

Arbitration Panel Finalized, Opening Day September 4

Arbitrator Stephen B. Goldberg has been appointed as the impartial chair of the tripartite interest arbitration panel and scheduled the opening day of the hearings for September 4, 2019.

When the APWU and USPS are unable to reach a new collective bargaining agreement through negotiations, the law requires interest arbitration. In this process, there is a three-member arbitration panel. One arbitrator is appointed by the APWU, another by the USPS, and a neutral and impartial arbitrator is selected as chair of the panel by mutual agreement between management and the union.

Arbitrator Goldberg has extensive experience with the APWU and the USPS. He chaired the interest arbitration panel in 2016 and his award determined the terms of the 2015-2018 collective bargaining agreement. He also chaired the panel that determined the 2000-2003 contract. Arbitrator Goldberg has also decided many national grievance disputes between the APWU and the USPS.

The APWU appointed Phillip Tabbita, Manager of Negotiation Support and Special Projects, as the APWU arbitrator. He has been involved in every APWU contract negotiation since 1981 and every interest arbitration since 1984. He served as the APWU-appointed arbitrator in the 2016 interest arbitration. The USPS appointed Robert Dufek as their arbitrator. Mr. Dufek is a management attorney and has been the Postal Service's arbitrator of choice in every interest arbitration in recent decades.

“The APWU team of officers, staff, attorneys, economists, and witnesses are fully prepared to beat back management's concessionary demands and win a decent new contract,” President Mark Dimondstein said. “In 2016, we prevailed through interest arbitration when negotiations stalled, and we plan to succeed once again in this interest arbitration as we continue ‘Fighting Today for a Better Tomorrow.’”

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To show solidarity, the APWU encourages union members to wear stickers throughout the first month of arbitration. Stickers are being mailed to members' homes and to local and state unions.

Send pictures of you and your coworkers wearing them to nccc@apwu.org! Post online with #APWUnited.

The APWU demands include fair and retroactive wage increases and cost-of-living allowances (COLAs), closing the gaps of the divisive multi-tier wage system, maintaining protections against layoffs, increasing career jobs, restrictions on subcontracting, limits on excessing and expanding PTF rights.

Management's demands include eliminating pay increases, gutting COLAs, creating a new lower-tier of employees with reduced benefits, restricting no lay-off protections, making it easier to excess employees and increasing the non-career workforce.

“The demands of management show complete disrespect for you, the dedicated postal worker, and the hard work you do,” Industrial Relations Director Vance Zimmerman said. “Management would rather punish than reward you for your good work. We will fight in this interest arbitration to get what you deserve — a fair contract that recognizes your value.”

Previous interest arbitrations have taken 18 hearing days and more to conclude. Because of the varying schedules of the neutral arbitrator, lawyers, and witnesses, the hearings are usually spread out over several months, followed by legal briefs, panel deliberations and the writing of a final award by the Interest Arbitration panel.

The national leadership will keep the members regularly informed of the progress of the interest arbitration proceedings through all avenues of print and social media.

“In the meantime, remember,” said President Dimondstein, “that this is a great time to be union proud. Without the collective strength of our union to protect us, management would simply implement their draconian proposals. In the month of September, wear your *Good Contract NOW!* sticker – soon to be delivered – and union gear with pride as we show our unity in the struggle for a good union contract.”

More contract arbitration information to come!

The National Negotiation Committee thanks the many rank and file members who assisted in arbitration preparation by participating in polling and job analysis surveys and who will be serving as witnesses.

Keep reading future issues of *The American Postal Worker* and further News Service Bulletins for updates on interest arbitration.

Also go to apwu.org and Facebook (@APWUNational) for the most recent information.



House Majority Supports H.R. 2382

On August 16, the USPS Fairness Act (H.R. 2382) achieved a bipartisan majority of cosponsors.

This critical milestone is the direct result of a successful day of action held on July 23, and our ongoing work with the AFL-CIO and our sister postal unions.

This legislation, if signed into law, would repeal the mandate that requires the Postal Service to prefund its retiree health care benefits 75 years in advance. The prefunding mandate is responsible for 100% of the Postal Service's net losses since 2013, has harmed the Postal Service's operations, and negatively affects postal employees and the public they serve. Eliminating the mandate would allow

the Postal Service to revert to the pay-as-you-go method for retiree health benefits and focus on innovation and investing.

“APWU members showed once again what we can accomplish when we work together to send a message to Congress,” said President Mark Dimondstein. “By making calls to every single Representative, we showed that our fight is of national importance and we will be heard.”

“Let's keep up the momentum and make sure this fight is taking place in every zip code across the country,” said Legislative & Political Director Judy Beard. “We can gain even more cosponsors and show Congress this is critical legislation that should be brought to the House floor for an affirmative vote.”