

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

By JANETTE DOLABSON

Consolidated Casing

On August 29th the NALC filed a lawsuit against the Postal Service in the federal district court in Washington D.C. The suit asks the court to issue an injunction stopping the Postal Service from continuing its Consolidated Casing Initiative until NALC's pending national level grievance is resolved. The grievance over consolidated casing is presently scheduled for arbitration in December. Further developments will be reported as they occur.

This may not have been in time to stop Consolidated Casing from implementing in Sherman Oaks but it might be before they try it in other offices. We will keep you informed on how it is going in Sherman Oaks in the November Mail Call. By the time this article was due it had not started yet in that office.

OWCP

Schedule Awards

The Federal Employees' Compensation Act (FECA), provides for schedule awards for an injured worker who suffers a permanent impairment to a body part covered by the Act. Permanent impairment is defined as the permanent loss, or loss of use of, a part of the body, whether partial or total.

Schedule awards are payable when an injured employee has suffered a permanent impairment to a part or function of the body that is listed in the schedule of body functions and members found in the FECA at 5 USC 8107.

Injured workers interested in pursuing a schedule award should ask their physician if he or she does evaluations of permanent impairment using the AMA Guides to the Evaluation of Permanent Impairment, Sixth Edition. Ratings made in accordance with earlier editions of the Guides will not be accepted by OWCP.

If your physician does such evaluations, ask him or her to schedule an exam to do the evaluation after you have reached maximum medical improvement (MMI). If your physician does not do such evaluations, ask him or her to refer you to a physician who does.

OWCP recently revised some procedures for evaluating impairment ratings. Provide your doctor with a copy of the Impairment Rating Fact Sheet, which clarifies those revisions.

Requirements

Impairment ratings must:

1. State the date you reached maximum medical improvement,
2. Describe the impairment, and
3. Give a percentage evaluation of the impairment in terms of the affected body part, not the body as a whole.
4. Include a data collection form or summary form from the relevant chapter of the Guides that identifies the specific features to consider for each category for organ system impairment, it must be used to document the data and be attached with the final report.

The percentage evaluation must be based on charts and tables found in the AMA Guides, and the medical report must include references to the applicable charts and tables. Your physician must explain in the report how he or she determined the percentage impairment by specific reference to the charts and tables in the AMA Guides that were used to make the determination.

Submitting the Schedule Award Request

When you receive the medical report, send it to OWCP with a cover letter requesting a schedule award. Active letter carriers must complete the employee portion of the CA-7, check "schedule award," and submit it to the Postal Service. Request a completed copy of the CA-7 from the Postal Service. The Postal Service has 5 working days to submit the CA-7 to OWCP.

If you are retired and applying for a schedule award, federal regulations allow an application to be submitted with a cover letter requesting the schedule award as long as there was a previous CA-7 filed.

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"The MailCall" is published monthly by "Heart of the Valley Branch 2462, NALC, 6910 Hayvenhurst Ave., Suite 104, Van Nuys, CA 91406 in the interest of and for the Letter Carriers of the Van Nuys Post Office and its Stations. **ARTICLES FOR PUBLICATION MUST BE IN THE HANDS OF THE EDITOR ON NIGHT OF THE REGULAR BRANCH MEETING. ALL ARTICLES MUST BE TYPED OR ON COMPUTER DISK WITH SINGLE LINE SPACING.** The Editor reserves the right to delete any article he deems necessary, improper, or unfit. All opinions expressed are those of the writer and are not necessarily those of the Editor or Branch 2462, NALC. The views expressed in this document are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the official views of the U.S. Postal Service.. In the hopes that any material contained herein may be of benefit to your Branch and to the goals of the NALC, permission is granted to copy and/or use any material in this publication with our best wishes.

NALC Health Benefits Report

By

Larry Dolabson, HBR

ATTENDANCE CHART BRANCH MEETINGS

| MONTH | J | F | M | A | M | J | J | A | S | O | N |
|---------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| MAIN OFFICE | 4 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 7 | | |
| ENCINO | 4 | 5 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 4 | | |
| PANORAMA CITY | 4 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 0 | | |
| SHERMAN OAKS | 3 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 4 | | |
| SUN VALLEY | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | | |
| TARZANA | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | | |
| RETIREE'S | 3 | 4 | 6 | 5 | 6 | 6 | 3 | 5 | 5 | | |
| TOTAL | 2022 | 2119 | 2424 | 2420 | 2022 | | | | | | |

**MEETING PLACE OF BRANCH 2462, NALC
6910 HAYVENHURST AVE., SUITE 104
VAN NUYS, CALIFORNIA**

**NEXT MEETING
6:30 PM**

**OCTOBER
1st
"2019"**

**DEADLINE DATE FOR THE NEXT
ISSUE OF "THE MAIL CALL" IS**

October 4, 2019

**WEBPAGE.....WWW.NALCBRANCH2462.ORG
BRANCH OFFICE.....818-786-8505
O P C PERSONNEL OFFICE.....818-374-5600
E-Mail.....Branch2462nalc@gmail.com**

"RETIREE CORNER" ATTENTION: !!!!

Our Last Breakfast Meeting this year will be held at Denny's Restaurant on September 28, 2019, (Corner of Sherman Way & DeCelis). It will begin at 09:00 AM. So, please mark your calendar.....We hope to see you there. Thank You

Bob Johnson

This year Open Season for 2020 will begin November 11th 2019 and end on December 9th 2019.

Please don't wait until the last minute to do your research if you are thinking of switching health plans.

Make sure you change your plan if you have had a change in family status, ie, got married, had a child, adopted a child or have become newly single. You do not have to wait until open season to change your health plan election if you have a change in status.

I highly recommend that you look into the NALC Health Benefit Plan for your health coverage. It is a PPO plan and is specifically geared for letter carrier health issues. You cannot get a better plan. Check them all out and see for yourself.



**BRANCH 2462
RETIREE
LUNCHEON
SUNDAY AFTERNOON
OCTOBER 27, 2018
MONTEREY AT ENCINO
(FORMALLY ENCINO GLEN RESTAURANT)**

16821 Burbank Blvd. Encino, California
**Doors Open 1:00 PM
LUNCH at 2:00 PM
Price is \$ 10.00**

**Retiree's and Active Carriers are
Welcome**

**For Further Information Contact
BOB JOHNSON (818) 786-8505**

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

(Continued from Page 1)

Schedule awards are payable concurrent with wages or retirement benefits.

Schedule awards are generally not payable concurrent with OWCP wage-loss compensation benefits.

However, if an employee has a job-related injury that causes impairment in one body part (that entitles him or her to a schedule award) and at the same time has a different job related injury to a different body-part that is disabling, both wage-loss compensation and a schedule award may be paid concurrently.

Schedule awards paid by OWCP do not constitute a settlement or final payout.

Receiving a schedule award does not end the right to continue receiving other OWCP benefits, such as payment for medical bills, reimbursement of transportation expenses for travel to medical appointments, wage-loss compensation benefits, etc.

Schedule Awards and Social Security Disability

There is also an important, and dangerous, limitation that arises when employees are entitled to Social Security disability benefits. Employees covered under the Federal Employees' Retirement System (FERS) are required to apply for Social Security disability benefits in order to obtain FERS disability retirement. Social Security regulations provide for dollar-for-dollar offset of Social Security disability benefits if an employee receives workers' compensation disability benefits.

Social Security considers OWCP Schedule Awards as disability benefits, and will deduct the full amount from any Social Security disability benefits due. Moreover, Social Security will report the full amount of the deduction to the IRS as taxable income, even though it never was paid to the injured worker.

As a result, NALC members covered by FERS who may be entitled to a schedule award and concurrently entitled to disability retirement should seek advice from their branch OWCP specialist or National Business Agent's office.

Schedule awards and VA disability ratings

Under FECA, an injured letter carrier whose claim is accepted is entitled to medical benefits and wage loss compensation. For letter carriers with DVA disability ratings, applying for some FECA benefits may require an election between the DVA benefits and FECA benefits.

An injured worker with a DVA disability rating for the same injury will often receive more from an increase of their DVA disability rating than from a schedule award. Injured workers with DVA disability ratings should contact their National Business Agent's office for guidance.

Method of Payment

Schedule awards are paid for a certain number of weeks, calculated by multiplying the percentage of impairment of a body part (determined by the rating physician) times the number of weeks set out in the schedule in the FECA for that body part. Each week of the schedule award is paid at the employee's compensation rate, which is weekly salary times

2/3 or 3/4, depending on whether the employee is single with no dependents (2/3) or married or otherwise has one or more dependents (3/4).

COLA

The seventh contract COLA was finalized at \$624 annually with the release of the July 2019 CPI-W. This is the last COLA of the 2016-2019 National Agreement. The COLA increase began on August 31, 2019.

NALC RESOURCE GUIDE

NALC's Letter Carrier Resource Guide combines the 2016 City Carrier Assistant Resource Guide and the 2014 Letter Carrier's Guide into one merged and updated publication. The Letter Carrier Resource Guide is now available in downloadable PDF format on the NALC website at nalc.org/resourceguide. The online version contains links throughout the guide that will connect you directly to additional relevant information. The guide is a one-stop shop of valuable information for all city letter carriers at every stage of their careers. With a redesigned format and more than 20 pages of new information, the Letter Carrier Resource Guide was created to address letter carriers' concerns throughout their career. For city carrier assistants (CCAs), the guide includes updated CCA rights and benefits reflected in the 2016-2019 National Agreement and the joint Questions and Answers 2011 USPS/NALC National Agreement.

A new "On-the-Job" section provides information on issues relevant to the workroom floor, such as Delivery Operations Information System (DOIS) projections and PS Form 3996, the MDD, Customer Connect and Sunday parcel delivery. Additional chapters with information on Wounded Warriors Leave, ePayroll, PS Form 3971 and holiday provisions will assist letter carriers in using their contractual rights. Also, in the new guide is a significantly expanded section explaining the changes to letter carriers' rights and benefits when they become fulltime regular (FTR), part-time regular (PTR) or part-time flexible (PTF). This section explains things such as layoff protection, military buyback and contractual overtime provisions.

NALC members who would like a print copy will soon be able to order one through the Members Only portal on the NALC website. The Members Only portal can be accessed by visiting the website and clicking the "MEMBERS ONLY" button at the top right of the home page. The portal includes access to documents, information and programs that are intended only for the use of NALC members. It also includes an area where members can update their contact information, Letter Carrier Political Fund (LCPF) contributions, edit information in the Work Hour Tracker and more.



"THE MAIL CALL"
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Steve Seyfried, Editor
6910 Hayvenhurst Ave., # 104
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Branch Meeting Minutes
September 3, 2019

By
Steve Seyfried, Secretary

The Meeting was held at the Branch 2462 Union Hall 6910 Hayvenhurst Ave, Van Nuys California. It was called to order by PRESIDENT J. DOLABSON at 7:05 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by MBA Rep ROBERT ENZ

MOMENT OF SILENCE-----In Memory of LETTER CARRIERS WHO HAVE DIED & IN REMEMBRANCE OF THOSE WHO LOST THEIR LIVES IN NEW YORK. PENNSYLVANIA, & THE PENTAGON ON 9/11

ROLL CALL OF OFFICERS

PRESENT--- J DOLABSON, BURTON, SEYFRIED, JOHNSON, DOZAL, JEFFREY, WILSON, ENZ, L. DOLABSON

ABSENT---MULLINAX, MACARAEG

MINUTES ACCEPTED AS PRINTED IN MAIL CALL

CORRESPONDENCE READ

APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP--NONE

BILLS READ---NONE

COMMITTEE REPORTS

AUDIT COMMITTEE Audit was held on July 25th at 6:30 pm at the Union Office and the books were found to be in good order.

HEALTH & SAFETY---DOZAL Vehicle accidents are up this year from last, Main Office 15 (9), Encino 4 (4), Sherman Oaks 7 (5), Panorama City 1 (1) as of first of July. Be sure to stay hydrated at all times and immediately report any heat related sickness to your supervisor and Shop Steward.

TRUSTEES No Report

RETIREEES 5 retiree's present tonight.

Last Breakfast of the year will be Saturday, September 28, at 9am at Denny's. Hope to see you there.

MDA FUND--DOZAL Currently \$1162.00 in fund

HBR---L. DOLABSON NALC Health Plan Health First Help line is now available to plan members 24/7. The number to call is (877)222-6252. They are available any time, day or night to answer any health questions you have. Open Season will begin this year on November 11th and run through December 9th. This is the only opportunity you have during the year to change your health plan, so take advantage and check out the NALC Plan, you will find it to be very competitive and offers excellent coverage for singles or family options.

MDA--MACARAEG No Report

MBA---ENZ Mutual Benefits is offering an Hospitalization plan to members of the NALC. This affordable plan offers different levels of coverage to help defray costs associated with hospital stays. They also have many

other insurance plans for members. Contact BOB ENZ through the Union Office for more information.

FINANCIAL SEC---MULLINAX Membership Pins have come in and have been sent out to all Stations for distribution. Happy to report that our Branch is now at 98.2% organized, talk with your fellow Carriers, members and non-alike, and let them know how important it is that we stand united in our fight for fairness and equal respect on the workroom floor by all.

TREASURERS REPORT---JOHNSON READ

MOTION---Accept the Financial Reports as read M/S/C

VICE-PRESIDENT BURTON HR 2382, which would eliminate the Pre-funding mandate that was imposed by the Bush Administration, now has 213 co-sponsors. This is only 5 short of the number needed to pass this resolution. HR 2517, which would allow the Postal Service to deliver beer and wine, currently has 37, of the needed 218 votes. There should be 2 CCA conversions coming up soon.

PRESIDENT J. DOLABSON Report in the MailCall

EXECUTIVE BOARD MINUTES READ

OLD BUSINESS--NONE

NEW BUSINESS--NONE

UNDERLINED INDICATES UNANIMOUS VOTE

GOOD OF THE ASSOCIATION

Shop Stewards should be checking on injured Carriers being offered new job duties. Schedule Award requests should be handled by NALC and not private lawyers or organizations. NALC lawyers are FREE private lawyers ARE NOT and will receive part of your award. If you are injured ALWAYS CONTACT THE NALC BEFORE YOU MAKE ANY DECISIONS

MDA DRAWING

\$ 3 JOSE JIMENEZ---SHERMAN OAKS--DONATED
\$ 5 BOB JOHNSON--RETIREE---DONATED
\$ 10 RICHARD DUNEZ--ENCINO

Meeting Adjourned 8:52 pm