

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

**By
JEMMAYEN MACARAEG**

Harassment from management should be grieved despite hotline

In a recent article from Link, the USPS announced the following: The Postal Service has established a toll-free phone number for employees and managers seeking guidance on what actions to take in the event of an incident of alleged harassment.

The number is **877-521-4272**. Harassment is unwelcome behavior that an individual finds offensive and harmful, and that a reasonable person would consider intimidating, hostile or abusive. Such behavior is prohibited by the Postal Service and may also violate federal antidiscrimination laws. Workplace harassment may include offensive or derogatory comments, names or slurs; engaging in negative stereotyping; circulating or displaying inappropriate graphic materials; and engaging in physical or verbal threats, intimidation or humiliating actions. The offensive behavior could be a one time occurrence or may occur over a period of time. Although not every instance of inappropriate behavior may fit the legal definition of harassment, such behavior in the workplace undermines morale and may violate the Postal Service's standards of conduct and/or policies. USPS, through its supervisors and managers, takes prompt action to prevent, investigate, address and remedy conduct that is found to be against its policies and/or the law. The Postal Service will act to protect the confidentiality of complainants but cannot guarantee complete confidentiality. For more information, USPS encourages employees to review Publication 553, Employee's Guide to Understanding, Preventing, and Reporting Harassment, and/or call the harassment information line. (Emphasis added.)

If you feel the desire or need to use the above hotline to protest the harassment to which you are subjected, please do the following:

1. Make sure that you gather the facts that you have available, then draft out what you want to report. If you do it alone, you do not have the investigative rights of a shop steward. Only the union has those rights as specified in Articles 17 and 31 of the National Agreement.

2. Once you have determined what you want to report, make sure that you take notes on what information you gathered, and a word-for-word description of the facts as you report in your call.

3. Make sure that you take the names of the people with whom you speak, along with their titles and contact information, in the event that a follow-up will be necessary.

4. Ask them to identify what steps they will take to look into your concerns and when to expect them to respond to your needs.

Keep in mind, however, that your use of this USPS harassment hotline should not be used instead of the grievance procedure. Article 15 of the National Agreement provides that we must initiate a grievance within 14 days of the event that causes the grievance, or the grievance may be declared untimely.

The NALC has no control of the above process.

The union has no say in how your call will be handled. If you want to make sure that your complaint is handled, please see your shop steward promptly to make sure we can look into your complaint and file a grievance, if necessary, before expiration of the 14-day time limit.

The above message from the USPS is not new. It comes from the commitments made in the National Agreement going back to its roots in Section 115.4 of the Handbook M-39, 115.4 Maintain Mutual Respect Atmosphere:

The National Agreement sets out the basic rules and rights governing management and employees in their dealings

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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.

VICE PRESIDENT REPORT

by
JANETTE DOLABSON

Planning to retire ?

Information for NALC members planning to retire soon

While the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) makes all decisions regarding retirement entitlement, current employees are required to *apply* for retirement through the USPS Human Resources Shared Services (HRSSC). HRSSC can be reached by calling **877-477-3273, option 5**. When calling HRSSC, be prepared to provide your Employee ID and PIN.

Upon request, HRSSC will: Mail an individualized annuity estimate based on a projected retirement date provided by the employee; Schedule and provide telephonic individual pre-retirement counseling; Mail a packet of information (usually called the 'blue book') of forms and guidance.

HRSSC retirement services can alternately be accessed by employees close to retirement eligibility online using the LiteBlue eRetire application. Employees must know their Employee ID and USPS Pin numbers to access eRetire.

The LiteBlue eRetire application allows the following:

View and print individualized annuity estimates; Request and obtain a retirement application packet in one of two ways: Download and print a retirement application packet; Order a retirement application packet and receive it in the mail Schedule a retirement counseling session.

In addition to the information available from the USPS HRSSC, retirement information is available from OPM; and retirement information and advice is available to NALC members from the NALC Retirement Department.

The NALC Retirement Department publishes a leaflet titled "Preparing for Retirement," and Question & Answer booklets on retirement matters for CSRS and FERS

Retirement counseling

Letter carriers approaching retirement eligibility have a contractual right to **individual** pre-retirement counseling from the Postal Service, upon request. The purpose of the counseling is to promote fully informed retirement decisions by employees. The Postal Service individual counseling is provided telephonically by a retirement specialist at the USPS Human Resources Shared Services Center (HRSSC). Letter carriers initiate and schedule the counseling session by calling HRSSC at **877-477-3273 option 5**, or online at the Liteblue eRetire application.

Letter carriers have a right to this individual counseling **on the clock**, if desired. When a letter carrier wishes to receive the counseling on the clock, local management must arrange a reasonably private space. The letter carrier has the right to have his or her spouse and/or an advisor present during the counseling.

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ATTENDANCE CHART BRANCH MEETINGS

| MONTH | J | F | M | A | M | J | J | A | S | O | N |
|---------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|---|---|---|---|---|
| MAIN OFFICE | 2 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 5 | 5 | | | | | |
| ENCINO | 3 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 5 | 3 | | | | | |
| PANORAMA CITY | 2 | 2 | 4 | 4 | 2 | 3 | | | | | |
| SHERMAN OAKS | 7 | 5 | 7 | 6 | 7 | 8 | | | | | |
| SUN VALLEY | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | | | | | |
| TARZANA | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | | | | | |
| RETIREE'S | 7 | 5 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 5 | | | | | |
| TOTAL | 21 | 18 | 21 | 22 | 26 | 24 | | | | | |

NEXT MEETING TUESDAY

JULY

2nd

"2024"

6:30 p.m.

BRANCH OFFICE

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

July 7, 2024

WEB PAGE.... WWW.NALCBRANCH2462.ORG
BRANCH OFFICE.....818-786-8505
O P C PERSONNEL OFFICE.....818-374-5600
[E-Mail.....Branch2462nalc@gmail.com](mailto:Branch2462nalc@gmail.com)

"RETIREE CORNER"

ATTENTION: !!!!

Our next Breakfast Meeting will be held at Denny's Restaurant , (Corner of Sherman Way & DeCelis). **It will begin at 09:00 AM. Date will be June 22 ,2024 (4th Saturday)** So, please mark your calendar.....We hope to see you there. Thank You

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

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with each other, but it is the front-line manager who controls management's attempt to maintain an atmosphere between employer and employee which assures mutual respect for each other's rights and responsibilities.

Prior to the existence of the Joint Statement on Violence and Behavior in the Workplace (JSOV), this M-39 language has existed for many decades and for years was the basis of our grievances protesting the treatment of employees (see C12168, in which the offending manager was required to issue a written apology, and C11805, in which the offending manager was required to post a written apology for inappropriate harassment of the grievant). There are many other cases throughout the country that our NALC advocates have presented.

The bottom line is, if you don't object to the way you are treated, nothing will change. I have been asking you to do your best to observe how others are treated and stand up for each other as witnesses so that we can help make the changes necessary. For a listing of the other workplace issues articles, please go to my Safety and Health additional resources page at: nalc.org/workplace-issues/safety-and-health/safety-and-health-resources.

Keep an eye on each other.

Resource: May 2024 Postal Record, Director Safety and Health Manuel L. Peralta Jr.

Senate introduces Protect Our Letter Carriers Act (S. 4356)

On May 16, Sens. Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY) and Josh Hawley (R-MO) introduced the Protect Our Letter Carriers Act (S. 4356) in the Senate, mirroring H.R. 7629.

"NALC appreciates Sen. Gillibrand and Sen. Hawley's leadership in introducing the Protect Our Letter Carriers Act. Every employee has the right to be safe and protected on the job. Our hope is that this legislation will deter these violent crimes and keep letter carriers safe on the job," NALC President Brian L. Renfro said. "I urge Congress to pass this bill, which would protect the nation's letter carriers who dutifully deliver medications, checks, ballots, packages and other essential mail that all Americans depend on."

"Amid a concerning uptick in postal crime, I'm proud to be introducing this critical bipartisan legislation to protect our mail and those who deliver it," Gillibrand said. "This bill will make long-overdue upgrades to mailboxes around the country to safeguard against the theft of Americans' sensitive information. It will also strengthen penalties for assaulting a postal worker, helping ensure that the hard-working men and women who deliver our mail are not put in harm's way because of their jobs. I look forward to getting this bill passed."

"Postal carriers work day in and day out to fulfill critical needs, like package deliveries, that Americans often take for granted," Hawley said. "The recent uptick in violent assaults against these men and women is unacceptable and inexcusable. Congress should protect our postal workers on the job, and that starts by increasing enforcement of the law for crimes committed against them."

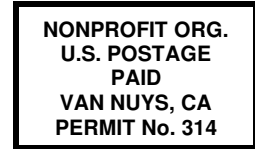
Health & Safety Report

by
Lucy Jacobs

- 10AM - 6PM is when the sun can burn you the most (highest intensity). Check the UV index on your weather app
- Generously apply sunscreen 15-20 minutes prior to sun exposure
- Reapply every 2 hours or after sweating/swimming or toweling off
- Use a higher SPF at tropical locations or at higher altitudes where the atmosphere is thinnest
- SPF = Sun Protection Factor, indicates how much longer an individual can be in the sun before becoming burned when using a product vs when not
- SPF 15 allows 1/15 of the rays through (93% repelled) SPF 30 allows 1/30 of the rays through (97% repelled). SPF 50 allows 1/50 of the rays through (98% repelled) • You can still get burned from the sun's reflection off of sand/snow/water/concrete, anything light in color or that has mirror like properties
- Wear a hat and sunglasses, long sleeves and pants
- UV rays can penetrate clouds
- Certain medications can cause your skin to be more sensitive to sunburn • If you cannot avoid sunburn, use aloe vera to treat
- Chemical sunscreen: absorbs into the skin and converts the rays to non damaging heat • Mineral sunscreen: creates a physical barrier and sits on top of the skin and reflects the sun's ray off
- Use a **broad spectrum** sunscreen to protect against UVA and UVB rays as both can lead to skin cancer
- UVA ultra violet aging. Longer wavelength that penetrates deeper into the skin, more common, can penetrate glass (example: car windows)
- UVB ultra violet burning. Shorter wavelength, higher energy
- UVC rays are blocked by the Earth's atmosphere so you don't have to worry about those • Rub in all types of sunscreen (spray, stick, or lotion), make sure it is not expired or it may not be as effective
- People of all skin types should use sunscreen

"THE MAIL CALL" BRANCH 2462, NALC

Lucy Jacobs, Editor
6910 Hayvenhurst Ave., # 104
Van Nuys, CA 91406



Address Service Requested

Branch Meeting Minutes

June 4, 2024

By

Steve Seyfried, Secretary

The Meeting was held at the Branch 2462 Union Hall 6910 Hayvenhurst Ave, #104 Van Nuys California. It was called to order by PRESIDENT MACARAEG at 6:47 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by SGT-AT-ARMS GODDARD

MOMENT OF SILENCE--In Memory of all LETTER CARRIERS & RETIREES that have passed in 2024.

ROLL CALL OF OFFICERS

PRESENT--MACARAEG, SEYFRIED, WILSON, MULLINAX, GODDARD, JOHNSON, VALENZUELA, BURTON, JACOBS

ABSENT---J. DOLABSON, L. DOLABSON

MINUTES ACCEPTED AS PRINTED IN MAIL

APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP---NONE

COMMUNICATIONS READ

BILLS READ---MOTION TO PAY

M/S/C

COMMITTEE REPORTS

AUDIT & BUDGET---TRUSTEES Audit will be on July 17, 2024, at the Branch Office.

SAFETY & HEALTH---JACOBS Look for my article in MailCall 5 Retiree's present tonight.

MDA FUND---GODDARD \$ 3,315.21 in the fund

HBR---BURTON All employees must resign up

for your Health Plan..

MDA---BURTON Jamba Juice cards are again available. MDA Summer Camp visitor day will be July 8th. If you wish to attend contact the Branch office for directions.

MBA---BURTON Still waiting for last training class to be held.

POLITICAL---BURTON Nothing new has changed.

EDITOR---JACOBS All accounts are up to date.

FINANCE REPORT---MULLINAX Waiting for Sherman Oaks to turn in their Food Drive receipts.

TREASURERS REPORT---WILSON Financial Reports were read.

MOTION TO ACCEPT REPORTS AS READ M/S/C

VICE-PRESIDENT DOLABSON No Report

PRESIDENT MACARAEG Reported on the very successful Retiree Class held on Sunday 6/2. Over 45 people attended. Food Drive was at about 25,000 lbs. Slightly less than last year.

OLD BUSINESS

NEW BUSINESS

MOTION--Move that the Branch pay YOGGI RILEY

\$ 200.00 for conducting the Retiree Training class

on June 2, 2024

M/S/C

MOTION--Move that the Branch purchase a new

shredder. Cost not to exceed \$ 200.00

M/S/C

UNDERLINED INDICATES UNANIMOUS VOTE

MDA DRAWING

\$ 2 STEVE SEYFRIED--RETIREE---SHERMAN OAKS--DONATED

\$ 2 CALVIN BROOKINS-RETIREE---CIVIC CENTER--DONATED

\$ 2 CALVIN BROOKINS-RETIREE---CIVIC CENTER--DONATED

Meeting Adjourned 8:49 PM

VICE PRESIDENT REPORT

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The counseling will include (but not be limited to) assistance with completing forms (e.g., StandSF2801 and any other forms related to FEGLI, FEHB, and TSP) and military and civilian service deposit issues.

If a letter carrier is unable to begin or complete a scheduled individual retirement counseling session, that issue will be addressed at the local level jointly by the union and management.

The Postal Service is required to provide individual and group retirement counseling. That obligation flows from [law](#) (the Civil Service Retirement Act and Federal Employees Retirement Act), Office of Personnel Management [guidance](#) (OPM is the federal agency that has authority to administer the CSRS and FERS), USPS Employee and Labor Relations Manual provisions, and [national level settlements with the NALC](#).

Should you encounter any difficulties obtaining individual retirement counseling, contact the NALC Retirement Department for assistance.

Annuity Estimates

HRSSC mails an individualized computer-generated report called the annuity estimate is mailed twice each year to the home address of those employees currently eligible for retirement. Employees who are within three years of retirement eligibility may request and receive individualized annuity estimates by calling HRSSC. HRSSC. Employees within 5 years of retirement eligibility may view and print individualized annuity estimates online at LiteBlue using the eRetire application.

The NALC Retirement Department provides generalized monthly charts showing [annuity estimates](#) under both CSRS and FERS.

NOTICE FOR CONVENTION DELEGATES

There will be meeting of all Convention Delegates shortly after the Regular Branch Meeting on July 2, 2024.

All delegates are required to attend, as you will receive important Information and your Travel Funds