

**Representing the Stations of
Encino – Panorama City – Sherman Oaks – Sun Valley – Tarzana – Van Nuys Main**

VOLUME 58

JANUARY 2021

NUMBER 1

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

By JANETTE DOLABSON

There has been a lot of confusion and mis-information about COVID pay and how it works and how it should be paid after a carrier has already used their 80 hours of COVID pay and must continue to be out due to COVID related reasons or has new COVID reason for being out from work.

USPS headquarters has confirmed the following current Contact Tracing Program. Several questions have come up regarding whether or not an employee is entitled to Administrative Leave if they must quarantine and they have already used the FFCRA EPSL.

To initiate a close contact investigation:

1. Review form submitted by local manager
2. Interview employee to gather information regarding his/her movements within the facility and potential direct contact with co-workers.
3. Assess movement and contacts to determine risk level to others.
4. Identify employees who should exercise self-quarantine.
5. Notify local manager of employees being recommended to self-quarantine.
6. Employees should then be placed on Emergency Paid Sick leave according to Families First Coronavirus Response Act guidelines.
7. If Emergency paid sick leave has been exhausted, the employee will be placed on Administrative Leave.
8. OHNA/OHN will contact Public Health Department.

9. Public Health Department will conduct Close Contact investigation for non-postal close contact.

If you have issues in your office with folks not getting Administrative Leave and they have had to use their own sick leave or annual leave a grievance should be filed to get that leave returned to them. Notify my office if this is happening so we can contact District to get this resolved in a timely way.

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SPECIAL NOTICE

Until further notice all Regular Branch Meetings are suspended due to the Covid-19 Pandemic and Restrictions enacted by the State and County

The entire Executive Board extends their Best Wishes to all Members, Retiree's and their Families over the Christmas and New Year Season. We know that these have been hard times for everyone, and sincerely hope that this crisis will be ended soon.

Letter Carriers and their families are no strangers to hard and difficult times and struggles. We are confident that we will continue to bear the burdens, as our past colleagues have, with strength, courage and a continued commitment to the American Public we serve.

God Bless you all, and Please be Safe

Mask, Socially Distance and Wash Hands



"The MailCall" is published monthly by "Heart of the Valley Branch 2462, NALC, 6910 Hayvenhurst Ave., Suite 101, 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.

O. W. C. P. REPORT

By
JEMMAYEN MACARAEG

Injured on the Job?

Hi friends! First and foremost, I would like to greet everybody a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year! I wish everybody more healthy years to come and that you will never have to deal with COVID-19.

With the pandemic and the holidays during this time of the year, we are more prone to accidents. Our customers are ordering more parcels than ever. I've had to deliver many things, ranging from 36 packs of toilet paper to a king size mattress. In this job, you can easily and unexpectedly get injured. No job is worth the risk and no service is so urgent that we cannot take time to perform our work **SAFELY**.

I have spoken about Traumatic Injury on the November article, and now I will share with you guys the other type of injury: The Occupational Diseases Injury.

Occupational Diseases are defined as injuries that occur over a period longer than one day or one work shift. You will need to fill out a CA-2 (Notice of Occupational Disease form) and provide a description of your work duties along with a medical narrative from a doctor that makes a casual connection between specific works factors and your diagnosed condition(s).

Here are 3 steps that can guide you on filing a CA-2:

STEPS 1: EMPLOYEE NARRATIVE

Prior to filing the CA-2, you need to explain your day-to-day duties as a letter carrier to your doctor. A written explanation of your job duties as a letter carrier provides your doctor with the information to write a medical opinion connecting specific work factors to your diagnosed conditions. Most doctors are very busy, so you need to keep your explanation to one page. Describe an average day on your route. Mail volume and deliveries fluctuate everyday so avoid exact numbers. Describe how long you sort and deliver mail. Estimate mail volumes, weights, distances and repetitions. Never exaggerate. Use action words that describe your work factors like walking, carrying, reaching, pushing, pulling etc.

To fully explain the range of letter carrier duties you can provide your doctor with the appropriate copies of/ or the link to the Letter Carrier Duties photo and explanations.

<https://www.nalc.org/workplace-issues/body/Letter-Carrier-Duties.pdf>.

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ATTENDANCE CHART BRANCH MEETINGS

MONTH	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
MAIN OFFICE	1	6	7	C	C	C	C	C	4	2	2	C
ENCINO	4	8	5	A	A	A	A	A	4	4	4	A
PANORAMA CITY	3	4	3	N	N	N	N	N	3	4	3	N
SHERMAN OAKS	4	3	3	C	C	C	C	C	3	2	3	C
SUN VALLEY	1	0	0	E	E	E	E	E	0	0	0	E
TARZANA	1	1	0	L	L	L	L	L	2	1	0	L
RETIREE'S	4	5	5	E	E	E	E	E	3	3	2	E
TOTAL	18	27	23	D	D	D	D	D	19	16	14	D

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

**NEXT MEETING

Will be Announced Pending Covid-19 Restrictions

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

January 15, 2021

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

"RETIREE CORNER" ATTENTION: !!!

All Breakfasts have been cancelled until further notice. To all our Retiree's and Regular Members we hope that you are staying safe in your homes during this crisis.

Bob Johnson

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Janette Dolabson

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From President Rolando:

To break the gridlock over ongoing negotiations with the White House and Senate over another round of COVID-19-relief, the House most recently advanced an additional relief package (H.R. 925). The bill, dubbed "Heroes Act 2.0", passed the House on party lines by a vote of 214-207, with 18 Democrats and all Republicans voting against the measure. House Democratic leadership scaled back on the size and scope of the measure to \$2.2 trillion, reflecting an urgency by House Democratic leadership to get some measure of relief passed. The original Heroes Act (H.R. 6800), which passed in May, was \$3 trillion and the Senate recently failed to advance a \$1.5 trillion "skinny" measure, showing the vast difference between the chambers on how much stimulus is needed and where it should be spent.

For the Postal Service, Heroes Act 2.0 includes \$15 billion (reduced from \$25 billion in the original measure) for the Postal Service to cover COVID-related expenses and removes the terms and conditions on the \$10 billion loan the CARES Act authorized this spring.

The new bill also includes workers compensation benefits for postal employees who contract COVID-19, but unlike the original Heroes Act, does not include hazard pay for frontline workers and postal employees. The measure would also continue unemployment insurance, provide another round of stimulus money to American families, additional Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) for small businesses, continued Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits, funding to the nation's schools and universities and additional resources for testing, tracing and treatment. It would also provide funding to prevent more than 40,000 layoffs of airline workers. While the House continued to keep up pressure on the Senate and White House to come to some sort of compromise, the Senate failed to advance any additional relief. NALC will work with the newly elected officials and continue to call for relief for the Postal Service, favorable terms and conditions for the \$10 billion Treasury loan and for hazard pay for our members on the front-line of this pandemic.

COVID-Related MOUs

As previously reported, NALC and the Postal Service agreed to continue several pandemic-related memorandums of understanding (MOUs) through the end of the year. These MOUs, found in NALC's Materials Reference System on the NALC website, include temporary expanded sick leave for dependent care (M-

01910); temporary additional paid leave for CCAs (M-01911); temporary use of the 7:01 rule (M-01913); temporary workplace changes to promote social distancing (M-01915); and temporary use of TCAs (M-01916). NALC and the Postal Service also agreed to another temporary time limit extension on Step B and arbitration appeals (M-01930), and an agreement giving local parties the ability to develop a sign-up process for full-time employees who previously did not, or could not, place their names on either the overtime desired list or work assignment list. The latter agreement (M-01931) is due to the potential effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on staffing levels. Both of these agreements will expire at the end of the year as well. We are currently discussing further extension of all of these MOUs beyond December 31st.

Also, still in effect through December 31st is a USPS memorandum (M-01914) which instructs managers and supervisors to allow liberal changes of schedule to accommodate employees who are dealing with childcare issues related to the pandemic.

The memorandum also provides for liberal sick leave usage for employees who are sick and liberal annual and leave without pay (LWOP) to the extent operationally feasible, treats COVID-19 related leave as scheduled (as opposed to unscheduled) leave, and directs that leave taken for COVID-19 related reasons during this time are not to be cited in discipline for failing to maintain an assigned schedule.

Annual Leave Carryover

After several weeks of discussions, NALC and the Postal Service also agreed to a memorandum of understanding (MOU) that increases the maximum allowable annual leave carryover amounts outlined in the Employee and Labor Relations Manual (ELM). For leave year 2021, regular work force career employees covered by the USPS-NALC National Agreement may carry over 520 hours of accumulated annual leave from leave year 2020 to leave year 2021.

Normally, as defined in ELM 512.321(a), bargaining unit employees have a maximum leave carryover of 440 hours. The MOU (M-01928) can be found in NALC's Materials Reference System on the NALC website. Although this memorandum did not impact the ELM provisions for payment of accumulated leave, after further discussion, the Postal Service has confirmed that employees that retire during leave year 2021 can receive a terminal leave payment of up to 520 hours.

Branch Meeting

There will be no Branch Meeting in January. Due to COVID Restrictions we will not be holding Branch meetings until those restrictions have been lifted. Stay safe and healthy!! Wear masks!

"THE MAIL CALL"

BRANCH 2462, NALC

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O. W. C. P. REPORT

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STEPS 2: THE DOCTOR'S NARRATIVE

Once you have your job description completed, take a copy of it to your doctor.

OWCP require a "rationalized" medical narrative that describes the casual relationship between specific work factors and the diagnosed injury. A rationalized narrative is one based on objective medical evidence such as test, x-rays, or MRIs that describes the physiological mechanism by which specific work factors caused, aggravated or accelerated the diagnosed condition.

Your doctor must state his or her opinion with "reasonable medical certainty." Reasonable medical certainty is a bureaucratic term required by OWCP.

The medical opinion of a board-certified specialist with expertise in your particular injury will have more weight with OWCP than a general practitioner. You can research doctors online or ask your general practitioner for a referral.

STEP 3: SUBMITTING THE CA-2

Once you have the medical narrative describing the causal relationship between your work and your medical condition, ask your supervisor for CA-2 and a CA-17 (Duty Status Report) or you can go to this link to print

<https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/owcp/regs/compliance/ca-2.pdf>

As you fill out the CA-2 you will come to question 11; Date you first became aware of the disease or illness. Answer question 11 as best as you can, OWCP needs to have a rough idea of when you had an initial diagnosis. Question 12 asks the date you first realized the disease or illness was caused or aggravated by your employment. The date your doctor signs his or her medical report will be the date you enter in question 12.

You should file the CA-2 as soon possible, preferably within 30 days from the date listed in question 12. However, the CA-2 will meet the statutory time requirement if filed no later than 3 years after the date of your last exposure to the work factors that caused the injury.

Complete your portion of the CA-2, make a copy of it and hand the original along with your narrative to your supervisor, do not place it on their desk or in their inbox. The supervisor's instructions for the CA-2 requires them to give you the signed receipt on (page4) immediately. Request a copy of the completed CA-2 for your file.

The Postal Service is required to send your CA-2 to OWCP within 10 working days of receiving it from you. If OWCP has not received your CA-2 after 10 working days, contact your shop steward or National Business Agent's office.

Once OWCP gets your CA-2 they will assign you a claim number and send you a letter. If you do not receive a letter from OWCP, call your OWCP district office and ask for your file number.

Medical reports should be sent directly to OWCP, not the Postal Service. Once you have the file number, you can mail the medical information – test results, medical narratives etc. directly to:

Office of Workers' Compensation Programs
PO Box 8300 London,
KY 40742

A better way is to directly upload the documents via OWCP's web portal, ECOMP. Go to: <https://www.ecomp.dol.gov/#>. On the right side of the page, under Need to Upload a Document, click on the green Access Case and Upload Document icon. Follow the instructions on the next page and record the DCN number once your files have been uploaded. Uploading your information is faster and more reliable than mailing.

When communicating with OWCP, it is essential to have your file number on every page, usually at the very top. Documents mailed to the London, Kentucky address get scanned; a page without a file number may never get into your claim file.

The Postal Service has an obligation to make every effort to find you work within your limitations. Request a copy of form CA-17, Duty Status Report from your supervisor. The Postal Service is responsible for filling out the job requirements on the left (side A) of the CA-17. Your doctor fills out the right (side B) of the CA-17, listing any medical restrictions. When your doctor has completed and signed part B, take a copy of the completed CA-17 and give one copy to your supervisor.