccine distribution; and \$5.2 billion for procurement of vaccines and supplies. Provides \$10 billion to expand domestic production of PPE, vaccines and medical supplies under the Defense Production Act.

**Workplace Safety.** Provides \$200 million for pandemic-related worker protection activities at the Labor Department, half of which would go to the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) to support OSHA enforcement and worker training in high-risk sectors such as meat processing, health care, correctional facilities and agriculture.

**Relief for State and Local Governments.** Provides \$350 billion in aid to state, local, tribal and territorial governments to help deal with the budgetary impact of the pandemic, including \$195.3 billion for states and Washington, D.C.; \$130.2 billion for local governments; \$20 billion for tribal governments; and \$4.5 billion for U.S. territories.

**Education.** Provides \$125 billion in state grants to help local educational authorities reopen K-12 public schools safely, address instruction loss and support students as they recover from the effects of the pandemic. Provides \$39.6 billion to colleges and universities and their students, at least half of which must be spent on emergency financial aid grants.

**Direct Payments.** Provides \$1,400 in direct payments to individuals making less than \$75,000 and married couples making under \$150,000, and for dependents claimed on federal tax returns.

**Unemployment Benefits.** Extends

pandemic-related unemployment assistance that was set to expire on March 14, including the current \$300 supplement to unemployment benefits (called "Pandemic Unemployment Compensation"), for another six months through Sept. 6. Provides that the first \$10,200 of unemployment benefits received by taxpayers making less than \$150,000 will not be subject to federal taxation.

**Relief for Multiemployer Pensions.** Provides about \$86 billion in financial assistance to struggling multiemployer pension plans, which the plans will not have to repay, to cover all benefits due through plan year 2051, with no cuts to accrued benefits.

**Full COBRA Subsidies.** Subsidizes 100% of health care premiums of COBRA-eligible individuals who lose their job or had reduced hours, who will not have to pay any premiums, for six months. The employer or health plan can claim a refundable tax credit against their Medicare payroll tax liability for the cost of the premiums.

**Airline and Aerospace Payroll Support.** Provides \$15 billion for the wages and benefits of employees of airlines and contractors in the airline industry, on terms similar to airline payroll.

**Support in previous legislation:** no layoffs or pay cuts through Sept. 30 or whenever the assistance is exhausted, whichever is later, and the continuation of current restrictions on stock buybacks, dividend payments and executive pay. Provides another \$3 billion to create a payroll support program for aviation manufacturers.

**Transportation.** Provides \$30.4 billion for grants to transit agencies, which can be used for operating expenses, including payroll costs and PPE, and \$1.7 billion for Amtrak in fiscal year 2021, including funding to recall furloughed workers and restore the frequency of long-distance routes.

**Paycheck Protection Program (PPP).** Extends eligibility for the PPP forgivable loan program to more tax-exempt groups, including 501(c)(5) labor organizations. Creates a new \$28.6 billion grant program for restaurants.

**Child Tax Credit.** Reduces child poverty by expanding the child tax credit through 2021, increasing the maximum credit to \$3,600 for each child younger than 6 and \$3,000 for other children, and making the credit fully refundable.

**Child Care.** Expands the Child and Dependent Care Tax Credit to \$4,000 per child or \$8,000 for two or more children and makes the credit fully refundable. Provides \$39 billion for childcare, including \$15 billion in grants to states to help low-income families afford childcare and help essential workers regardless of their income and \$24 billion for state grants to child care providers.

**Federal Employee Leave.** Provides \$570 million to create an Emergency Federal Employee Leave Fund to provide up to 15 weeks of emergency paid leave for civilian employees and postal workers, including those who have COVID-19, who are caring for someone with COVID-19, are looking after children during virtual classes, or are obtaining a COVID-19 vaccine. Provides \$13 million for an Emergency TSA Employee Leave Fund and \$9 million for an Emergency FAA Employee Leave Fund.

**Paid Sick Leave and Paid Family and Medical Leave Tax Credits.** Extends current tax credits through September 2021 and expands eligibility to include state and local governments.

**Employee Retention Tax Credit.** Extends the current tax credit through Dec. 31, 2021 and increases the percentage of wages covered for

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# Research/Education/Application Keys To Success



By **Bob Stutts, Director  
Research and Education**

## 3 STATE SEMINAR, MARCH 13-15, 2021

The information on our long awaited 3 Stater is in this issue. It is the intent of the NC Council that all efforts are to have an onsite conference if possible. We will be bound by the NC laws and restrictions at time of assembly. While appalled by non-mask wearers currently it is hoped things will be more open and the responses to the pandemic will have greatly improved ability to assemble.

We have tried to have classes we have been ask for. Also we with our half and full day lineups locals can send members to multi classes if they have enough in attendance. Strongly suggest some Clerk Stewards attend Class B on Custodial Staffing. It is an opportunity to help find more jobs for vets, get large payouts and more members. The information online Item H can revolutionize the offices without local maintenance stewards.

The other classes are also very much needed and hope we have a good response in signups. I suggest other days or times locals pal around as usual but it would be wise to split up for classes.

## USPS REALIGNMENT

I am concerned with the new postal realignment as I have seen this type of thing before. This happened when

in the 80s we went from divisions to districts and areas. Many Union and all management thought we would be out of the Southern Region in NS and SC. At the time the Union had the terrible habit of allowing management to basically name our Union structure to align with them. I made a motion that NC/SC remain Southern Region and report to our coordinator in Memphis at the time. We would also maintain our NBA structure definitely for Clerks and suggest same for Maintenance and Special Delivery, That was where we were when management left Atlanta and went to Memphis we followed. I went to the other 3 state (SC, GA, FL) after we passed the motion unanimously and each of their conventions also passed the sane motion unanimously. While many Union officers and members wanted us to be part of their standing environment to give easier access to coming to our states. Management did flood us. For a while I had to discuss Step 3s in Philadelphia. I had a long talk with President Moe Biller and I told him of our solid opposition to us moving to a new region or have new officer structure. I told him we were weak if we let management determine where we operated from. I told him his predecessors who had called weak were the ones who agreed we had to move all our regional operations to where

management was. He agreed and we supported at convention by many who have previously expressed a different opinion.

Now for our NBAs and management we are the only one split from the other 4 states. In fact SC is now back with GA/FL for management. We need to monitor closely to see that just because we are at the bottom of the new Eastern Alignment we are still not their area to use or abuse.

## ZOOM MEETINGS

With the leadership of our president and E Board we have been having Zoom meetings by district or statewide depending on the session. It is an excellent opportunity for those who cannot attend our state meetings to meet your representatives and get important updates and your chance to ask questions or raise issues for them to follow up on. They are usually held at 6PM, usually on Tuesday, and last about an hour or so. For those who had used it so far the response has been great and it lets the little officer member had a say.

Suggest strongly when you district rep or other officer advises one is being held to take advantage. Especially when it is your district that session.

AS ALWAYS YOU ARE APPRECIATED.

## Emergency Federal Employee Leave

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severely distressed businesses.

**Earned Income Tax Credit.** Expands the earned income tax credit for taxpayers without children for 2021 by increasing both the credit percentage and phaseout thresholds.

**Veterans.** Provides \$386 million to create a rapid retraining program for veterans who are unemployed because of the pandemic.

**Housing.** Provides \$21.6 billion for

emergency rental assistance to prevent evictions and \$10 billion to help homeowners avoid foreclosure; \$5 billion for emergency public housing vouchers; and \$5 billion to address homelessness.

**Nutrition Assistance.** Extends a 15% increase to monthly benefits under the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program through Sept. 30, 2021. I pray for good health and God's speed as you continue on.

In Union Solidarity, I remain.

# Women In The Post Office



*By Turnette Chestnut,  
District 2 Representative*

The issues today are not new. Women in the work place have always been looked at as not relevant. Your voice needs to be heard. In honor of Women's Month take the time to do a wellness check!!!

The purpose of Annual Leave or Sick Leave is to allow you to take time for yourself!!!

Go to the Doctor or Go to the Beach!!! Either of these scenarios may be just what you need!!!

The 3971 is for that purpose. You can request time off by filling out

one. The 3971 is the gateway for requesting your Prime-time leave, sick leave dependent care or other types of leave. You do not have to ask permission to use your leave. You are informing the manager that you need time off. They must return your leave slip to you within 72 hours. They must approve or deny the leave by that time. If this is not occurring in the office please notify your steward today.

Remember this is your Leave. Take care of yourself!!!

# Things To Be Mindful Of



*By Craig Ayscue,  
District 6 Representative*

Every good grievance has good documentation. And that documentation starts with the members on the workroom floor. You have to be observant, you have to be aware and you have to document. Without your documentation many grievances are dead before they even start. As the union we have to prove that a violation occurred, when it occurred and how often it occurred. We also have to have the witnesses to back it up, just like in any court hearing. Because basically that is what a grievance is, a court hearing, the reps are the lawyers and the witnesses are the members. Help us help you.

If management is doing your work follow the who, what and when. Who was the manager? What were they doing? When and how long did they do it?

Furthermore there are time limits that must be followed. If you feel you need to file a grievance for any cause it is important that you get in touch with your rep as soon as you can because you have 14 days to file. And that 14 days goes by before you know it. And please do not wait 14 days to notify your steward. Please give them ample time to prepare. I have had people in the past wait well over the 14 days to tell me that they needed me to file a grievance but at that point it is too late. So be mindful that there is a time limit that we need to adhere to.

Now in some cases you may not be aware of a situation that occurred until later. For instance I have filed at least 2 grievances so far where management snuck a letter of warning in a clerks personnel file and the clerk didn't realize it until much later when they checked their OPF. Check your OPF monthly at least to make sure

there are no discrepancies. The union was successful in getting the letter of warnings removed even after the 14 days from the date management claimed to have issued the letter.

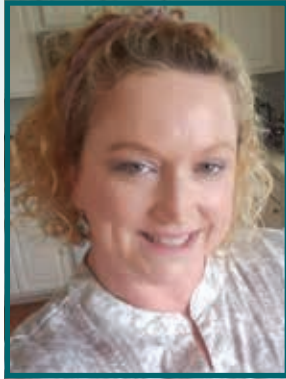
Finally, some members have asked me how they become a steward for their office. First off, thank you for wanting to step up. Our state officers have given a basic stewards class that was open to those of you who wish to be stewards. They are currently working to get other classes together as well. So please contact your district rep and let them know that you are interested and we can get you signed up when the class is available.

I also want to encourage everyone to take advantage of all the information available to you at [www.apwu.org](http://www.apwu.org). All of the contracts, MOU's, JCIM and small office LMOU's are available right there. We also have our state website [www.nccapwu.org](http://www.nccapwu.org) that you should also check out. Knowledge is power and taking the time to learn and read is key in that.

I hope everyone continues to stay safe and healthy.



# COVID In The Workplace



By *Tonya Freeman,*  
*District 3 Representative*

Hello, Sisters and Brothers.

I am sure we can all agree that we are tired of hearing about Covid-19. But it remains a dominant factor in our everyday lives. Although the vaccines have begun to be administered, we must remain vigilant to protect ourselves and our love ones. It is too soon to let our guards down. This includes in the workplace.

Most of us may have had someone in our own offices that had contracted the virus. Many more have been quarantined due to possible close contact exposure. But what is Management's role in keeping us safe during this pandemic; and what is your role?

Article 14 in our contract addresses safety and health. Under Section 1 entitled Responsibilities, first sentence states "It is the responsibility of management to provide safe working conditions in all present and future installations and to develop a safe working force." In Chapter 8 Section 824.6 of the Employee Labor Manual (ELM), which is management's own book also known as the "post office bible", outlines management's responsibilities regarding safety. There is a section that details what a PS Form 1767 Report of Hazard, Unsafe Condition or Practice. You can use this form for any other safety hazard as well. Now let's apply this

language to the safety measures that must be practiced in order for all of us to be safe at work during this pandemic.

Management should ensure there is proper personal protective equipment (PPE) in every office and made readily available to employees. There should be a shield at the window in between the employee and the customers, and there should be masks and gloves.

Management should ensure that there is proper cleaning and sanitizing of "high touch" areas such as bathrooms, counters, doorknobs, etc. This should be done often. There should be cleaning in between shifts and at the end of the day. If someone in your office contracts the virus, the office should have a deep clean and be sanitized. If you contract the virus from a co-worker or member of management in your office, you may file a Workman's Compensation Claim. Contact your steward.

Now what is your role in staying safe in the workplace? **Wear your masks!** I can't say this enough. There are many offices where the employees and management do not wear masks. Put your masks on! Stay 6 feet apart if possible. It may be their responsibility, but don't rely on management to keep you safe. You may want to bring in your own masks, hand sanitizer, and wipes, just in case. If management does not have PPE, if there is not a shield at the window, if proper cleaning isn't being performed, contact your steward. Fill out a PS Form 1767. This form should be available to all employees in all offices. You can also print it out

from the blue page. But it is recommended you use the form with the four copies.

After filling out the 1767, give it to your supervisor or postmaster. Request that they inspect the hazard. You may maintain anonymity if you choose. In order to remain anonymous, you must send the 1767 to safety personnel or your safety coordinator. Safety personnel will then give the report to your supervisor for necessary action. They must not disclose your name. Contact your steward. Management must not

discriminate against you for reporting a hazard. It is the supervisor or postmaster's responsibility to abate the hazard within the tour of duty. Management's responsibilities include investigation, initiate immediate corrective action or

make appropriate recommendations, record actions or recommendations on the 1767, forward the original copy and an additional copy to the next appropriate level of management which is the approving official, give the employee a copy that is signed by the supervisor as receipt, immediately forward the third copy to the safety coordinator. It is also the supervisor's responsibility to monitor the status of the report at all times until the hazard is abated. In the event that this is not covid related, for example a broken dock lift, the supervisor must verbally inform you of the abatement status if it has been 7 days and must do so at the end of each 7-day interval if not abated sooner.

In conclusion, hold management accountable, please report any safety hazards, wear your masks, sanitize your hands often, stay at least six feet apart when possible, and stay safe.

In Solidarity.



**AGENDA**

***NC/SC/GA Tri-State Seminar May 13-15, 2021***

**Sonesta Charlotte, 5700 West Park Drive, Charlotte**

**Room Rates \$109 single/double**

Reservations 704-527-5650 or 800766-3782 or link American Postal Workers Union

*Cut Off Date for guaranteed room rate April 27th, 2021*

**Registration \$60 advance \$70 Walkup includes breaks and lunch buffet.**

*No fee NCCAPWU MAL/DCO Members*

**THURSDAY, MAY 13, 2021**

**Registration 11:00 AM-5:00 PM** (Must be registered to attend Classes and Luncheon)  
**12:00 PM-12:45 PM** NC/SC/GA State Presidents opening Tri-State meeting welcoming Delegates leading the group on our issues in our state and new area alignments.  
**12:45 PM - 2:45 PM** Administrative Leave for Covid 19 Grievance Processing.  
**2:45 - 3:00 PM** Refreshment breaks  
**3:00 - 5:00 PM** OWCP Processing for COVID Related Issues  
**7:00 PM - 11:00PM** Hospitality

**FRIDAY, MAY 14, 2021**

**Registration 8:30-10:00**  
**7:45 AM - 8:20 AM** Morning beverage setup

**8:30:00 AM – 12:00 PM** Half Day Classes (Breaks at 10:15 AM & 3:15 PM)  
**1:40 PM -5:00 PM** Half Day Classes (Breaks at 10:15 AM & 3:15 PM)  
**8:30 AM – 5:00 PM** Full Day Class (Breaks at 10:15 AM & 3:15 PM)  
**Buffet Lunch 12:15 PM - 1:25 PM**  
**5:15 PM** NCCAPWU Executive Board Meeting  
**7:00 PM – 11:00 PM** Hospitality

**SATURDAY, MAY 15, 2021**  
**8:00 AM – 8:30AM** Morning Beverages  
**8:30 AM –10:00 AM** Craft Break Outs  
**10:00 AM - 1:00 PM** National and State Officers speaking followed by OPEN FORUM. Members will have a great opportunity to ask or comment about virtually any Union subjects including what they have heard this seminar.  
**(Break at 10:30 AM)**

**Name (PLEASE PRINT)**

Thursday 1:00 PM Will you be attending Administrative Leave for Covid 19 Grievance Processing?

\_\_\_\_\_  
 YES

\_\_\_\_\_  
 NO

**Local**

Thursday 3:00 PM: Will you be attending OWCP Processing for COVID Related Issues?

\_\_\_\_\_  
 YES

\_\_\_\_\_  
 NO

**CHOOSE TWO HALF DAY CLASSES OR ONE WHOLE DAY CLASS. DUE TO COVID RESTRICTIONS YOU MAY ONLY ATTEND CLASSES YOU ARE REGISTERED FOR. IF YOU MARK MORE THAN THE NUMBER ALLOWED, YOU WILL NOT BE PRE-REGISTERED AND WILL HAVE TO SELECT REMAINING CLASSES AT SEMINAR**

<b>Classes</b>	<b>Time Slot</b>	<b>Choose "2" half day classes or Full Day</b>
<b>Class A - Line-Item H Custodial Staffing</b>	<b>8:30-12:00</b>	
<b>Class B - Level 18/20 Office/RMPO Issues</b>	<b>8:30-12:00</b>	
<b>Class C - PSE Issues</b>	<b>8:30-12:00</b>	
<b>Class D - Dealing with NLRB/Fair Representation</b>	<b>8:30-12:00</b>	
<b>Class D - Motor Vehicle Craft Class (MVS)</b>	<b>8:30-12:00</b>	
<b>Class E - FMLA/Wounded Warrior Leave</b>	<b>1:40-5:00</b>	
<b>Class F - Electronic Grievance System - EGS</b>	<b>1:40-5:00</b>	
<b>Class G - Large Office Issues</b>	<b>1:40-5:00</b>	
<b>Class H - Military Buy Back/Retirement</b>	<b>1:40-5:00</b>	
<b>Class I - Intensive Steward Training</b>	<b>8:30-5:00 Full Day</b>	

**Mail \$60.00 registration fee to:** NCCAPWU, c/o Jamie Ayscue, PO Box 1035, Elizabeth City NC 27906  
*(Late registration at the door is \$70.00)*



# IRS Outlines Steps To Speed Refunds During Pandemic



By *Jamie Ayscue,*  
*Secretary-Treasurer*

The February 12 start date for individual tax return filers allows the IRS time to do additional programming and testing of IRS systems following the December 27 tax law changes that provided a second round of Economic Impact Payments and other benefits.

This programming work is critical to ensuring IRS systems run smoothly. If filing season were opened without the correct programming in place, then there could be a delay in issuing refunds to taxpayers. These changes ensure that eligible people will receive any remaining stimulus money as a Recovery Rebate Credit when they file their 2020 tax return.

To speed refunds during the pandemic, the IRS urges taxpayers to file electronically with direct deposit as soon as they have the information they need. People can begin filing their tax returns immediately with tax software companies, including IRS Free File partners. These groups are starting to accept tax returns now, and the returns will be transmitted to the IRS starting February 12.

“Planning for the nation’s filing season process is a massive undertaking, and IRS teams have been working non-stop to prepare for this as well as delivering Economic Impact Payments in record time,” said IRS Commissioner

Chuck Rettig. “Given the pandemic, this is one of the nation’s most important filing seasons ever. This start date will ensure that people get their needed tax refunds quickly while also making sure they receive any remaining stimulus payments they are eligible for as quickly as possible.”

### KEY FILING SEASON DATES

There are several important dates taxpayers should keep in mind for this year’s filing season:

**February 12.** IRS begins 2021 tax season. Individual tax returns begin being accepted and processing begins.

**February 22.** Projected date for the IRS.gov Where’s My Refund tool being updated for those claiming EITC and ACTC, also referred to as PATH Act returns.

**First week of March.** Tax refunds begin reaching those claiming EITC and ACTC (PATH Act returns) for those who file electronically with direct deposit and there are no issues with their tax returns.

**April 15.** Deadline for filing 2020 tax returns.

**October 15.** Deadline to file for those requesting an extension on their 2020 tax returns. — *irs.gov*

## Say Hello

*by Luther L. Jones, Chairman  
Greensboro EAP District  
Advisory Committee*

### Employee Assistance Program Services:

- Face to Face Counseling
- Telephonic Counseling
- Web-based Tools (myStrength)
- Text Therapy (Talkspace)
- Video Counseling
- “In the Moment” Support
- EAP Orientations
- Consultations
- Promotions
- Coaching & Training
- Work/Life Balance
- Critical Incident Response
- Health & Wellness
- Suicide Awareness & Prevention
- Preparing for Retirement
- Elder & Childcare







USPS  
Employee Assistance Program

CALL US TODAY: 800-327-4968  
800-EAP-4YOU | TTY: 877-492-7341  
WWW.EAP4YOU.COM

North Carolina Council APWU  
PO Box 1035  
Elizabeth City NC 27906

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## Change Service Requested



### NC COUNCIL APWU 2021 DATES TO REMEMBER

- March 25: Virtual Health Fair noon-2pm ET
- March 31: Virtual Health Fair 6-8pm ET
- April 14: Virtual Health Fair 2-4pm ET
- April 28: Workers Memorial Day
- April 30: Virtual Health Fair 11am-1pm ET
- May 1: May Day
- May 7: Virtual Health Fair 1-3pm ET
- May 8: Stamp Out Hunger/Food Drive
- May 13-16: NC/SC/GA Tri-State Conference  
Charlotte, NC
- September 6: Labor Day
- September 30 -October 2: APWU All-Craft Conference
- October 4-7: APWU National Convention
- October 13-15: 64th NC State AFL-CIO  
Annual Convention
- October 17-20: APWU Health Plan  
36th Annual Open Season
- November 2: Municipal Elections

To register for virtual Health Fair for New Employees go to APWUHealthPlan.com. All other registrations will be deployed by the appropriate entity in the newsletter and on the websites. Stay Tuned.

**\*\*\*\*MEMBERS AT LARGE/DUES CHECK OFF ONLY\*\*\*\***  
**ENTRY FORM**

**NC/SC/GA Tri-State Seminar**  
**May 13-15, 2021**  
**Charlotte NC**

THREE DELEGATES FROM ACROSS NORTH CAROLINA WILL BE CHOSEN FROM THOSE WHO SEND IN THIS FORM. THE STATE COUNCIL WILL PAY YOUR FOOD, MILEAGE, ROOM AND REGISTRATION.

**THIS FORM MUST BE RECEIVED BY APRIL 30, 2021**

**MAIL TO:**  
**NCCAPWU**  
**PO Box 1035**  
**ELIZABETH CITY NC 27906**

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_  
POST OFFICE: \_\_\_\_\_  
PHONE # OFFICE: \_\_\_\_\_  
HOME/CELL #: \_\_\_\_\_  
HOME ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_  
PREVIOUS WINNER YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_  
SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_

DO NOT WRITE BELOW THIS LINE

DATE RECEIVED: \_\_\_\_\_