

# Mail Handler News

NPMHU Local 307 - Michigan

April 5, 2008

## More Hiring Approved

The Kalamazoo P & DC will be hiring more mail handlers soon. There will be an additional 3-5 mail handlers in a combination of PTFs and PTRs according to information provided to the Union at a recent Labor/Management meeting.

## Attendance Control Rampage in Progress

As some of you may be well aware, management is currently trying to get some kind of grasp on attendance in the Kalamazoo P & DC. The current method seems to consist of issuing as many disciplinary actions as possible, whether or not proper reviews and discussions have taken place. This is not corrective in any shape or form. It's designed to punish and scare employees. While the Union does not condone poor attendance, it has stated in grievance after grievance that discipline is to be corrective, and to be corrective employees need to understand the expectations. Attendance expectations should be clear and not some kind of "double secret probation" as they are now. A few things that you should remember are:

1. If you are being given a discussion, the supervisor should tell you it's a discussion. An attendance review is NOT a discussion.
2. If you or an immediate family member have a serious medical condition, you may qualify for FMLA. Do not assume that your supervisor will inform you of this, although they have the legal responsibility to do so. See a Union official if any type of medical issue is going on with you or a family member.
3. If you know you will need to take time off for a medical condition, request the leave in advance and assure that it is documented as SCHEDULED.
4. If you are asked to go with a supervisor to an office or room away from the workroom floor and they begin asking you questions, immediately request to have a Union representative present. You have the right to have representation or the questioning must stop.

The best bet is to only use unscheduled sick leave when you are sick and cannot work. Your sick leave is your only income if you have a long term medical problem. Consider it an investment that increases in value with each step increase, contract increase, and cost of living increase you get. There is a movement in Congress towards passing legislation that will pay you for unused sick leave balances at retirement if you are in the FERS retirement system. More information will be provided on that when it becomes available.

## Displacement and Improper Movement

**A**lthough the issue has been discussed at Labor Management meetings and has been the subject of many grievance settlements, some supervisors insist on violating Article 12 of the National Agreement. The movement of employees from one assignment to another is outlined in the National Agreement and in the Local Memorandum of Understanding. Article 12 states that casual employees should be moved from a work assignment first. Out of craft employees should be moved next, although the NPMHU would NOT file a grievance regarding an out of craft employee being moved improperly. PTF mail handlers should be moved next and it should be noted that PTF mail handlers do NOT have relative seniority standing in regards to work assignments. The Local Memorandum of Understand further details the next movements. Employees in an overtime status should be moved next, followed by employees who do not hold a bid in the assignment they are being moved from. Last, bid holding employees on their regular schedule should be moved out in JUNIORITY order. Sounds simple, doesn't it. We cannot figure out why it cannot be accomplished on a regular basis.

If an employee is moved from a work assignment, management is prohibited from moving another employee into that assignment to replace them. One of the classic examples of displacement violations is when management moves a bid holding mail handler from the AI, only to send over a clerk casual to prep mail.

If you think you have been improperly displaced from your work assignment, please ask to see a Union representative.

## FMLA Problems Continue

**E**very new year brings a renewed effort by the FMLA Denial Coordinators to discourage as many people from using their legal right to protected leave for serious illnesses as possible. The Union has had discussions with District management over the conduct of the coordinators in that office, as well as the inconsistency in which they deny and approve leave. If you have a problem with an FMLA request, bring it to a Union representative for assistance. We can make some phone calls for you and we also can contact the Local 307 FMLA representative, Mary Misuraca Zerr for further assistance. If you wish to contact Ms. Misuraca Zerr personally, her phone number is available from a Union representative.

## Worker's Memorial Day

**A**pril 28 is when AFL/CIO affiliated labor organizations observe Worker's Memorial Day. It is a day to reflect upon and remember our coworkers who are killed or injured while at work. Please remember to work safely. Also report any unsafe conditions that you encounter.