

THE

# MAIL HANDLER

SPRING 2019

THE QUARTERLY PUBLICATION OF THE NATIONAL POSTAL MAIL HANDLERS UNION

BARGAINING

DEADLINE

8

Mail Handlers Come  
Together for Semi-  
Annual Meeting

28

NPMHU Women's  
Committee Report

31

Mail Handlers  
Support JDRF

A

P

P

R

O

A

C

H

E

S

# Dental and Vision Plans Available All Year!



Did you forget to enroll in a dental or vision plan during Open Season? Don't worry. You can easily enroll in MHBP Dental and Vision Plans at *any* time in the year—even if you aren't enrolled in an MHBP health plan!

## **Our comprehensive dental benefits include:**

- Preventive Care covered 100% twice a year
- Coverage for services from basic to major
- Orthodontic benefits

## **Our comprehensive vision benefits include:**

- Eye exam and lenses every 12 months for just \$10
- Up to \$120 for frames every 24 months or contact lenses every 12 months
- Nationwide coverage for eye exams, frames and lenses, contacts, laser vision correction discounts and more!

No matter what job you do in the service of the U.S. public, this plan is your plan.

For more information, call **800-410-7778**  
or visit **MHBP.com**.

**Open to Everyone**  
**MHBP**<sup>SM</sup>  
Brought to you by Aetna



8-13



# THE CHALLENGES OF NATIONAL BARGAINING

Paul V. Hogrogian, National President



**O**n April 30, 2019, Postmaster General Megan Brennan testified before the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee on the Financial Condition of the United States Postal Service. During that testimony, Brennan reported that mail volume has declined by 31% since 2017. First class mail, the most profitable mail product, declined by 41% during that same period. The Postmaster General projected a \$125 Billion cumulative loss over the next 10 years in the absence of legislative (Postal Reform) and regulatory (Postal Regulatory Commission Rate Case) reforms. A large percentage of this projected deficit can be attributed to the ill-advised mandate that requires the Postal Service to “pre-fund” several decades of retiree health benefits for future retirees. The Postmaster General declared that without Postal Reform and without a favorable outcome of the Rate Case, the Postal Service is “likely to run out of cash in 2024.”

The Postmaster General also announced that the USPS is working with the Board of Governors to formulate a “10-year plan” to return the organization to financial stability. While the details of the 10-year plan are still being worked through, the plan could include some of the following:

- [Postal Reform Legislation](#)
- [Rate Flexibility](#)
- [Closing and Consolidation of Mail Processing Facilities](#)
- [Closing of Post Offices](#)
- [Reduction in Delivery Frequency](#)
- [Increased Centralized Delivery](#)
- [Reduced wages and benefits of future employees](#)

Nothing is definite yet. Many elements of this plan would require legislative action. The Postmaster General has stated that she will be meeting with all stakeholders, including the Unions, to discuss the plan once it is finalized.

The NPMHU believes that the 10-year plan as described above is premature. This is a classic case of putting the cart before the horse. We should first address the pre-funding requirement through legislative action and implement the PRC's new rate system before developing any 10-year plan. The

implementation of any such plan could adversely affect the current coalition's efforts to achieve meaningful postal reform.

The NPMHU, along with the other Postal Unions, believes that the most immediate step that must be taken to secure financial relief and sustainability for the USPS would be to address the 2006 Congressional mandate to pre-fund retiree health benefits 75 years in advance—an onerous burden that no other private or public entity is required to carry.

The bi-partisan USPS Fairness Act (H.R. 2382) was recently introduced by Representatives Peter DeFazio (D-OR), Tom Reid (R-NY), Xochitl Torres Small (D-NM), and Brian Fitzpatrick (R-PA). The legislation would repeal the 2006 mandate that requires the USPS to pre-fund its future retirees' health benefits. The NPMHU, along with the APWU, NALC and the NRLCA, supports this legislation. The pre-funding mandate accounts for 100% of the financial losses of the Postal Service since 2013. If not for this mandate, the USPS would have recorded surpluses of nearly \$4 Billion during the past 6 years.

The NPMHU remains committed to a more comprehensive Postal Reform bill which would include Medicare integration (Parts A, B and D), restoration of the exigent rate increase, and more rate flexibility.

There are other bi-partisan postal reform bills and resolutions currently pending in both the Senate and the House that address this issue. For more details on these bills, please see National Political and Legislative Director Bob Losi's report on page 24.

President Trump submitted his proposed Fiscal Year 2020 budget to Congress. As with his prior budget proposals, the President attempts to pay for his tax cuts for the wealthy on the backs of postal and federal workers. The President's budget proposals contain the following:

- [Increase employee FERS contributions by 1% per year for the next 6 years \(this amounts to an up to 6% pay cut for affected employees\)](#)
- [Eliminate COLAs on FERS pensions](#)
- [Reduce CSRS COLAs](#)
- [Eliminate FERS Social Security Supplemental Annuity](#)



- Change retirement formula from a high 3-year to a high 5-year basis
- Reduce the interest on the TSP G-Fund

In short, the proposed budget would increase employee contributions while at the same time reducing employee benefits. The NPMHU opposes the proposed budget and will work with our allies in Congress from both sides of the aisle to ensure that these budget proposals are dead on arrival.

The conversion of MHAs to career employee status remains a priority for the NPMHU. More than 12,000 MHAs have now been converted to career status. The MOU on Filling Residual Vacancies, which we signed in August 2015, continues to produce results. The MOU was incorporated into our National Agreement during the last round of bargaining. This MOU has provided significant opportunities for our MHAs to achieve career status while also providing transfer opportunities for those Mail Handlers who desire them.

The NPMHU continues its preparations for the next round of bargaining. Our National Agreement is set to expire on September 20, 2019. A bargaining strategy session was held during the August SAMLU in Washington, DC. Mail Handler representatives from throughout the country discussed the priorities for these negotiations. The Field Negotiating Committee met in Washington, DC during the first week of February. Negotiations will officially open on June 27<sup>th</sup>. The entire National Executive Board as well as the National CAD staff will be attending the opening session.

Our priorities in bargaining include:

1. Obtain a fair and just general wage increase
2. Continue of our current Cost of Living Adjustments (COLAs)
3. Keep the No Lay Off clause
4. Improve the wages, rights and benefits for our MHAs
5. Increase MHA conversions to career status
6. Return subcontracted work to the Mail Handler Craft and stop future subcontracting
7. Minimize the dislocation and inconvenience to Mail Handlers subject to involuntary reassignments
8. Fight any USPS proposals to implement any new lower wage scale and reduced benefits for future career employees
9. Address the issue of MHAs serving as 204Bs and
10. Achieve an MOU on Sexual Harassment and Discrimination in the USPS.

This is not a particularly opportune time during which to bargain. The Postal Service's financial situation, the Postmaster General's 10-year plan, the political stalemate in

Congress, the President's Task Force on the Postal Service, the OMB privatization recommendations, and the continuing uncertainty about Postal Reform legislation lead us to believe that these negotiations will be extremely difficult.

The NRLCA, whose contract expired in May 2018, just announced the terms of a new 3-year agreement, which will be subjected to ratification votes this summer. The APWU, whose contract also expired in May 2018, has declared an impasse and appears to be heading for interest arbitration. The slow progress, or lack thereof, in these negotiations indicates that we have a difficult path in front of us.

If the APWU negotiations are any indication, we expect that the USPS will submit regressive and draconian proposals which may include:

- A wage freeze for current employees
- Lump sum payment(s) in lieu of raises
- Increasing the non-career workforce
- Current employees with less than 6 years of service must work 15 years of service to achieve no lay off protection
- Elimination of no layoff clause for future employees
- Pay and benefits substantially cut for all future career hires, including MHAs who are converted to career.

While the NPMHU prefers and will strive to reach a negotiated agreement, we are not afraid to fight in arbitration for a fair and just contract that our members deserve.

Whether in negotiations or in arbitration, I am confident that the NPMHU bargaining team is up to the task at hand and will work tirelessly to achieve a fair contract for all Mail Handlers. Through the work of our Contract Administration Department and our legal team, and through the hard work of our Regional, Local, and Branch representatives, we can and will successfully meet any and all challenges that lie before us. But we must remain united in the face of the Postal Service's attacks on our jobs.

In these and other endeavors, the continuing support of all Mail Handlers is very much appreciated. The NPMHU will keep the membership informed of the progress of the negotiations in the coming weeks and months. Watch your bulletin boards for the latest developments.

Fraternally,



**Paul V. Hogrogian**  
National President

## NPMHU BEGINS NEW CHAPTER AFTER SPRING RELOCATION

Michael J. Hora, National Secretary-Treasurer



**O**n May 18, 2019, the National Postal Mail Handlers Union closed one chapter of the organization's history and launched a fresh start two days later. Over a very hectic weekend in May, the NPMHU relocated and on May 20, 2019, the National Office officially opened at its new location in the headquarters of the AFL-CIO. We are now located at **815 16<sup>th</sup> St NW, Suite 5100, Washington DC 20006-4101**. Anything mailed to the old address will now churn through the USPS Computerized Forwarding System, adding days, if not weeks to the normal delivery timeline. Please update all records, files, correspondences, and future mailings accordingly.

The process formally began on June 27, 2018 when (then) National Secretary-Treasurer Tim Dwyer signed the NPMHU's ten-year lease with the AFL-CIO; 325 days later we moved into the new space. We originally planned the move in two phases but moving everyone at once eliminated the need to maintain multiple physical locations and networks during the transition and it saved significantly on move costs and labor. Once we confirmed we could move everyone at once without interfering with National Bargaining preparations, the decision was easy.

We are honored to be in a 100% Union environment. While the costs associated with the buildout and move were significant, we expect to recoup those expenses within the first two years of the lease. By signing a 10-year lease, we will save money on office space costs in the short and long term—providing some financial stability in the District of Columbia's unapologetic dog-eat-dog real estate market. Additionally, we will reduce copier and printing costs by running many jobs through the AFL-CIO print shop, located on the second floor of our new location. We will also capture other savings on direct and incidental expenses when utilizing the purchasing power of the AFL-CIO.

Moving into the new location afforded us an opportunity to make necessary improvements on the layout of the office, departmental workflow, phone, Internet and related technologies, and security. We are still working out a few bugs here and there, but for the most part the move was seamless. Please join me in thanking the entire National staff for their hard work during this transition. Everyone truly

came together and stepped up at every opportunity. If you have the chance to visit the National Office, we are confident that you will appreciate your new National headquarters. The NPMHU will be hosting an Open House during the next SAMLU later this year. Details about the Open House will be shared as they become available.

During the first quarter of 2019, the NPMHU surpassed the milestone of 12,000 conversions from Mail Handler Assistants (MHA) to career fulltime regular (FTR). The Residual Vacancy Memorandum signed in February 2016 greatly increased the pace of conversions to FTR by creating a pecking order and clear direction on how residual vacancies must be filled, including the conversion of MHAs to FTR.

There is a misunderstanding about MHAs eligibility for Union membership that I would like to clarify. MHAs are immediately eligible to join the NPMHU. There is no waiting period to enroll; eligibility for enrollment is not tied to or limited by a probationary period; and there is no requirement to wait until one is converted to FTR. MHAs are the path to career employment and should join the NPMHU at the first opportunity. Every new employee passes through the ranks of MHA. Each MHA is entitled to Union representation and, in return, the NPMHU asks that you join the labor organization that is fighting for you day in and day out.

We recently mailed 5,000 postcards to our non-members asking them to Join the Union, Join the Fight. The postcard outlined many of the benefits enjoyed by collectively organized career mail handlers such as Health Benefits, Salary, Night Shift Differential, Sunday Premium, Annual Leave up to 5 weeks per year, and Sick Leave at 13 days per year. Not to mention Job bidding, Local and National Work Rules Protections, Cost of Living increases, No Layoff clauses, and a Defined Pension Plan.

By contract, the Union is entitled to meet with newly hired employees during their orientation and again upon conversion to FTR. Each NPMHU representative is encouraged to make the most of these opportunities and MHAs are encouraged to request these meetings. Please reach out to our new MHAs, meet with them during orientation, talk about the job, the career opportunity, available benefits, contractual rights and enforcement thereof. Talk about the mission of

the Union. Encourage every new employee and non-member to Join the NPMHU.

To help in the recruitment of new employees and non-members, the NPMHU has created a short video entitled, *Join the Union, Join the Fight!* The video details the work and operations of the National Postal Mail Handlers Union. It describes the constitutional documents that control this labor organization and describes the rights and benefits of Union membership. When a new employee asks, "Why should I join the Union," encourage the employee to watch the video to learn a little bit about the NPMHU. If you know a non-member or have the occasion to meet a newly-hired MHA, introduce yourself and encourage them to join the Union. As we enter National bargaining, we need a strong united front. We need every single mail handler on the NPMHU team. We cannot afford to have non-members riding on the coattails of dues paying members.

Health insurance is another topic that raises many questions for MHAs and newly converted FTRs. Mail Handler Assistants are immediately eligible for health insurance; coverage is available under the USPS Non-Career Health Benefits Plan and coverage is subsidized by the Postal Service through

## During the first quarter of 2019, the NPMHU surpassed the milestone of 12,000 conversions from Mail Handler Assistants (MHA) to career fulltime regular (FTR).

an employer contribution of \$125 per pay period. Thus, for the 2019 Plan Year, self-only coverage for an MHA will require an employee contribution of \$60 per pay period. The additional costs for family coverage are charged to the MHA.

Conversion to full-time career triggers certain strictly enforced timelines. Converted mail handlers have 60 days from the date of their career appointment to enroll in a health insurance plan offered through the Federal Employee Health Benefit (FEHB) program. If a newly converted mail

handler does not make an election in the allotted time period, that employee will be considered to have declined coverage, and the employee must wait until the next Open Season to enroll, except for certain qualifying life events.

Although new career mail handlers have 60 days to enroll in the FEHB, it is to the employee's advantage to make this election as soon as possible. Coverage will begin on the first day of the first pay period that begins after the employing office receives each enrollment request. If an employee previously elected coverage in the USPS Non-Career Employee Health Benefits Plan as an MHA, coverage in that Non-Career Plan will be automatically terminated 28 days (or two pay periods) after conversion to career mail handler. The employee should make every effort to elect an FEHB plan by the end of the pay period prior to coverage termination to avoid having a gap in health benefits coverage. All new mail handlers, as well as all other career postal employees, are encouraged to investigate the Union's sponsored health plan—the MHBP®.

Finally, let me end this column with news about wage increases. In accordance with Article 9.7 of the 2016 National Agreement, all Mail Handler Assistants have received a wage increase of \$0.21 per hour effective on Saturday, May 25, 2019. This is the sixth MHA wage increase occurring during the 2016 National Agreement.

The 21 cent per hour increase raises the Level 4 MHA hourly rate to \$16.21 and the Level 5 MHA hourly rate to \$17.07, which is an increase of approximately 1.3% and 1.2% respectively. These additional increases were included in the 2016 National Agreement to help close the current gap between MHAs and career employees and to reduce attrition amongst MHAs.

Also, this coming September, prior to the expiration of the 2016 National Agreement at midnight on September 20, 2019, there will be another cost-of-living adjustment for career mail handlers. Although it is too early at this writing to predict inflation through the end of July 2019, it is probable that the COLA will be in positive territory.

The continued improvement of mail handler wages and benefits is a primary objective in the upcoming NPMHU's national negotiations, which start toward the end of June. If you know a non-member or meet a new employee, please ask them to Join the Union, Join the Fight.

In Unity,



**Michael J. Hora**  
National Secretary-Treasurer





# SAMLU REPORT

## ATLANTIC CITY, NJ

NATIONAL OFFICERS AND  
REPRESENTATIVES MEET  
WITH COUNTERPARTS FROM  
LOCAL UNIONS

**B**eginning on Monday, April 29, 2019, officers and representatives from nearly every NPMHU Local Union gathered in Atlantic City, NJ to participate in the Semi-Annual Meeting of the Local Unions (SAMLU).

During welcoming remarks, President Hogrogian introduced one newly installed Local President and three re-elected Local Presidents, resulting from elections or appointments occurring since the last SAMLU in August 2018. The newly elected Local Presidents include:

Local 305 President Felandria Jackson (representing Maryland, the District of Columbia, Virginia, North Carolina, and most of West Virginia); Local 307 President James Haggarty (Michigan); Local 319 President Robert Jacknitsky (Wyoming); and Local 330 President Robert Griffith (representing southern Idaho and southwest Oregon).



Brother Hogrogian also congratulated other recently elected and re-elected Local Union officers who were in attendance. Next, Local 308 President John Gibson took the podium and welcomed all attendees to Atlantic City.

President Hogrogian then turned to his report to the assembly. As is customary, the National President's report was a comprehensive account of the activities of the National Union since the previous meeting of the Local Presidents. President Hogrogian addressed a wide array of topics, beginning with the USPS financial situation. For the first quarter of FY2019 (October through December 2018), the Postal Service had a net loss of \$1.5 billion and a net operational loss of \$103 million.

The USPS reports that the parcel business continues to grow, showing a first quarter 2019 increase of 5.4%, but the volume of more profitable first-class mail continues to decline, hurting

National President Paul Hogrogian addresses the leadership at the SAMLU.







the bottom line more than parcels are helping. It is also concerning that the rate of parcel growth has declined in four consecutive years from a 14.3% growth rate in 2015, to 13.7% in 2016, 11.4% in 2017 and 6.5% in 2018. Hogrogian noted that these declines are driven by increased efforts of large mailers such as Amazon to develop their own processing and delivery networks.

President Hogrogian next addressed the rate review and rate case that is currently before the Postal Regulatory Commission (PRC). The current rate system is subject to an annual cap on rate increases equal to the rate of inflation, except for rare exigent rate increases like the one that ended in April 2017. The PRC has recommended

changes to the rate system that would allow the Postal Service to increase rates at inflation plus 2% per year, plus another 1% based on meeting certain quality improvements. The NPMHU has intervened in support of the Postal Service, as have the other postal unions, and filed comments with the PRC.

An update was next provided on the postal network and employee complement with respect to reversions, abolishments, excessing, withholding, and the impact of the Function-1 Scheduler. Hogrogian noted that PMG Megan Brennan continues to be under extreme pressure from the Congress

**PMG Megan Brennan continues to be under extreme pressure from the Congress** and the PRC to reduce costs and increase efficiencies.



and the PRC to reduce costs and increase efficiencies.

Union officials at the Regional, Local, and Branch levels have been challenging the unwarranted start time changes, reversions, and abolishments, and have filed and continue to file the appropriate grievances; our efforts have been paying off. Many Locals have been successful in the grievance procedure and at arbitration challenging these actions on a bid-by-bid basis.

These successes may be short lived, however, as USPS has begun to implement its new version of the Function-1 Scheduler. Early reports generated by this new version have been positive,

and in many cases resulted in increased mail handler staffing and MHA conversions. However, the USPS Chief Operating Officer David Williams recently announced a freeze on all staffing increase recommendations resulting from a Function-1 Review. The NPMHU will continue to meet with the PMG and voice its opposition to unnecessary closings and consolidations.

President Hogrogian reviewed the recently signed RI-399 settlement and Update MOU. The key points of the MOU were reviewed in detail, including the distribution of the monetary settlement. In order to be eligible for payment, a Mail Handler had to be in

the NPMHU bargaining unit (career or MHA) and on the rolls of the Postal Service during the Pay Period which ended on September 1, 2017 AND the Mail Handler has to be in the NPMHU bargaining unit (career or MHA) and on the rolls of the Postal Service during the Pay Period which ended on March 15, 2019. Any action taken by the Mail Handler after March 15, 2019 (e.g., retirement, transfer, resignation) is not considered.

Here is the further breakdown:

- A) If eligible, and in the bargaining unit for less than 5 years (as of September 1, 2017), the Mail Handler will receive 1 Share.



Local 308 leaders assist attendees with questions regarding local and regional information.



Local 315 President Bryan Easley



National Secretary-Treasurer Michael Hora with the Treasurers Report.



Central Region Vice President and Women's Committee Chairperson June Harris with her report.









- B) If eligible, and in the bargaining unit for 5 years or more but less than 10 years (as of September 1, 2017), the Mail Handler will receive 2 Shares.
- C) If eligible, and in the bargaining unit for 10 years or more but less than 20 years (as of September 1, 2017), the Mail Handler will receive 3 Shares.
- D) If eligible, and in the bargaining unit for 20 years or more (as of September 1, 2017), the Mail Handler will receive 4 Shares.

There are more than 38,000 eligible Mail Handlers, and the Share amounts are as follows:

**1 Share** = \$143.90; **2 Shares** = \$287.80; **3 Shares** = \$431.70; and **4 Shares** = \$575.60.

The National Office will establish an NPMHU-run appeal procedure for claims to be filed by ineligible Mail Handlers who believe they should have been listed amongst the eligible and by eligible Mail Handlers who believe they did not receive the number of Shares authorized.

Turning to national contract bargaining in 2019, President Hogrogian



## MHBP

**Pictured (l-r)** Brad Corban Manager National Accounts, Paul Hogrogian National President, Nina Gallaresi Executive Director MHBP, Melissa Shea, Manager Health Plan Operations and Michael Hora National Secretary-Treasurer.





NPMHU members participate in a workplace survey conducted by the NPMHU Women's Committee



NPMHU Legislative and Political Director Bob Losi with the Legislative Report.



MHBP Executive Director Nina Gallauresi addresses the SAMLU.

reiterated that preparations for these upcoming negotiations are well underway. The NPMHU Field Negotiating Committee gathered in Washington DC in February 2019 to review, debate, and analyze hundreds of proposals submitted from members across the country. We are in the process of formulating our bargaining strategy in anticipation of the Opening Session set for June 27, 2019. Given the financial condition of the Postal Service, this round of bargaining promises to be extremely challenging.

Following the President's report, National Secretary-Treasurer Michael



A



B

## WOMENS COMMITTEE

**A)** The NPMHU Women's Committee meet after the SAMLU meeting to discuss several issues during which National President Hogrogian and Secretary-Treasurer Hora stopped in to join the discussion.

**B)** Pictured (Back Row l-r) Marcenia Yvette Johnson Vice President Local 300, Michael Hora National Secretary-Treasurer, Paul Hogrogain National President, Felandria Jackson Local 305 President, Joyce Webber Local 318 Treasurer. Pictured (Front Row l-r) Roxie Olds-Pride Local 311 Treasurer, Juanita Contreras Local 302 Vice President, Kelly Dickey Local 322 President, and June Harris Central Region Vice President and Local 306 President.



Hora provided a detailed presentation on a variety of topics, including the NPMHU's Q42018 Financial Statements; an update and analysis related to Mail Handler complement, with particular emphasis on the importance of organizing our new MHAs; membership trends and revenue allocation among our Union's affiliated organizations; and analysis and review of the Union's Associate Dues, Service Charge, and Revenue Sharing Programs. In addition, attendees viewed the new NPMHU New-Member Orientation video that will soon be posted at [npmhu.org](http://npmhu.org).

Aetna's Director of National Accounts, Brad Corban and Executive Director MHBP® Nina Gallauresi, supported by Melissa Shea, Manager Health Plan Operations MHBP® offered a comprehensive report on the status of the Mail Handlers Benefit Plan, including its operations, membership, benefits, and marketing.

NPMHU Women's Committee Chairperson June Harris presented on issues facing the organization including a sexual harassment quiz for all SAMLU attendees. June will report on the results of the quiz at a future gathering. NPMHU Legislative and Political Director Bob Losi provided a report on various legislative and political efforts with which the NPMHU and its activists continue to be involved. Brother Losi gave details of the upcoming Legislative Conference set for June 4-5, 2019 in Washington, DC, discussed several initiatives which the NPMHU is supporting.

National Contract Administration Department Representative Charles Manago provided a full report and entertained questions and comments from various attendees on the activities of the Contract Administration Department since the last meeting of the Local Unions. Brother Manago's presentation was based on the written report that was circulated at the meeting (and which will be distributed to



National CAD Representative Charles Manago delivers and discusses the CAD Report.



National CAD Representative Kevin Fletcher with an RI 399 and Article 12 update.



Northeast Region Vice President and Local 309 President David Wilkin



Local 322 President Kelly Dickey





Manager of Aetna National Accounts Brad Corban addresses the SAMLU.



Local 321 President Errol Wilson



Local 317 President James Morris



Western Region Vice President and Local 316 President Don Sneesby

all NPMHU Officers and Stewards through the MAILS Steward Resources portal at [npmhu.org](http://npmhu.org)) and included the following topics: NPNHU Address Change; Preparing for Negotiations for the 2019 National Agreement; Implementing the 2016 National Agreement; Mail Handler Workforce; Wages Under the 2016 National Agreement; Holiday Pay for MHAs; The F-1 Scheduler; Promotion Pay; Cases Pending National Arbitration; Audio and Video Recordings on Postal Property; RI-399—Jurisdictional Disputes; Autonomous Guided Vehicles (AGV); Subcontracting Committee; Subcontracting Pilot Program for the Initial Scanning and Dumping of the

ePacket Sacks at Chicago ISC and Los Angeles ISC; USPS Protocol for Providing Electronic Data Fulfilling Union RFI; Expansion of the Sensor Technology Initiative; Integrated Human Resource System (HERO); HCR Drivers Using Surface Visibility Devices; MI on Best Practices for Supporting Gender Transition in the Workplace; National Day of Mourning; Modified Arbitration Process (MAP); Update on the Wounded Warriors Federal Leave Act of 2015; Postal Pulse Survey; Quality of Work Life (QWL); Combined Federal Campaign; NLRB Revisions Negligence Standard for Breaches of DFR; and Step 4 Appeals. Members are reminded that CAD

Reports are available at the MAILS Steward Resource link at [npmhu.org](http://npmhu.org).

National CAD Representatives Kevin Fletcher lead discussions on the RI399 Update memorandum and provided a comprehensive report on the activities of the Article 12 Task Force.

On day three of the meetings, the attendees reconvened for the first of a two-part Leadership Training session hosted by National Executive Board members Paul Hogrogian, Michael Hora, John Gibson, June Harris, Don Sneesby, and Dave Wilkin. The second part of the Leadership Training program is expected to occur during the first SAMLU in 2020.



## LEADERSHIP TRAINING

On day 3 of the SAMLU members of the NPMHU gathered for a leadership training. Leading the training were members of the NPMHU National Executive Board along with General Council Bruce Lerner. The training covered various topics and included some spirited debate.



# MAIL HANDLERS FACING MODERN TECHNOLOGY

Teresa Harmon, Manager, CAD



In this issue, I want to give a brief overview on several technological issues effecting the mail handler craft. These include:

## **SURFACE VISIBILITY (SV)—SCANNING**

In the early 2000s, the Postal Service began an initiative known as the Surface Visibility Program. The purpose of this program was to collect data at the mail handling unit level in order to track mail volume through surface transportation in an effort to collect the end-to-end data required to support planning and optimization of the postal transportation network. The Surface Visibility Program has evolved and changed since that time, and it continues to evolve as more and more technology becomes available.

To support the original initiative, the Postal Service created a new, enhanced distribution label so that each surface mail handling unit could be uniquely identified. The goal was to scan each individual sack, tray, or tub as it was placed into a container (wiretainer, GPMC, etc.), and the container could then be scanned as it was placed onto transportation. All along this path, the scanning device would notify employees if the mail piece was being placed into the incorrect container or if the container was loaded onto an incorrect truck. In addition, the system provided near real-time data to alert when trucks were about to leave, which containers were already loaded, and which containers were ready for dispatch but had yet to be loaded.

Initially, the Postal Service installed the scanning equipment, which consisted of one to six hubs in each mail processing site to support the wireless scanners, as well as fixed and handheld scanners. The agency anticipated that the scanners would be used by whomever was working with the container.

At the beginning of this initiative, the Postal Service deployed hand held scanners which were somewhat burdensome to use, but are still in use today in most operations. They evolved to ring scanners that allow mail handlers to process a package using both hands. They have since deployed passive scanners which scan the package as it goes by on a conveyor or other mail movement device, without being handled by a mail handler or any other career postal employee. Indeed, the

Postal Service is beginning to use mobile cellular scanners. It seems that virtually every employee within a mail processing facility is scanning in one form or another.

It is important that all mail handlers working in our mail processing facilities follow management's scanning directives. The data collected by these scans has a great impact upon staffing levels in your facility. The Postal Service feeds the volume data created by these package and container scans into its F-1 Scheduler System, along with other data, to determine how many employees it is required to process the mail in a given facility. The more mail we scan, the greater the volume will be and, in conjunction, the better our staffing will be.

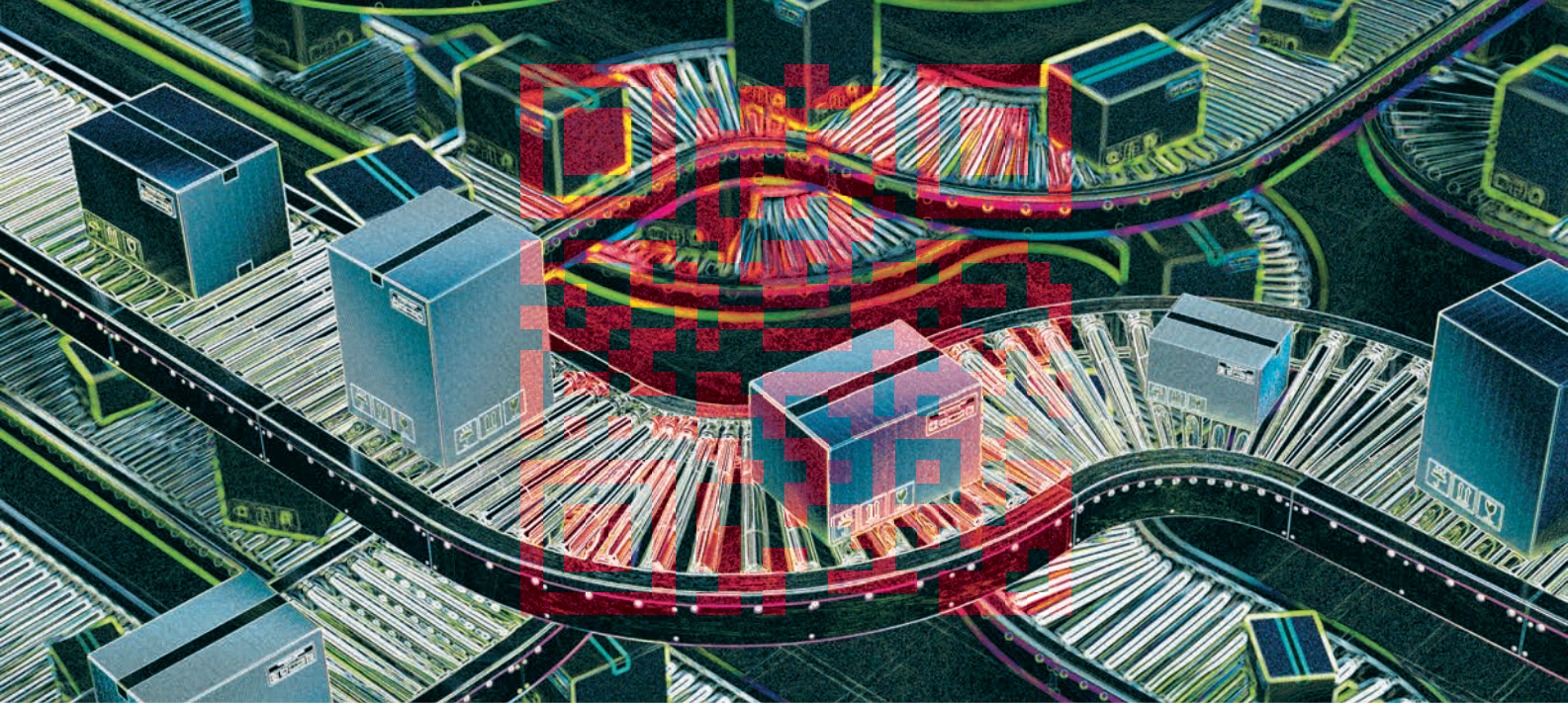
## **MOBILE SCAN-WHERE-YOU-BAND (SWYB)—WEARABLE PRINTERS**

Wearable printers are a new technology that streamlines the processing of packages in sacks that need a Dispatch & Routing (D&R) Tag. (This is the mail that is transported by airplane.) These Wearable Printers will eventually be used on all of the APBS, APPS, EPPS, HTPS, and SPSS machines. They will allow the D&R Tags to be printed as soon as an employee sweeps the bin on the sorters; this will minimize the need to move the mail to another separate scan-where-you-band operation.

These Wearable Printers were originally tested in Queens, NY on the HTPS, which has 400 total bins. They were used at 75 of those bins which contained the mail that needed airline assignment.

In 2018, the Postal Service rolled out a pilot program for the Wearable Printers. During the pilot phase, the wearable printers were only to be used on the APPS. The facilities included in the pilot were Chicago Metro STC, Northwest Rochester P&DC, Greater Newark P&DC, Philadelphia NDC, Peachtree P&DC, Royal Palm P&DC, Los Angeles P&DC, Portland P&DC and West Valley P&DC.

The Postal Service plans to purchase and deploy up to 8,500 mobile printers during the current Fiscal Year 2019 in over 170 mail processing sites. The agency plans to use them on 332 package sorters, including 214 APBSs, 74 APPs, 40 SPSSs, 2 HTPSs, and 2 EPPSs.



## SENSOR TECHNOLOGY INITIATIVE

The Sensor Technology initiative consists of utilizing time badges and wireless sensor readers to collect data in an autonomous and passive manner. The Postal Service plans to use this technology to track work hours in specific operations within a facility without requiring manual operational moves through the Electronic Badge Reader (EBR). Normally when an employee reports to a work operation or moves to another work operation they would use their badge to make a move on the EBR. Experience suggests that very few mail handlers ever actually followed this practice. With this new technology, the Postal Service will have the ability to track the movement of employees using autonomous or passive scanning of ID badges without the employee ever making a move on the EBR.

In addition, this technology will provide the Postal Service with the ability to identify and/or locate a mail piece or transport equipment within a facility. It will also be able to generate maintenance or safety alerts when needed.

## AUTONOMOUS GUIDED VEHICLES (AGVS)

Automated Guided Vehicles are self-driven Power Industrial Vehicles (PIVs, such as tuggers, forklifts, and pallet lifts) that are dispatched and operated by a central management system.

The current AGVs use three different technologies: Vision Guidance (cameras on ceiling, poles, and columns); Laser Technology (sensors on poles and columns); and Magnetic Tape (guide tape on the workroom floors to mark routes). The obvious intent of these machines is to eliminate labor costs associated with PIV drivers. If these machines prove reliable, we could see a reduction in the number of Level 5 equipment

operators working in postal facilities. The Postal Service claims that the elimination of these jobs, or the reduction of Level 5 positions to Level 4 would result in substantial savings per work hour.

The Postal Service states that the agency spends over \$900 million annually on PIV operators who are moving containers. The Postal Service also contends that only a small portion of the PIV operator's time actually involves driving a PIV and that these mail handlers perform other non-driving duties such as loading/unloading/waiting on mail, waiting on dock for trucks, etc., which comprise most of this overall cost.

Another \$3 billion is spent annually in processing plants on allied labor duties, including platform activities, opening unit work, Mail Prep, and moving containers.

Currently, AVGs are being used in a number of Processing and Distribution facilities across the country, and the Postal Service plans to deploy AGVs to a total of twenty-five (25) mail processing sites by the end of 2019.

The cost of the AGVs ranges from \$100,000 to \$200,000 each. Their life expectancy varies, but it is the same or similar to the traditional PIVs. The Postal Service claims they will not be replacing all PIVs, but the goal is to replace a good percentage of them with the AGVs.

As you can see, neither the Postal Service nor mail handlers are immune to the effects of technology. In an effort to keep up with or ahead of competitors, the Postal Service is implementing numerous technological changes aimed at processing the mail as effective and efficiently as possible. The NPMHU is closely monitoring this situation, and will take all actions possible to minimize any adverse impact on mail handlers around the country.



# 2019 PAC

## INCENTIVE AWARDS



### 2019 PAC INCENTIVE AWARDS

LEVEL	DONATION	AWARD
Member	\$26 (\$1 per pay period)	PAC Pin
Sponsor	\$52 (\$2 per pay period)	PAC Cooler
Activist	\$100	PAC Polo Shirt
Leader	\$250	PAC Umbrella
Ambassador	\$500	PAC Garment Bag

## YOU TOO CAN BECOME AN NPMHU POLITICAL ACTIVIST

There is a quick way for Mail Handlers to contribute to the NPMHU PAC. Simply call in to the PostalEASE system, or visit the PostalEASE option on the web at [www.liteblue.usps.gov](http://www.liteblue.usps.gov). Follow the instructions printed on page 22 of this magazine. Your PAC contribution will be made directly from your bi-weekly postal payroll. You also have the option of sending in a personal check or authorizing a credit card contribution. Your contributions will also be entered in to the incentive award program that entitles you to an award based on your contribution level. There are five distinct PAC membership levels and awards. Awards are distributed based on membership level and will be mailed after the end of the year; awards will vary year to year.



## NOTICE CONCERNING CONTRIBUTIONS:

Contributions to the Mail Handlers PAC are not deductible as charitable contributions for purposes of federal income taxes. In addition, federal law requires that the Mail Handlers PAC report to the Federal Election Commission the name, mailing address, occupation, and name of employer for each individual whose contributions in any calendar year total in excess of \$200. Please also note that the Mail Handlers PAC has political purposes, and that all members have the right to refuse to contribute, and the right to revoke their authorization for any continuing contributions, without any reprisal.

## PAC CONTRIBUTION BY PERSONAL CHECK, MONEY ORDER, OR CREDIT CARD:

You can contribute directly to the Mail Handlers PAC by filling out the following information and mailing it to:

**Mail Handler PAC**  
P.O. Box 65171  
Washington DC 20035

*Please enclose your check or money order, or provide authorization to charge your credit card.*



(Cut here and return to NPMHU PAC)



## YOUR CONTRIBUTION HELPS PRESERVE POSTAL JOBS

This is to certify that I, \_\_\_\_\_, have voluntarily contributed the amount listed below, to the NPMHU PAC. I understand that this voluntary contribution is not a condition of membership in the union; I have the right to refuse to contribute without any reprisal; if specific contribution amounts are mentioned they are merely suggestions and I am free to contribute more or less; the Union will not favor or disadvantage me because of the amount of my contribution or my decision not to contribute; NPMHU PAC will use the money it receives to make Political expenditures and contributions in connection with federal elections; and only U.S. Citizens and lawful permanent U.S. residents are eligible to contribute.

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Local \_\_\_\_\_

Employer (if other than USPS) \_\_\_\_\_ Job Title \_\_\_\_\_

Contribution Amount: (Please check one):

- ☐ \$26 (Member)    ☐ \$52 (Sponsor)    ☐ \$100 (Activist)    ☐ \$250 (Leader)    ☐ \$500 (Ambassador)  
☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_

Please enclose your check or money order, or authorization to charge your credit card.

☐ VISA    ☐ MASTERCARD    Acct.# \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Expiration Date \_\_\_\_\_

Contributions to the NPMHU PAC are not deductible as charitable contributions for federal income purposes.



# You also can make your PAC contribution by bi-weekly salary allotment through PostalEASE (access by phone or on the web):

## PostalEASE by TELEPHONE:

1. Dial **1-877-4PS-EASE**—(877-477-3273) and follow the prompt for the Employee Services Main Menu.
2. When prompted, press **#1** for PostalEASE
3. When prompted, enter your eight-digit USPS employee identification number.
4. When prompted again, enter your USPS PIN number.  
(This is the same as the PIN number you use for telephone bidding and/or other payroll allotments.)
5. When prompted, choose option **#2** (to select payroll allotments)
6. Then choose option **#1** (to select allotments)
7. When prompted, press **#2** to continue
8. When prompted, press **#3** to add the allotment
9. When prompted for the routing number, enter **054001220**
10. When prompted for the account number, enter the following:  
**11260001** \_\_\_\_\_ (the last nine digits of your account number is your social security number—this information will allow us to identify you as the PAC contributor).
11. Press **#1** if correct
12. When prompted, press **#1** for “checking”
13. When prompted, input the bi-weekly dollar amount of your PAC allotment.
14. Press **#1** if correct
15. When prompted, press **#1** to process
16. You will be provided a confirmation number as well as the start date for the salary allotment.
17. For your records:
  - Record the confirmation number
  - Record the start date of the salary allotment
18. Press **#1** to repeat, or press **#9** to end call

## PostalEASE on the WEB:

To initiate your bi-weekly PAC contribution on the web, simply go to **[www.liteblue.usps.gov](http://www.liteblue.usps.gov)**

1. Enter your eight-digit USPS Employee ID Number and your USPS PIN
2. Follow the link to PostalEASE—you will again be asked to enter your Employee ID Number and USPS PIN
3. Follow the link for PAYROLL – Allotments/NTB
4. Continue to the ALLOTMENTS section
5. Your ROUTING TRANSIT NUMBER is: **054001220**
6. Your ACCOUNT # will be: **11260001** \_\_\_\_\_ (the last nine digits of your account number is your social security number—this information will allow us to identify you as the PAC contributor).
7. For ACCOUNT TYPE—please select “CHECKING”
8. When prompted, please input the AMOUNT that you would like to contribute to the PAC each pay period.
9. To process your PAC allotment, you will need to select the VALIDATE button, and to finalize the transaction, please select SUBMIT. Be sure to print out a copy of the confirmation page for your records.



# Welcome Home

Whether you are in the market to purchase a home or refinance an existing mortgage, **Union Plus offers two mortgage providers** designed to help union families. Every mortgage provides hardship assistance in case of disability, layoff, lockout, or strike.

Find out more about this and other great Union Plus programs by visiting [unionplus.org](http://unionplus.org).



Learn more at  
[unionplus.org/mortgage](http://unionplus.org/mortgage)





## CAPITOL HILL HAPPENINGS

Robert Losi, Legislative and Political Director



**M**uch has happened on Capitol Hill since our last Mail Handler magazine, as a number of key bills and resolutions have been introduced by both Democrats and Republicans since the start of the 116<sup>th</sup> Congress.

### RESOLUTIONS

First, here is an update on where the resolutions that are supported by the NPMHU stand. Again, they have strong support from both sides of the aisle.

**H. Res. 60**—Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that the United States Postal Service “should take all appropriate measures to restore service standards in effect as of July 1, 2012.” Sponsor is Congressman David McKinley (R-WV); introduced on January 17, 2019; currently has 161 co-sponsors.

**H. Res. 33**—Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that “Congress should take all appropriate measures to ensure that the United States Postal Service remains an independent establishment of the Federal Government and is not subject to privatization.” Sponsor is Congressman Stephen Lynch (D-MA); introduced on January 9, 2019; currently has 248 co-sponsors.

**H. Res. 23**—Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that the United States Postal Service “should take all appropriate measures to ensure the continuation of door delivery for all business and residential customers.” Sponsor is Congresswoman Susan Davis (D-CA); introduced on January 4, 2019; currently has 183 co-sponsors.

**H. Res. 54**—Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that the United States Postal Service “should take all appropriate measures to ensure the continuation of its 6-day mail delivery service.” Sponsor is Congressman Gerald Connolly (D-VA); introduced on January 16, 2019; currently has 236 co-sponsors.

### BILLS

Since the beginning of May 2019, both Democrats and Republicans have been working diligently to right the ship of postal finances through a number of bills that, if enacted, would put the Postal Service in a much stronger posture to thrive for many more decades into the future.

**H.R. 2382, the USPS Fairness Act**—The first such bill was introduced on April 29, 2019 by Congressman Peter DeFazio (D-OR), with original cosponsors Congressman Tom Reed (R-NY), Congressman Brian Fitzpatrick (R-PA), and Congresswoman Xochitl Torres Small (D-NM). This legislation, if passed, would end the prefunding burden for the Retiree Health Benefits Fund that was placed upon USPS finances when the Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act (PAEA) was passed in 2006. That legislation has caused close to all of the USPS losses since 2006. It truly has been an albatross around the neck of the Postal Service; it has caused hundreds of processing plants to close, consolidate and/or slow down the processing of mail through service standard changes. This legislation, in addition to the postal reform bill, is exactly what the doctor ordered to put the postal service on the road for growth and prosperity in the future.

**Both Democrats and Republicans have been working diligently to right the ship of postal finances.**

**H.R. 2553—the USPSShippingEquityAct**—Congresswoman Jackie Speier (D-CA) introduced this bill with twelve colleagues representing both political parties. This is exactly the type of legislation that is needed to change the way the USPS does business. The Postal Service has been unable to participate in this market because of archaic rules that prohibit the USPS from shipping beer and wine and competing against FedEx and UPS. If passed, this bill could be a shot in the arm for postal finances and another step towards financial freedom. Not to mention that it would give the consumers another option.

**H.R. 2553—the Postal Service Financial Improvement Act of 2019**—Introduced by Congressmen Stephen Lynch (D-MA) and David McKinley (R-WV), this bill is identical to versions from past congressional sessions. Instead of requiring that all monies from the Postal Service Retiree Health Benefit Fund be invested in lowly yielding US Treasury bonds, the Postal Service would be authorized to invest in certain index funds. By allowing the Postal Service to invest wisely and safely, the return could be much higher.

## ALWAYS ON DEFENSE

Although all of the listed resolutions and bills, if passed, would help the USPS, the NPMHU must always be on guard for budget items and legislation that could harm Mail Handlers as well! For example, in President Trump's Fiscal Year 2020 budget, language was submitted to eliminate cost-of-living adjustments for FERS retirees and reduce such adjustments for CSRS retirees. Another item in President Trump's FY20 budget that would be harmful would be changing from a high-three to a high-five salary when calculating pension credits. This would adversely affect both the CSRS and FERS retirement systems by reducing earned benefits. Lastly and very costly, the President inserted language in his most recent budget to

eliminate the FERS Annuity Supplement. This benefit adds a financial bridge for FERS retirees before they become eligible for Social Security benefits, and its elimination would cause most FERS eligible retirees to put off such a move.

## HILL POLITICS

As you know, the Presidential election and congressional elections are not scheduled until November 3, 2020. That election will decide not only who our next President will be, but also this election will decide what party controls the Senate and house which as equally important to all Mail Handlers and federal employees is extremely important.

The schedule for two House special elections to be held in 2019 is as follows. First, the 3rd Congressional District in North Carolina will have a general election on September 10, 2019 to fill the seat that was held by deceased Republican member Walter Jones. Also, in North Carolina, voters will go to the polls on November 5, 2019 to elect a new member to the House representing the 9th Congressional District. The seat has been vacant since the Board of Elections in North Carolina voted unanimously not to seat the Republican who won the contested seat in the November 2018 midterms because of alleged absentee voter fraud.







# THE NPMHU LEGISLATIVE AGENDA FOR THE 116TH CONGRESS

**E**very two years, the Committee on the Future of the National Postal Mail Handlers Union adopts a comprehensive legislative agenda for the new Congress. This year is the first session of the current 116th Congress, which will be in session during 2019 and 2020, and once again a legislative agenda has been developed. Included on this agenda are specific legislative goals, as well as various political matters on which the NPMHU National Office will be working during the next two years.

Before the last Congress, because of the 2016 national elections for Congress and the U.S. President, the political landscape in Washington, DC changed dramatically. President Trump took over the White House, and both Houses of Congress had strong Republican majorities. During the 2018 mid-term elections, the Senate became slightly more Republican, but the House completely changed direction, with the Democratic Party gaining a large majority of the Members, and thereby taking over all committees and re-appointing Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) as Speaker. The political atmosphere is more polarized than ever, however, with opposition to President Trump reaching a fevered pitch, while most Republicans fear criticizing the President no matter what he does or says. The two years covered by the 116<sup>th</sup> Congress, therefore, are

likely to be dominated by anti-worker, anti-union, and anti-USPS rhetoric and proposals that pose serious risks for the NPMHU and all mail handlers.

As always, the NPMHU will continue its fight to protect the legislative interests of all mail handlers and promote deeper involvement of its members in the legislative and political arenas.

## **PRESERVING AND PROTECTING THE FUTURE OF THE POSTAL SERVICE**

This is the primary objective of the NPMHU in the current legislative session, and will be the focus of this year's Legislative Conference.

Preservation and protection of the Postal Service means:

**Enacting comprehensive postal reform legislation** (similar to H.R. 756 and H.R. 760, H.R. 6076, or S. 2629 during the last Congress), which still has not been formally introduced as legislation in the 116th Congress. Two years ago, the bills identified were passed by unanimous voice votes of the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, but languished before the House Ways and Means Committee and in the Senate.

**Restoring the Postal Service's financial stability by eliminating or delaying payments to the Retiree Health Benefits Fund**, by improving investments of this Fund, and by correcting pension

errors in both the CSRS and FERS Retirement Systems.

The USPS Fairness Act, H.R. 2382, is bipartisan legislation that has been introduced by Representatives Peter DeFazio (D-OR), Tom Reed (R-NY), Xochitl Torres Small (D-NM), and Brian Fitzpatrick (R-PA) to repeal the onerous pre-funding requirement for the Retiree Health Benefits Fund. The bill has been referred to the House Committee on Oversight and Reform, with 29 co-sponsors (including 6 Republicans and 23 Democrats).

H.R. 2553 also is bipartisan legislation that has been introduced (in early May 2019) by Representatives Stephen F. Lynch (D-MA) and David B. McKinley (R-WV). It would provide for certain index fund investments from the Retiree Health Benefits Fund, rather than restricting the Fund to low-yielding Treasury bonds. This bill is identical to H.R. 760 in the last, 115<sup>th</sup> Congress, which was passed by the full Oversight and Reform Committee in the House.

**Halting subcontracting or other privatization schemes**, and retaining six-day, if not seven-day, delivery, as these positions also will protect the Postal Service brand and its ability to develop new and better products during the coming years.

H. Res. 33—Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that Congress should take all appropriate

measures to ensure that the United States Postal Service remains an independent establishment of the Federal Government and is not subject to privatization. Sponsor: Rep. Stephen F. Lynch (D-MA)

H. Res. 23—Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that the United States Postal Service should take all appropriate measures to ensure the continuation of door delivery for all business and residential customers. Sponsor: Susan A. Davis (D-CA)

H. Res. 54—Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that the United States Postal Service should take all appropriate measures to ensure the continuation of its 6-day mail delivery service. Sponsor: Rep. Gerald E. Connolly (D-VA)

**Reversing the January 2015 changes to USPS service standards and/or adopting a moratorium on additional closings or consolidations of mail processing facilities.**

H. Res. 60—Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that the United States Postal Service should take all appropriate measures to restore service standards in effect as of July 1, 2012. Sponsor: Rep. David B. McKinley (R-WV)

## WORKING TO PREVENT HARMFUL LEGISLATION

The NPMHU will work, together with similarly interested parties, to prevent legislation harmful to mail handlers and other postal employees. Given President Trump's aggressive use of executive action, this also includes opposition to Executive Orders reducing bargaining rights of federal employees and trying to cut the official time used for union business conducted by union representatives. Also on the NPMHU's legislative radar are various proposals included in the Trump Administration budget to cut retirement and health care benefits for federal and postal employees.

Also to be opposed by representatives of the NPMHU:

- Proposals to eliminate or curtail prevailing wage laws, particularly under the Service Contract Act.
- Proposals to raise health insurance premiums for federal employees or to weaken the Federal Employee Health Benefit Program.
- Proposals to reduce retirement security for current and future retirees, including potential cuts in Social Security or in the CSRS and FERS programs or potential increases in employee contributions.
- Efforts in various state legislatures to enact “do not mail” or anti-“junk mail” bills that allow individuals to remove their names and addresses from mailing lists used for commercial mail purposes.
- Proposals to single out federal and postal employees by prohibiting their employment if monies are owed to the IRS for failure to pay taxes.

## WORKING TO ENACT NEW LEGISLATION

Although the political atmosphere on Capitol Hill and in the White House is not conducive to positive change, the NPMHU will continue to urge Congress to adopt legislation to improve the lives and working conditions of mail handlers and other postal and federal employees. These efforts will focus on the following pieces of legislation:

- Legislation to eliminate or curtail the Government Pension Offset.
- Legislation to eliminate or curtail the Windfall Elimination Provision.
- Legislation to provide pre-tax health care premiums for postal and federal retirees (premium conversion).
- Legislation, at the federal level, to increase the minimum wage, and legislation, at the state

and local level, to provide a guaranteed living wage, in excess of the federal minimum wage, to workers and their families.

- Legislation, primarily at the state and local level, to encourage democratic participation through “vote by mail” initiatives.
- Legislation or other congressional action to eliminate or discourage the subcontracting or outsourcing of postal jobs to private contractors.
- Legislation to reform U.S. labor laws—through the enactment of the Employee Free Choice Act or similar proposals—to eliminate delays, provide for effective remedies for violation of the law, and to return to the original purposes of the National Labor Relations Act.
- Legislation to ensure the future viability of Social Security.

## PREPARING FOR THE 2020 ELECTIONS

Campaigns no longer occur between Labor Day and Election Day, with most candidates seeking office running longer and more expensive campaigns. Beginning now, and continuing into next year, the NPMHU will join with others in the American labor movement to prepare for the 2020 U.S. Presidential and Congressional elections, as well as upcoming state and local elections (a few of which will be held in 2019). The NPMHU will take all reasonable steps to ensure that mail handlers and their families are actively involved in these upcoming elections, through voter registration, education, and efforts to increase turn-out. It is critical that all mail handlers and their families not only are registered to vote, but that they go to the polls to have their voices heard. We must continue to work to ensure that pro-union, pro-worker candidates are elected to represent our interests.



## TIME FLIES WHEN YOU'RE HAVING FUN.

**June Harris**, Central Region Vice President,  
Local 306 President, Women's Committee Chairperson



It has been approximately a year and one half since the inception of the NPMHU Women's Committee. We conducted our first official meeting at the April 2018 Semi-Annual Meeting of Local Unions. Thanks to the full support and backing of our National President Paul Hogrogian and the entire National Executive Board, we have made tremendous strides. The Committee members have gone above and beyond the call of duty to ensure that our initial goals were met. Notwithstanding some bumps in the road, we were able to complete our Mission Statement, create the Bylaws that we are governed by, and formulate a proposed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) regarding Antidiscrimination and Sexual Harassment.

This MOU addresses the importance of a commitment by both the NPMHU and USPS to provide all of our employees with a workplace free from discrimination and sexual harassment. This type of behavior will not be tolerated in any form. The MOU defines "sexual harassment" and how employees are to report such and the responsibility of the USPS to conduct a prompt, thorough, and confidential investigation that ensures due process for all parties. We are hoping that this MOU will be incorporated into our National Agreement during the upcoming contractual negotiations and drastically change the hearts and minds of the entire postal workforce. If the door is opened for receptive dialogue, we believe that the climate of the USPS will change for the better.

After the SAMLU held in April of this year, several questions have been asked regarding the Sexual Harassment Quiz that the Women's Committee distributed. We appreciate the participation of our Brothers and Sisters in completing this valuable resource. Because of your honesty and eagerness to participate, we were able to garner invaluable information regarding the misconceptions of people concerning sexual harassment. The results allowed us to address specific areas in creating the MOU Re: Anti-Discrimination and Sexual

Harassment. Your work was not in vain. Here is a snippet of what we were able to gather from the circulated quiz.

- There were a total of fifteen (15) questions: 13 True or False and 2 multiple choice.
- Question number 10 was the most missed. It read, "Friendly flirting is not sexual harassment when flirting is practiced between mutually consenting individuals who are equal in power or authority." Most participants responded False. The correct response is True.
- The least missed question was number 1, which read, "Sexual harassment complaints are generally false or unjustified." Almost everyone responded correctly, False.
- Gender played a significant role in responses also. More of our Brothers missed questions 3, 13, 14, and 15, while our Sisters tended to miss questions 7, 10, and 11.
- Age was also a factor in regards to how the questions were answered. Our Brothers and Sisters under the age of 35 incorrectly responded to questions 2, 3, 5, 7, 10, 14, and 15. This was nearly 47% of the entire survey. These questions dealt with where the harassment occurred, the usage of terms of endearment when addressing co-workers, the intent of the alleged harasser, the usage of email or social media, flirting, the liability of the management team, and the importance of cooperating in an investigation.

The Sisters on the Committee have also been tasked with formulating a resolution to be presented to the delegates at our 2020 NPMHU National Convention. So it is full steam ahead.

Finally, if your Local is interested in starting a Women's Committee, please speak with your Local President. The National Women's Committee is more than willing to assist you, once you get the approval of your Local President.

**Thanks to the full support and backing of our National President Paul Hogrogian and the entire National Executive Board, we have made tremendous strides.**

# Sexual Harassment Quiz

## True or False

1. Sexual harassment complaints are generally false or unjustified.
2. Sexual harassment can occur outside the work site and still be considered work related. Incidents that occur at retirement parties and office socials or in training are some of the situations where work related harassment occurs.
3. Terms of endearment with co-workers, i.e. "honey," "dear" are considered verbal abuse and charges can be brought up against the employee.
4. Women in professional jobs (teachers, lawyers, engineers, doctors, etc.) are not as likely to be sexually harassed as women in blue-collar jobs (factory workers, secretaries, truck drivers, etc.)
5. If he didn't like the sexual attention, but she meant it only as flirting or joking, then it was not sexual harassment.
6. Sexual harassment is not limited to physical contact. It can occur any time that an individual is uncomfortable with another person's approaches, comments or discussions.
7. Due to strict privacy laws, supervisors cannot monitor employee email or be found liable for sexual harassment via email by their employees.
8. Sexual harassment in the workplace is a women's issue.
9. Quid Pro Quo harassment is a form of sexual harassment when there is a request or demand of sexual favors in exchange for employment benefits or threatening reprisals if the favors are not given.
10. Friendly flirting is not sexual harassment when flirting is practiced between mutually consenting individuals who are equal in power or authority.
11. Employees claiming sexual harassment who are aware of but fail to take advantage of company policies or resources designed to prevent, correct or eliminate harassment have much weaker cases than those who do.
12. In order for it to be determined sexual harassment, the victim has to be of the opposite sex of the harasser.
13. An employee witnesses another employee being harassed. Even though this involved a co-worker, the witness can be considered a victim in this case.





# Credit Counseling

**Debt and credit problems can happen to anyone at anytime.**

Luckily, The Union Plus Credit Counseling program can help you regain your financial footing by helping you better manage your finances. Get free credit counseling from certified counselors.

To speak to a counselor call 1-877-833-1745 or visit  
**[unionplus.org/creditcounseling](https://unionplus.org/creditcounseling)**



LEGAL  
PROGRAM



FREE  
COLLEGE



CONSUMER  
REPORTS



HEALTH  
DISCOUNTS

Learn more at  
**[unionplus.org/creditcounseling](https://unionplus.org/creditcounseling)**



  
**UNIONPLUS**

# MAIL HANDLERS SUPPORT

# JDRF RESEARCH



Walkers pause in front of the Lincoln Memorial.



The Mail Handlers JDRF One Walk Team gathers in Washington DC to walk for a cure.



NPMHU Headquarters staff come together for JDRF kick-off!

**M**ail Handlers support JDRF research in pursuit of a cure. Our participation in the Washington DC JDRF walk is supported by many of our members throughout our 37 Local Unions across the country. While most cannot attend in person, many support the Mail Handlers JDRF team by sponsoring those that walked on June 2, 2019. Many others also donate as virtual walkers. Our motto is, no donation is too small. In 2019, the Mail Handlers JDRF One Walk Team raised \$16,685.

The NPMHU supports JDRF's pursuit of policies to accelerate life-changing breakthroughs to cure, prevent and treat type 1 diabetes. We know that JDRF advocates strongly for actions by health plans, employers, companies, and the government to make insulin and disease management tools more affordable. This is a complex and life altering disease that requires continuous management. We are honored to support efforts to make Type 1, Type None.

**JDRF** | **ONE WALK**  
FOR A WORLD WITHOUT TYPE 1 DIABETES **T1D**





# SLEEP AFFECTS YOUR HEALTH

## WHY YOU NEED A GOOD NIGHT'S SLEEP

Nina Gallauresi, Executive Director, MHBP

**W**e have so many demands on our time—jobs, family, errands—not to mention finding some time to relax. To fit everything in, we often sacrifice sleep. But sleep affects both mental and physical health. It's vital to your well-being.

Of course, sleep helps you feel rested each day. But while you're sleeping, your brain and body don't just shut down. Internal organs and processes are hard at work throughout the night.

"Sleep services all aspects of our body in one way or another: molecular, energy balance, as well as intellectual function, alertness and mood," says Dr. Merrill Mitler, a sleep expert and neuroscientist at NIH.

When you're tired, you can't function at your best. Sleep helps you think more clearly, have quicker reflexes and focus better. "The fact is, when we look at well-rested people, they're operating at a different level than people trying to get by on 1 or 2 hours less nightly sleep," says Mitler.

"Loss of sleep impairs your higher levels of reasoning, problem-solving and attention to detail," Mitler explains. Tired people tend to be less productive at work. They're at a much higher risk for traffic accidents. Lack of sleep also influences your mood, which can affect how you interact with others. A sleep deficit over time can even put you at greater risk for developing depression.

But sleep isn't just essential for the brain. "Sleep affects almost every tissue in our bodies," says Dr. Michael Twery, a sleep expert at NIH. "It affects growth and stress hormones, our immune sys-

tem, appetite, breathing, blood pressure and cardiovascular health."

Research shows that lack of sleep increases the risk for obesity, heart disease and infections. Throughout the night, your heart rate, breathing rate and blood pressure rise and fall, a process that may be important for cardiovascular health. Your body releases hormones during sleep that help repair cells and control the body's use of energy. These hormone changes can affect your body weight.

"Ongoing research shows a lack of sleep can produce diabetic-like conditions in otherwise healthy people," says Mitler.

Recent studies also reveal that sleep can affect the efficiency of vaccinations. Twery described research showing that well-rested people who received the flu vaccine developed stronger protection against the illness.

A good night's sleep consists of 4 to 5 sleep cycles. Each cycle includes periods of deep sleep and rapid eye movement (REM) sleep, when we dream. "As the night goes on, the portion of that cycle that is in REM sleep increases. It turns out that this pattern of cycling and progression is critical to the biology of sleep," Twery says.

Although personal needs vary, on average, adults need 7 to 8 hours of sleep per night. Babies typically sleep about 16 hours a day. Young children need at least 10 hours of sleep, while teenagers need at least 9 hours. To attain the maximum restorative benefits of sleep, getting a full night of quality sleep is important, says Twery.

Sleep can be disrupted by many things. Stimulants such as caffeine or certain medications can keep you up. Distractions such as electronics—especially the light from TVs, cell phones, tablets and e-readers—can prevent you from falling asleep.

As people get older, they may not get enough sleep because of illness, medications or sleep disorders. By some estimates, about 70 million Americans of all ages suffer from chronic sleep problems. The 2 most common sleep disorders are insomnia and sleep apnea.

People with insomnia have trouble falling or staying asleep. Anxiety about falling asleep often makes the condition worse. Most of us have occasional insomnia. But chronic insomnia—lasting at least 3 nights per week for more than a month—can trigger serious daytime problems such as exhaustion, irritability and difficulty concentrating.

Common therapies include relaxation and deep-breathing techniques. Sometimes medicine is prescribed. But consult a doctor before trying even over-the-counter sleep pills, as they may leave you feeling unrefreshed in the morning.

### GETTING QUALITY SLEEP

- Go to bed the same time each night and get up the same time each morning.
- Sleep in a dark, quiet, comfortable environment.
- Exercise daily (but not right before bedtime).
- Limit the use of electronics before bed.

- Relax before bedtime. A warm bath or reading might help.
- Avoid alcohol and stimulants such as caffeine late in the day.
- Avoid nicotine.
- Consult a health care professional if you have ongoing sleep problems.

Good sleep is critical to your health. To make each day a safe, productive one, take steps to make sure you regularly get a good night's sleep.

## DON'T LET APNEA STEAL YOUR SWEET DREAMS

Most people who have sleep apnea don't realize it. That's because this disorder only occurs during sleep.

Sleep apnea is when you have pauses in breathing while you're asleep. These pauses can last from seconds to minutes. You may have difficulty breathing a few times or dozens of times an hour.

These breathing pauses can be dangerous if they cause the oxygen level in your body to drop or disturb your sleep. When oxygen drops, your brain does whatever it can to get you to resume breathing. And then you may snore, gasp, snort loudly, or make a choking sound. A family member or bed partner might be the first to notice these disruptions in your sleep.

Sleep apnea is a common disorder. Anyone can develop it. "Sleep apnea can occur in both genders, in all races and ethnicities, and in people of all sizes and shapes," says Dr. Michael Twery, a sleep expert at NIH.

The most common type of sleep apnea is called obstructive sleep apnea. Any air that squeezes past a blocked airway can cause loud snoring. When you're awake, the muscles in your throat help keep your airway stiff and open. In adults, the throat muscles and tongue can relax during sleep, or fat tissue in the neck can narrow your airway to cause an obstruction. In children, the airway may become blocked if their tonsils are so large they obstruct the airway opening.

The other type of sleep apnea is central sleep apnea. In central sleep apnea, the brain doesn't send the correct signals to your breathing muscles, so you stop breathing for brief periods.

So how can you tell whether you may have this disorder? One of the most common symptoms is excessive daytime sleepiness. "Anyone who feels so tired on a regular basis that this is a drag on their daytime function—that even if they allow enough time to get enough sleep on a regular basis and they still feel this way—then they need to discuss it with their doctor," Twery says.

Another common symptom is loud, frequent snoring. But not everyone who snores has sleep apnea. Other symptoms of sleep apnea may include feeling irritable or depressed, or having mood swings. You may have memory problems or trouble concentrating. Or, you may wake up with a headache or a dry mouth.

Your doctor can diagnose sleep apnea based on your symptoms, a physical exam, and a sleep study. For a sleep study, your doctor may send you to a sleep lab or provide a portable sleep monitor. Sleep studies record things like heart rate and oxygen level while you sleep.

A sleep study can show whether apnea is mild or severe. "The largest proportion of the population with sleep apnea has mild sleep apnea," Twery explains. "Mild may or may not be associated with any daytime symptoms." People who are so sleepy that they're at risk of a drowsy driving accident are probably in the moderate to severe range. Doctors may prescribe breathing devices.

Everyone deserves a good night's sleep. If you feel extremely sleepy during the daytime or your bed partner says that you stop breathing when you're asleep, go talk with your doctor.

## BREATHE EASY!

Try these tips for improving your breathing when you're asleep:

- Avoid alcohol before bedtime and don't take medicines that make you sleepy. They make it harder for your throat to stay open when you're asleep.
- Maintain a healthy weight. Extra fat in the walls of your throat can make it narrower.
- Sleep on your side instead of your back. This helps keep your throat open.
- Ask your physician about medicines. Some medications can help open your nasal passages.

## MHBP SLEEP TESTING AND SLEEP IMPROVEMENT COACHING PROGRAM

New in 2019, MHBP expanded its medical healthcare benefits for sleep studies to include those conducted at home (unattended), in addition to its benefits for those sleep studies conducted in an outpatient setting/ambulatory surgical setting (attended). Please note that sleep studies require prior authorization. For more information, contact MHBP at 800-410-7778 for Standard Option and Value Plan or call 800-694-9901 for Consumer Option.

MHBP also offers online digital coaching programs, including those for sleep improvement. Programs are prioritized based on a member's health risk assessment to help create a personalized plan for successful behavior change. Members can engage and participate through personalized messaging with tools and resources to help track their progress and stay on the path to wellness. This provides you secure access to a broad range of your personal health information after you register. Access the Plan's website tool Aetna Navigator through our link at MHBP.com. Select "Discover a Healthier You" under the Stay Healthy icon, then "Dashboard" and finally "Digital Coach".





# NATIONAL EXECUTIVE BOARD VISITS MEMBERS IN PHILADELPHIA

**M**embers of the National Executive Board along with Local 308 leaders toured the Philadelphia BMC after the conclusion of the SAMLU meeting. Members of the National Executive Board toured the facility and talked to tour 3 Mail Handlers over the duration of the visit. At one stop along the tour, the NEB took a photo in front of a mural that contained images of famous local: celebrities, artist, athletes and politicians painted by local Mail Handler Rick Slocum.





Mail Handler and artist Rick Slocum painted the Philadelphia NDC murals shown on page 34.





# MAIL HANDLERS ACROSS THE COUNTRY



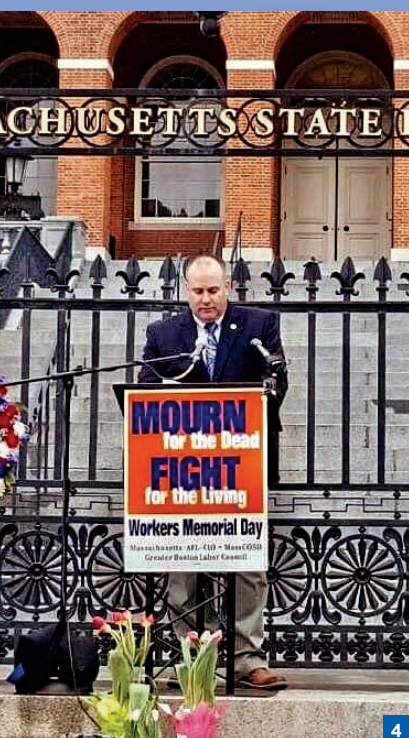
A



B



C



4



3



2

## LOCAL 301 AROUND THE UNION

1. Local 301 Members supporting the 31,000 Striking workers of the UFCW (Stop & Shop) **A)** Bobby Doherty, Mail Handler Branch 103, **B)** Sean Sweeney Local 301 Vice President **C)** Charlie Masterson, Mail Handler Branch 18. **2.** Three Generations of Mail Handlers Local 301, Southern Maine P&DC; Jesse DeGuzman (pictured Left) received his 55-year Government Service Award. He is pictured with his son, Dana DeGuzman (pictured center) and Grandson Tyler DeGuzman (pictured right). **3.** Massachusetts AFL-CIO meeting pictured (l-r) Local 301 President Dan St. Marie and AFL-CIO Treasurer Liz Shuler. **4.** Local 301 Vice President Sean Sweeney reads the names of the fallen at the Workers Memorial Day Ceremony at the Massachusetts State House





### LOCAL 333 STEWARD WORKSHOP

Central Region Vice President and Local 306 President June Harris and (not pictured) Eastern Region Vice President and Local 308 President John Gibson joined Local 333 President Randy Krueger for the Local 333 Steward Workshop.



### LOCAL 305 INSTALLATION OF OFFICERS

National-Secretary Treasurer Michael Hora officiates ceremony and installation of Local 305 Officers at local's Richmond VA headquarters



### LOCAL 307 INSTALLATION OF OFFICERS

Local 307 held its Council Meeting. On hand for the meeting were: Top row (l-r) John Roche Branch President, Trevell Fleming SEBM, Billy Genia Local 307 Treasurer, Jim Haggerty Local 307 President, Mike Mendez Branch President, Erik Stevenson Local 307 Vice President, Michael Hora National Secretary-Treasurer, Paul Hogrogian National President. Front row (l-r) June Harris Central Region Vice President and Local 306 President, Ladonna Hardy Local 307 Recording Secretary and Ursula Patterson Branch President.



# MAIL HANDLERS ACROSS THE COUNTRY



A



C



C



B



C



C

## LOCAL 318 AROUND THE UNION

**A)** Royal Palm P&DC Town Hall Meeting with Postmaster General Megan Brennan. **B)** Local 318 Advance Stewards Training for the Gulf Atlantic District. The training was conducted on April 16-18, 2019 in Jacksonville, FL by Local 318 President Nick Mosezar, Local 318 Vice President Ira Edelstein, Local 318 Treasurer Joyce Weber and NPMHU Southern Region VP and Local 318 Executive Board Member Lawrence Sapp. The Gulf Atlantic District encompasses Pensacola P&DC, Tallahassee P&DC, Gainesville P&DC, Jacksonville GMF and Jacksonville NDC. **C)** Local 318 Advance Stewards Training Seminar on May 14-16, 2019 in Tampa, FL. This training consisted of stewards in the Suncoast District that include the USPS Processing & Distribution Centers in Ft. Myers, Manasota, Tampa, Ybor City, Orlando, Seminole and Mid Florida.





### LOCAL 304 TRAINING

National Trainer and Eastern Region Vice President John Gibson, National Trainer and South Region Vice President Lawrence Sapp along with CAD Regional Director Eugene Horton joined Local 304 President William McLemore for the Local 304 Training.



### LOCAL 300 SWEARING IN

Peter Letizia new Mid-Hudson Branch President, sworn in by Local 300 President Kevin Tabarus.



# This Plan Is ***Your*** Plan

## Setting a new standard for federal health plans



### ***MHBP Standard Option***

#### **Comprehensive coverage at a surprisingly low cost**

MHBP Standard Option is the new standard for federal health benefits. You'll get comprehensive benefits and predictable out-of-pocket expenses for a much lower cost than you'd expect.

**Compare** MHBP Standard Option to other standard and even high-option plans. See how much you can save.

### ***MHBP Value Plan***

#### **Preventive care and catastrophic coverage at an affordable cost**

Our Value Plan safeguards you against the high cost of an unforeseen illness or event. Plus, you pay nothing for preventive care, such as your annual physical exam, routine screenings, immunizations, women's preventive care and well-child care.

### ***MHBP Consumer Option***

#### **A high-deductible plan with an HSA**

Like being in control of your health care? Our Consumer Option is a great choice for you. The Plan will deposit up to \$2,400 per year into an HSA for you to spend on your care or save. And preventive care is paid at 100 percent!

Call us at **800-410-7778** or visit **MHBP.com**  
for more information about our plans.

#### **Support your union-sponsored health plan**

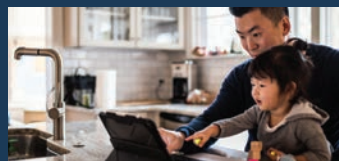
MHBP offers three worldwide health plans designed to fit every need and budget. Regardless of your stage in life, location or health status, there's an MHBP plan for you. You can count on:

- Nationwide network of doctors and hospitals backed by Aetna
- No specialist referrals or PCP selection required — you direct your care
- Wellness tools and rewards to help keep you healthy
- 24/7 customer service (except major holidays)

**Open to Everyone**

**MHBP**<sup>SM</sup>

*Brought to you by Aetna*



\*Qualifying life events allow individuals the chance to change their plan selection if one of the following life events occurs: marriage, birth, adoption, divorce, loss of health coverage, etc. This is a summary of the features of the Mail Handlers Benefit Plan (MHBP). Before making a final decision, please read the 2019 official Plan Brochures (RI 71-007 or RI 71-016). All benefits are subject to the definitions, limitations, and exclusions set forth in the 2019 official Plan Brochure. For more information about MHBP plans, please refer to [www.MHBP.com](http://www.MHBP.com). ©2019 Aetna, Inc. All rights reserved.