



National Postal Mail Handlers Union

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Local 303 COVID-19 Virus Update # 7

I would like to thank all the Mail Handler Hero's that are showing up to work in these uncertain times. We are moving more mail than we did in peak season with less staffing. In the Pacific Area we are processing 2 million parcels a day over the peak season numbers. I can finally see that management is bringing in MHA reinforcement that is greatly needed. Help is on the way.

The National President Paul Hogrogian has signed a MOU that allows the Postal Service to exceed the allowable percentage for MHAs for a period of 60 days. This is the help that is finally coming. The MOU was for 60 days but in a recent conversation I had with Paul, he stated that he would extend the MOU if the Postal Service needed it. With the late start in hiring and the increase in parcel mail they will need it.

The APWU also agreed to a similar MOU for PSE, these are the new employees that are identified as mail processing assistant (MPA). They are contractually prohibited from doing mail handler work. The NPMHU would not agree to a new term for employees hired under the COVID-19 MOU, this gives them all the protection's as all MHAs. They can't be let go unless it's for mail volume decline or just cause. If the facility is over the MHA cap and there's no extension, that will be a national decision on what happens.

This week I'm able to report the number of co-workers that have returned to work throughout the country and its 11,595 postal employees back on the job. There are currently 6,763 employees in quarantine and 1,806 confirmed cases. On May 1, 2020 the Pacific Area had a cumulative total of 1,045 quarantine cases with 291 currently under quarantine. The returned to work number of employees is 778, and there are 70 confirmed positive cases.

The spread of the coronavirus will eventually invade all 14 mail processing plants under Local 303s jurisdiction. The latest to join the list is the Pasadena Plant. Currently there is positive test in all districts, Los Angeles 9 positive cases, Sierra Coastal 15 positive cases, Santa Ana 7 positive cases, San Diego 13 positive cases, and Sierra Nevada with no updated numbers on confirmed positive cases.

Just a reminder the MOU that was signed by the National President for MHAs to get an additional 80 hours of sick leave at full pay will expire on May 17, 2020. These 80 hours of paid leave can be used for absences related to COVID-19 to include providing childcare. As an MHA or shop steward for the MHA, make sure management uses the MOU 80 hours and not the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) because it also provides additional 80 hours of paid leave but expires later.

With the shelter in place order being relaxed on May 15, 2020 by Governor Gavin Newsom, the Local office will be getting Sandra the Local Office secretary back to work and start on the long road to normal, I hope.

Eddie Cowan
Local President