

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

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

**By
JEMMAYEN MACARAEG**

Emotional injuries and OWCP, Part 1

Workers claiming emotional injuries under the Federal Employees' Compensation Act (FECA) have to meet the same conditions of coverage as workers claiming physical injuries. They have the same burden of proof to establish the five basic elements of their claim:

- 1) time
- 2) civil employee
- 3) fact of injury
- 4) performance of duty
- 5) causal relationship

However, establishing these basic elements in emotional injury cases can be much more challenging than in physical injury cases. Claims examiners are often skeptical in emotional cases. While physical injuries are objectively verifiable through direct observation, clinical studies or imaging, emotional injuries are largely invisible. And in emotional occupational disease cases in particular, the causes of the injury may be complicated and difficult to establish. This is especially true in cases that attribute the emotional condition to misconduct, error, or abuse by Postal Service management. In such cases, the injured employee will also shoulder an additional burden of proof.

Emotional injuries can be either traumatic (CA-1), or an occupational disease (CA-2). For letter carriers, they also fall into two broad categories:

- 1) **in-house** emotional injuries that arise through interactions with USPS management or co-workers
- 2) **out-of-house** emotional injuries that arise from encounters and incidents with the public while performing letter carrier duties, usually outside the office on the street.

Although in-house emotional injuries can be traumatic, they usually involve occupational disease. Almost all out-of-house emotional

injuries are traumatic and result from assaults, threats, animal attacks or and traumatic accidents.

Historically, most emotional injury cases have been in-house and have involved allegations that the stresses of the workplace environment and management misconduct, or abuse, have led to the claimed emotional condition. In recent years, because of the unfortunate surge in assaults and attacks on letter carriers, out-of-house emotional injuries have become more and more common.

As President Brian L. Renfroe describes it in his President's Message in the September 2023 Postal Record: "Every day our members are being targeted in neighborhoods nationwide. Violence, assault, robbery, shootings, and even murder have become part of the job in many locations." Not only do letter carriers sustain physical injuries and even death as a result of these assaults, they also often sustain emotional injuries as well. All of these injuries should be covered under FECA.

Because out-of-house emotional injuries almost always involve specific traumatic events, getting them accepted by OWCP has always been more straightforward than in-house emotional injuries. However, prior to 2023, OWCP required a medical report and rationale from either a psychiatrist or a licensed clinical psychologist in order to accept the condition in all emotional condition cases. Letter carriers who sustained emotional conditions as a result of assaults, in particular, had a difficult time sending psychiatrists or licensed clinical psychologists to diagnose and treat these conditions. It often took months or even the greater part of a year before they could receive treatment for conditions that demand immediate attention.

All this changed with FECA Transmittal 23-04, published in May 2023, which revised FECA Procedure Manual Chapter 2-805, "Causal Relationship," regarding the requirements for a medical specialist needed to establish an emotional condition. With the revision, only extended occupational disease claims for emotional conditions now require a medical report from a psychiatrist or clinical psychologist to support the explanation of causal relationship required for the claim to be accepted.

(Continued on Page 2)

"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.

ATTENDANCE CHART BRANCH MEETINGS

MONTH	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N
MAIN OFFICE	4	5	6	7	6	3					
ENCINO	2	1	1	2	3	1					
PANORAMA CITY	4	4	6	2	3	3					
SHERMAN OAKS	8	5	7	9	6	4					
SUN VALLEY	0	0	0	0	0	0					
TARZANA	1	3	2	1	1	1					
RETIREE'S	8	4	7	7	6	6					
TOTAL	27	27	29	28	25	21					

NEXT MEETING TUESDAY JULY 1st 2025 6:30 p.m. BRANCH OFFICE

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

July 6, 2025

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 & DeCelsis). **It will begin at 09:00 AM. Date will be, July 26, 2025 (4th Saturday)** So, please mark your calendar.....We hope to see you there. Thank You

President's Report (Continued from Page 1)

The revision allows physicians with other specialties or even family physicians to submit medical reports to establish initial claims and provide treatment in traumatic emotional injury cases. This has been a lifesaver for letter carriers who have been emotionally traumatized by assault and are ill-equipped to deal with jumping through bureaucratic hoops. Not only are their claims accepted more quickly, they more promptly receive the benefits they are entitled to under the FECA, such as counseling and wage-loss compensation if they are incapacitated from working due to their condition.

According to the Transmittal, the revision is intended to apply to "typically traumatic injuries where the event or events are very specific, unambiguous and are generally clearer to physicians outside the psychiatric specialty as incidents that may naturally result in an extreme emotional reaction." In such cases, evidence establishing the traumatic event, such as a police report or accident report, should be submitted as part of filing the claim, in addition to the medical report.

The revisions from FECA Transmittal 23-04 do not apply to emotional conditions in CA-2 occupational disease claims—usually in-house cases that involve allegations of stress or abuse in the workplace by postal management. Not only are these cases much more difficult to get accepted, OWCP also will still require a causal explanation from a psychiatrist or licensed clinical psychologist.

Referenced: Postal Record April 2025, Regional Workers' Compensation Assistant Coby Jones

ATTENTION RETIREE'S !!!

You may be familiar with the saying "There is no such thing as a Free Lunch" While this may be true, it does not pertain to Breakfast. The Branch holds a Retiree Breakfast meeting every 4th Saturday of the Month. No Voting, just a friendly get together to talk and eat. The best thing is

IT IS FREE !!!

That's right, if you are a retired member in good standing of Branch 2462 your Breakfast is provided at no charge
You Heard Right !

FREE !!!!

So what are you waiting for, meet with us this month.

When 4th Saturday of When Announced
Where Denny's Restaurant,
(Corner of Sherman Way & DeCelsis).
Time 9:00 AM

If you have trouble with transportation contact FRANK BRASH and we will try and arrange for a ride. Come on out, you will have a great time, and the price is right !

Active Members are invited to attend also if it is your Day Off !!

MBA UPDATE:
NALC Group Accidental Death Benefit
By Pedro Morales (MBA Rep)

NALC provides an Accident Death benefit for all NALC members. The NALC Group Insurance Coverage has been provided since 1985. All active, retired and city carrier assistants of the NALC in good standing are eligible for the benefit. It also includes other non-supervisory postal career service employees. The basic benefit coverage is \$5,000 and there is no cost to the members.

The plan is administered by the MBA. A certificate is provided as part of the NALC welcome packet for new members.

Additionally, optional supplemental ADB and insurance coverage is available to local branches at a cost to the branch. There are two types of additional coverage: Supplemental ADB (accidental death benefit) and Supplemental Term Life insurance.

The Supplemental ADB coverage has nine (9) optional benefit amounts with a monthly cost of \$0.03 per \$1,000 of additional coverage per member. All active members in the branch must be covered.

The Supplemental Term Insurance has sixteen (16) optional benefit amounts. The first \$5,000 of coverage has a monthly cost of \$0.44 per \$1,000 of coverage per member. Additional cover above \$5,000 has a monthly cost of \$0.33 per \$1,000 per member. Again all active members must be covered. For more information please contact the branch office or nalc.org/mba.



HOPING THAT ALL OUR MEMBERS
HAVE A SAFE AND SANE HOLIDAY

LAST PUNCH BUNCH
CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR
RECENTLY RETIRED MEMBERS



DAN TRAN (L)

PRESIDENT MACARAEG (R)



PRESIDENT MACARAEG (L)

CARMEN ESPINOZA (R)



PAULINO AVELAR (L)

STEWART FERNANDO CUADRAS (R)

**THE MAIL CALL
BRANCH 2462,
NALC
6910 Hayvenhurst
104
Van Nuys, CA 91406**

**NONPROFIT
ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
VAN NUYS, CA
PERMIT No. 314**

**Address Service
Requested**

**Branch Meeting Minutes
June 3, 2025
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 6:58 p.m.
The Pledge of Allegiance was led by SGT-AT-ARMS GODDARD

MOMENT OF SILENCE--In Memory all Active & Retired members who have passed this year.

ROLL CALL OF OFFICERS

PRESENT--MACARAEG, SEYFRIED, MULLINAX, WILSON, GODDARD, VALENZUELA, DOLABSON, JEFFREY, BURTON, MORALES, MARISCAL

ABSENT—NONE

VACANT—VICE PRESIDENT

MINUTES ACCEPTED AS PRINTED IN MAILCALL

APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP--NONE

COMMUNICATIONS READ

BILLS READ--NONE

COMMITTEE REPORTS

AUDIT & BUDGET—TRUSTEES Next Audit will be on July 23, 2025 & Budget on Jan 8, 2026.

SAFETY & HEALTH If you are out of your vehicle the engine must ALWAYS BE OFF. Also no texting while operating the vehicle. Ear Buds are still a problem you may not use them while moving or delivering mail.

RETIREES 6 Retiree's present tonight.

MDA FUND--GODDARD \$ 1788.00 in the fund

HBR—BURTON If you receive a Letter of Demand be sure to contact your Shop Steward immediately.

MDA—BURTON Continuing setting up a Bowl-a-Thon, date will be announced soon. Jamba Juice cards are still available.

MBA—MORALES Going to training class in July. Please continue to watch for my articles.

FOOD DRIVE—BURTON This year was a slow year for the food drive. While we were somewhat disappointed, we were still able to donate over \$ 8,000 lbs. to needed food banks in our area. Thanks to all those who helped.

POLITICAL—JEFFREY The new tax bill did pass, but at this point things are being taken away that it is hard to know what it will exactly do. We will continue to monitor and try to give our members the best possible information that we have.

FINANCE REPORT—MULLINAX Happy to report that all stations have turned in their Food Drive receipts. Thanks
TREASURERS REPORT--WILSON Financial Reports read.
Motion to accept Financial Reports as read M/S/C

PRESIDENT MACARAEG

Thanks to all who helped with the Food Drive. Local Negotiations for Memo of Understanding will be starting next week. We will have information after meetings have been held. New article 8 rules will begin in July. There will be training sessions and stand-ups given to fully explain and make the transition as easy as possible.

OLD BUSINESS—Recent by-laws have been approved by National Trustees.

NEW BUSINESS

MOTION—Move that the Branch enroll in the Quick Books Training and certification classes. This covers 5 member, to be chosen by the President. Cost to the Branch is \$ 999.99 M/S/C

MOTION—Move that the Branch renew the Quick Books accounting program for 1 year subscription. Cost to the Branch is \$ 999.00 M/S/C

MOTION—Move that the Branch renew the membership in the L A County Federation of Labor for 1 year. Covers 2 delegates, to be chosen by the President. Cost to the Branch is \$ 943.34 M/S/C

MOTION—Move that the Branch renew the Branch Website, from July 27, 2025 to July 26, 2026. Cost For the Webhosting is \$ 264.00, Cost for the Domain Name is \$ 9.99. Total cost to the Branch \$ 273.99. M/S/C

UNDERLINED INDICATES UNANIMOUS VOTE

GOOD OF THE ASSOCIATION

Brother LARRY DOLABSON took a moment to Thank the Branch for the beautiful flowers sent to Janette's Celebration of Life

MDA DRAWING

\$ 2.00 KEITH ASHLEY—MAIN OFFICE—DONATED
\$ 2.00 "RAFA" PEREZ—PANORAMA CITY
\$ 3.00 TIA WILSON--RETIRED

Meeting Adjourned 8:11 PM