



# National Postal Mail Handlers Union

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## Local 303 COVID-19 Virus Update

As we all are aware City, County, State and Federal Governments are setting guidelines for public gathering and non-essential activities. As of the writing of this update the recommended gathering is 10 people and those 10 should exercise social distances of six feet apart. The gathering of 10 or less does not include work. The mail must move! In the past we worked through the Anthrax crisis and now we have the Coronavirus pandemic. We will get through this also.

In some local areas the complete school district has been shut down for a minimum of 14 days. I have gotten lots of calls regarding child care and attendance related questions. If you have a child care problem due to the school closure the Postal Service at the highest levels has committed to working with all mail handlers to try and accommodate them. They will work with you with a schedule change to other times, tours or off days. The Postal Service will also allow you to use 80 hours of dependent care sick leave if requested. Please contact your Branch President or Local Office if you have any scheduling problems.

The Federal Government has also required that if you return from a country that is on the CDC level three list, or return from a cruise that someone else test positive on, you must be quarantined for 14 days. If any mail handlers require quarantine, they will be paid administrative pay. The confirmed cases for Postal Employees, thank God, is currently holding at seven to include 1 mail handler.

At each facility and on each tour, management should be keeping you updated with stand-up talks and posters with Center for Disease Control (CDC) safeguards. Mail handlers that wish to use mask and disposable gloves just need to request them. Hand sanitizer should be available at all times. If this is not happening please contact your Branch President or myself.

I ask you as a co-worker if you are sick with flu-like symptoms please stay at home. The Union has gotten the Postal Service to agree to be compassionate regarding attendance while we serve the public. If as a mail handler for reasons beyond your control, your sick leave has been exhausted, advance sick leave can be approved.

As a Union we are committed to the safety of all mail handlers and the public at large. The Local has and will continue to follow the publicly announced abatement protocols. I as Local President will continue to participate in Pacific Area and each district conference calls to ensure that the Mail Handlers have the most up to date information. This is an evolving situation and I do expect changes. We as your Local Executive Board are in constant phone communication regarding the steps outlined in this update.

In following the abatement protocols, I am waiving all Branch Meetings that are due to be scheduled in the months of March, April and May. All Local events that will create a safety concern are now suspended until further notice. This includes picnics, trainings and meetings where more than 10 people would be expected to participate. Due to the recommended age restriction on airline travel, the COVID-19 Virus has caused the cancellation of some arbitration cases. The Local office will be operating under normal work hours, but the Executive Board agreed that abatement protocols need to be followed.

The National and Regional Offices have taken similar steps to address this national emergency.