



September 2021

Business Agent's Report

NALC

**Labor Management Meetings** – Over the past few years some branches have become lenient and allowed management to avoid Labor Management meetings. Article 17.5.A of the National Agreement entitles local branches to meet with management in regularly scheduled Joint Labor-Management meetings for the purpose of discussing, exploring, and considering with management matters of mutual concern. This is an opportunity for branch officers to address issues beyond contractual obligations.

**Retirement Seminar** – Retired NBA Mike Weir has agreed to conduct a Virtual Seminar on Sunday, November 7, 2021 at 9:30 a.m. The seminar will last approximately 4 to 5 hours. In order to attend, you will need to receive an email invitation (normally sent out the week before). Please contact your branch president who will submit your name and email address to me. You may also call the Region 5 office and leave your name, branch # and email address.

**OWCP** – While many of us can't agree on masks or vaccinations we can agree that letter carriers on the front line of this pandemic should be protected if they contract Covid-19 virus now and into the future. Because Covid-19 is new we don't know what if any long-term health consequences might arise once someone has gotten the virus. To that end DOL/OWCP has made it much easier for postal employees to get claims approved. The criteria are much easier to meet because letter carriers have been declared to be front line workers by OWCP.

- 1) You were diagnosed with Covid -19 between the dates of January 27, 2020 through January 27, 2023; and,
- 2) Your duties include any risk of exposure. Specifically, within 21 days of your diagnosis of Covid-19, you carried out duties that-
  - a. included contact with patients, members of the public, or co-workers; or
  - b. included a risk of exposure to the novel coronavirus.

Fill out a CA-1 Covid claim form. Upload your positive test result, verify on the CA-1 Covid form that you were exposed to the general public or co-workers within 21 days of the positive test and file the claim. Branch presidents were sent a bulletin with hyperlinks to everything you need to file the claim, including tutorial videos. If you didn't get one or would like another copy, just contact the NBA office. This will protect you down the road should you ever have medical issues related to having gotten Covid-19 and need to be off work for a period of time.

**COVID-19 vaccinations: Fast, Easy, & Free** – COVID-19 vaccinations are available at locations across the country, mostly through state or local governments, medical facilities, and pharmacies. For example, CVS Caremark is now offering COVID-19 vaccinations in thousands of



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CVS pharmacy locations around the country. No matter where you live, there is likely a CVS pharmacy near you. Getting vaccinated at CVS is fast and free for all letter carriers.

At CVS, the vaccination will come at no cost to you regardless of what health insurance you plan you have, or even if you have no health insurance. To schedule a vaccination appointment at a CVS Pharmacy near you or for more information, click here (<https://www.cvs.com/immunizations/covid-19-vaccine?cid=redir-covidvaccine> ).

Through September 30, active letter carriers can use Employee Federal Emergency Leave (EFEL) to take off from work and get vaccinated. When requesting this leave, you need to submit a completed PS Form 3971, Request for or Notification of Absence and a COVID-19 Emergency Federal Employee Leave (EFEL) Employee Notification and Leave Request Form. You will also need to submit a signed Employee Agreement in Connection with Emergency Federal Employee Leave (EFEL) if this is your first use of EFEL. For more information on EFEL and for the forms mentioned above, click here (<https://www.nalc.org/news/nalc-updates/body/USPS-EFEL-Guidance.pdf> ).

Vaccinations are proven to be the most effective defense against COVID-19. Scheduling an appointment or receiving the vaccination only takes a few minutes, is free to all letter carriers, and does not require you to use your personal leave. If you have specific questions about vaccinations related to your individual health circumstances, please consult a healthcare professional.

**Contract COLA: 4<sup>th</sup> COLA Is \$1,934** – The fourth regular COLA under the 2019-2023 National Agreement is \$1,934 annually. The fourth COLA is based on the increase in the CPI-W between the base index month and July 2021, less any previously calculated COLAs, and is payable the second full pay period following the release of the July 2021 index. The three COLAs that have been calculated under the 2019-2023 National Agreement, totaling 37 cents per hour, are as follows: 1st COLA, 8 cents per hour (\$166 annually), 2nd COLA, 9 cents per hour (\$188 annually), and the 3rd COLA, 20 cents per hour (\$416 annually).

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