



## Event Guide for Hosting an Action on October 1

**This year, on October 1, postal workers across the country will take action to demand dignity, respect, and adequate staffing to get the job done.** We deserve a job where we can show up, safely do our work, and clock out knowing that we've contributed to the postal mission. But a vicious cycle of short staffing and a toxic work culture is hurting postal workers and the communities we serve. This is reaching a crisis-point **and that's why we are taking action.**

*This guide is a quick overview of how to plan and host an action, and examples of actions you can take with your coworkers or local.*

### Event guide

If you are ready to mobilize members for a public event, we recommend a press conference. If you are still building up to that stage of mobilization, a smaller worksite action such as a sticker-up/gear up and workroom floor survey might be more appropriate.

#### **There are a few goals for our October 1 actions:**

- **Mobilizing members** – By taking action across the country, we have the opportunity show members that we are not alone. Raising our voices together shows that we are united and sends a strong message to management that we demand change.
- **Visibility** – Because so much of our work happens out of the public view, we need to share our stories and struggle with our communities. A public event can shine a light on short-staffing and the impact it has on our neighbors.
- **Connecting with our communities** – The public supports postal workers. Telling the story of understaffing helps us build relationships in our communities with individuals and organized allied groups. That alliance has a proven track record of winning for postal workers at the highest level.
- **Spreading the word through local press and social media about our demands** for a safe and effective public post office

## Invite and promote!

### **Internal Events: Mobilize members in your workplace and local**

Whether this is an internal or public-facing action, mobilizing members and keeping them active and informed is critical to the success of your day of action. Make a plan for your event. Include dates and clearly assign tasks.

- Use your member list and make one-on-one conversations the center of your strategy. Use your committee and active members to make calls and have workroom floor conversations.
- Give members the context: “WE are the power in the union! This is our chance to stand up for respect at work and get action on understaffing. Do you want to help solve these problems? Great, here’s how....”
- If you have a lot of members to talk to, a mapping exercise is a helpful way to cover the ground effectively. Look at where your members are. Ask when they are working. Figure out who is best placed to have the conversations. In each facility, ask questions like:
  - “Who is the steward on this tour?”
  - “Who comes to meetings from this facility?”
  - “Who is friends with this group?”
- Be sure to get hard commitments. “Sure, I guess so” is a soft commitment. “Yes, I’ll be in the break room at 7:30 am to survey members” is a hard commitment. Get the where, when, and what they’re willing to do. If they aren’t sure, let them know you’ll be back in contact and talk to them again.
- Share materials, including union gear, talking points and how-tos for members to get involved in your action.
- One-on-one conversations are most important, but also use your union bulletin boards, social media accounts, email lists and any other methods you can use to get the word out.
- Before the event, don’t forget to reconfirm. “Hi, I’m Jane Doe, Local President, and I’m calling to confirm that you’ll be joining our press conference tomorrow at 10 am.”
- What about the other unions in your facility? Is the local leadership interesting in getting involved too? Many of them are facing the same challenges that we are.

### **Public events: Invite your friends, neighbors, and others in your network!**

If your event is open to the public, this is a perfect opportunity to build alliances and spread the word.

Think about other groups that have an interest in the Postal Service. Other unions, labor federations, community groups, civil rights groups and members of A Grand Alliance are all great examples of groups to work with. Reach out early. Many other labor organizations will be planning their own Workers Memorial Day actions – hostile work environments are a major safety concern in many workplaces.

As well as groups, we found in 2020 that many individuals value the Postal Service and are willing to come out and take action in support of postal workers’ issues.

Take some time to map out a list of friends, family, and neighbors in your area who you can invite.

Phone calls & one-on-one conversations are by far the most effective methods that get people to commit to attending your action.

### **Spread the word on social media**

Social media is a great tool for reaching a wide audience. Be sure to pair it with the one-on-one outreach methods mentioned above, which are more likely to get people to show up.

### **Aim to get more RSVPs than your attendance goal**

Please keep in mind that it is normal to have less people show up than confirmed with you that they would attend. Be sure to get more commitments than you need for a successful event.

### **Share your success**

Make sure you remind everyone to wear their APWU gear or stickers, unless they have uniform restrictions.

- Take pictures! Record videos on your phone and email them to [communications@apwu.org](mailto:communications@apwu.org)
- Share what's happening on social media. Use the Hashtags #APWUnited and #WorkersMemorialDay
- Record who participated with you to get them involved in future actions

## Inside or public actions?

Plan an action based on what will work best and get the most attention for your members. ***Begin with where the members are at, not where you want them to be:*** If it has been a long time since you mobilized for a public event and you don't feel confident, start with a sticker up and/or survey event. If you are confident that members are already fired up, organize a press event.

Some things to consider:

- Have the members been willing to wear buttons or T-shirts? If not, do we know why and how to change that?
- Have the members ever handed out flyers to the public or to coworkers in the breakroom on an issue?
- Have you run a public event in the past? Did it empower your members or make a difference?
- Do you think short-staffing and/or hostile work environments are a problem in your workplace? Will the issues motivate your members?

Wherever you start, small or large, internal or public, use the action as an opportunity to get new people engaged, and build for something bigger next time.

## Some internal actions:

**A sticker action** is an easy way to show your solidarity for each other and show that you are committed to ending toxic management practices in the USPS. Every member will receive three stickers a few days before the action. Locals will also receive extras to distribute to members. Ask members to wear their gear along with their stickers.

Some people may come up and ask sticker-wearers questions, and members should be prepared to answer questions and share stickers. Locals will receive flyers, posters, news service bulletins and other materials. Remember that stickers cannot be worn by members with uniform restrictions.

Don't just put the word out and hope. Use the organizing tips above to get commitments and keep the stickers we send you ready to hand out to members on the day.

### **Break Room/Lunch Action**

In addition to wearing stickers, you might set up a table in your facility and host a drop-in for members and non-members interested in learning more about the campaign.

#### **On October 1:**

- Organize participants to arrive at your shift together
- Take pictures together – as a group and as a selfie! Send them to [communications@apwu.org](mailto:communications@apwu.org)
- Share with your coworkers and whoever asks why you are wearing stickers and what it means to you
- Take a note of how many people participated and report back!

#### **After the event:**

**Celebrate your progress:** At the end of the action, it is important to acknowledge the members who have participated and officers, stewards, and volunteer members who have mobilized their union brothers and sisters. You might even want to give out a few awards for those individuals whose efforts went beyond the call of duty.

Find a time to debrief your action with members and plan for your next steps!

## Some external actions:

### Press Conference/Press Rally

Hold a press conference to inform the public about the toxic workplaces leading to mail delays in your area. If you have enough members RSVP, turn it into a march or rally for safe staffing and safe workplaces!

- Reach out to local reporters! Let them know that you are hosting an event. Ask them if they would be willing to cover, promote, or maybe even attend your event.
- Let the communications department know by emailing [communications@apwu.org](mailto:communications@apwu.org). We can provide you with template press releases and advisories and media lists.
- It's also good to follow up after the event, whether or not a reporter doesn't attend. If they didn't attend, provide them with information. How many people attended your event, how long was it? Share photos and video. What's the next step they can give to their readers?

*To organize a press rally, follow these steps:*

#### **Before a press rally, make sure you:**

- Get required permits and permissions to set up the press conference
- Follow the mobilization steps above. Be sure you have the best turnout you can by having one-on-one conversations with your members about this action.
- Send a media advisory several days before the event and confirm attendance with the media the day before
- Round up press materials, like a fact sheet and key points for reporters
- Set up appropriate A/V for an event (do you need a podium and microphone, or just a bullhorn?)
- Prepare spokespeople. As the local or state president, you should be a spokesperson. Think about whether anyone else can add to the story.
  - Be ready and know what you want to say before the interview
  - This is a message to the public. Avoid jargon and language that only postal workers will understand. Talk clearly about how understaffing and toxic work environments are hitting the service that the public receives.
  - Speak about the issues, but don't speak about individuals – calling out individual managers or cases isn't helpful and could even put you at risk of action.
  - Remember: you're the expert. You know better than anyone else what is happening with the Postal Service in your location. Speak with confidence.

#### **On the day of the event:**

- Be there on time and make sure someone is assigned to welcome people
- Plan the location and make sure everyone knows where to be (think about it like taking a picture – for example, if you're in front of a post office, it should be clearly be in the background shot of anyone speaking)
- Kick things off & keep things moving along
- Energize the crowd
- Keep an eye on time, and wrap things up when they end
- Have someone help wrangle reporters, answer questions and provide materials.

**After the event:**

- **Celebrate your progress:** At the end of the action, it is important to acknowledge the members who have participated and officers, stewards, and volunteer members who have mobilized their union brothers and sisters. You might even want to give out a few awards for those individuals whose efforts went beyond the call of duty.
- Find a time to debrief your action with members and plan for your next steps!
- **Share press hits** on social media, with your participants AND send them back to APWU communications at [communications@apwu.org](mailto:communications@apwu.org)
- Find a time to debrief your action with members and plan for your next steps!