

AMERICAN POSTAL WORKERS UNION, AFL-CIO

*Welcome  
to the*

**APWU**

BE STRONG!

BE UNITED!

**BE UNION!**

# Welcome

TO THE  
**AMERICAN POSTAL  
WORKERS UNION**

*“It shall be the objective of the  
APWU to secure through collective  
bargaining and legislative effort  
a safe and healthy work  
environment, better working  
conditions and a better standard  
of living for the members of  
the APWU and their families.”*

ARTICLE 2 OF THE  
NATIONAL CONSTITUTION

**NATIONAL  
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PRESIDENT

**Debby Szeredy**  
EXECUTIVE  
VICE PRESIDENT

**Elizabeth 'Liz' Powell**  
SECRETARY-TREASURER

**Vance Zimmerman**  
INDUSTRIAL  
RELATIONS DIRECTOR

**Lamont Brooks**  
DIRECTOR  
CLERK DIVISION

**Idowa Balogun**  
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MAINTENANCE  
DIVISION

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**Sharyn M. Stone**  
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CENTRAL REGION

**Arthur W. Jones**  
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COORDINATOR  
NORTHEAST REGION

**Kenneth L. Bosley**  
COORDINATOR  
SOUTHERN REGION

**Omar M. Gonzalez**  
COORDINATOR  
WESTERN REGION

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Welcome to the American Postal Workers Union. If you are a USPS employee in the Clerk, Maintenance, Motor Vehicle, or Support Services craft the APWU is already working for you.

The APWU will always strive to bring good wages, benefits, and job security to our members. The Union has fought hard for the benefits we all receive. The benefits we enjoy are not given to us voluntarily by the Postal Service – every benefit is fiercely negotiated. In exchange for the value of our labor, the union strives to secure for its members the best compensation – compensation that will allow the Members to provide for themselves and their families well into retirement. Some of the benefits you could enjoy brought to you courtesy of the APWU include: Cost-of-Living Adjustments (COLA), healthcare and retirement benefits, annual leave, sick leave, holidays, protection against layoffs and dignity in the workplace. Does this mean there are never any problems in the work place? No, but the union will be there to assist you whenever and wherever we can.

Our modest union dues make it feasible for the APWU to function as an organization working for you. Your membership in the APWU shows a commitment to working together for better pay and benefits, as well as for dignity and respect on the job. It represents our understanding of the principle of strength through unity, both in demanding our rights on the job and in speaking to our nation's leaders about issues that are important to working Americans.

This book has been designed to provide you with an explanation of some of the benefits available to an APWU Member as well as to let you know where we came from, who we are, and how the American Postal Workers Union, AFL-CIO works to help you every day of your postal career.

We would be proud to have you as a Member, and with your commitment to join, we will always be fighting for you and with you.

In Union Solidarity,

*Mark Dimondstein*

Mark Dimondstein  
President

*A. Smith*

Anna Smith  
Organization Director



# Members' Bill of Rights

## **IN OUR UNION EVERY MEMBER HAS RIGHTS. THESE RIGHTS ARE LISTED IN THE UNION'S CONSTITUTION:**

- 1 Every member has the right to be respected as a human being.
- 2 Every member has the right to be respected as a brother or sister of this Union.
- 3 Every member has the right to freedom of speech and the right to be heard.
- 4 Every member has the right to the freedom to listen.
- 5 Every member has the right to the freedom of the press.
- 6 Every member has the right to participate in the activities of this Union.
- 7 Members shall not be denied the right to seek any office or the right to vote in this Union because of race, color, creed, sex, sexual orientation, nationality, handicap, political affiliation, age or religion.
- 8 Every member has the right to support the candidate of his or her choice and to participate in that right with others.
- 9 Every member has the right to a fair trial, to be represented by an individual of his or her choice and to proper appeal procedures.
- 10 Every member has the right to be secure in his or her basic rights without fear of political, economic, physical or psychological intimidation.

Our mandate to protect the common interest of postal workers and our desire to secure better wages, reasonable hours, and safe working conditions where we work demands that we strive to sign up non-members into our union.

As a Union we act also to strengthen the labor movement and all issues that improve and promote working class families nationwide. We fight for quality health benefits for our members. Every day the union works to improve working conditions and safety at the post office. We work to provide help to injured and retired workers. One of our major efforts is to secure a living wage so we can support ourselves and our families. United We Stand ~ Divided We Fall. Which side are you on?

# APWU Structure

We are an Industrial Union, which means we come from different crafts (clerks, maintenance, and motor vehicle) and from different operations (postal nurses, material handlers, support services). When the APWU was founded, the different craft unions merged into one Industrial Union. The crafts still kept their identity becoming "Divisions" under the APWU Constitution. Yet all crafts have the same objectives and work to secure a safe and health work environment, better working conditions and a better standard of living for all members of the APWU and their families.

## LOCALS

Ten (10) or more members in the same postal installation may be chartered as a local. A charter is a legal document that declares workers in a particular post office have formed a union and that union is recognized as a "local" union. The local serves the members on the work floor as representatives enforcing the union contract. Each local union has a constitution on how it is to operate, elect officers, conduct union business, how much the member dues are and a host of other issues. Also, each local is autonomous which means you the members have the say on how your local union is run and how it represents the workers.

## STATE ORGANIZATIONS

Two (2) or more district councils or five (5) or more locals within a state can form a state level union representing the locals within a given state. State unions represent postal workers who work at small offices that do not have a local union (these workers are called Members-At-Large). The State Organization also does a great deal of work in the legislative arena.

## NATIONAL ORGANIZATION

APWU Headquarters is located in Washington, DC. Members everywhere are serviced by national union officers. Those located in Washington, DC are called "resident officers" and are elected by the members of the union nationwide. Each craft has a director. The crafts include: Clerk, Maintenance, Motor Vehicle Division (MVS), and Support Services. There are several Departments which handle specific matters related to union members. Those departments include Industrial Relations, Legislative/Political, Organization, Research and Education, Health Plan, Human Relations, and Retiree's.

The APWU is divided into five regions. There are five elected Regional Coordinators who have jurisdiction over five distinct geographical regions of the United States (Eastern, Northeast, Southern, Central, and Western). Within each of these regions elected officers, National Business Agents, represent the locals and members within their specific craft and within a specified area.

# Officers

Though each local and state organization is autonomous, members in these organizations elect the national union officers by mail in a secret ballot. Your current national officers are:

<b>Mark Dimendstein</b>	President - Elected
<b>Bobby Seawell</b>	Executive Vice President
<b>Elizabeth Powell</b>	Secretary-Treasurer
<b>Vance Zimmerman</b>	Industrial Relations Director
<b>Laurent Brooks</b>	Clerk Division Director
<b>Moore Balogun</b>	Maintenance Division Director
<b>Michael G. Foster</b>	Motor Vehicle Service Division Director
<b>Steve Brooks</b>	Support Services Division Director
<b>Shayne M. Stone</b>	Central Region Coordinator
<b>Arthur W. Jones</b>	Eastern Region Coordinator
<b>Tiffany Foster</b>	Northeast Region Coordinator
<b>Kenneth L. Seawell</b>	Southern Region Coordinator
<b>Dana M. Gonzalez</b>	Western Region Coordinator
<b>Judy Beard</b>	Legislative & Political Director - Adviser, Elected
<b>Anna Smith</b>	Organization Director
<b>Joyce B. Robinson</b>	Research & Education Director
<b>Sarah Rodriguez</b>	Health Plan Director
<b>Nancy E. Blumke</b>	Retiree Department Director
<b>Sam Lianke</b>	Clerk Division Assistant Director
<b>Lynn Pallas-Barber</b>	Clerk Division Assistant Director
<b>Jamie Wallen</b>	Maintenance Division Assistant Director
<b>Terry B. Mariner</b>	Maintenance Division Assistant Director
<b>Janet Pitman</b>	Motor Vehicle Division Assistant Director

### CLERK DIVISION NATIONAL BUSINESS AGENTS

<b>Robert D. Kessler</b>	<b>Bernard C. Timmerman</b>
<b>Shirley J. Taylor</b>	<b>Rachel Whitball</b>
<b>Peter Casali</b>	<b>Liz Swigert</b>
<b>Stephen Lukaus</b>	<b>James Stevenson</b>
<b>William Mullen</b>	<b>Senia Ciochela</b>
<b>Tom O'Brien</b>	<b>Brian Dunsmuir</b>
<b>Patricia Richardson</b>	<b>Daniel F. Skemp</b>
<b>Billy Woods</b>	<b>Vince Tambucci</b>
<b>Brian Dunn</b>	<b>Wicki L. Carlos</b>
<b>Frank Rogers</b>	<b>Michael William Fink Jr.</b>
<b>Linda J. Tenney</b>	<b>Jim DeMauro</b>
<b>Robert Romanowski</b>	<b>Ashley Cargill</b>
<b>John Jackson</b>	<b>Dawn Scarfark</b>
<b>Jack Crawford</b>	<b>Charles Tillman</b>
<b>Chuck Locke</b>	<b>Doris Orr Richardson</b>
<b>Martin J. Mater</b>	<b>Patricia Smith</b>
<b>Stella "Joan" Gorham</b>	<b>Eric Van Dyke</b>
<b>Mike Schmidt</b>	<b>Dorenda Nathan</b>
<b>Michael Sullivan</b>	

### MAINTENANCE DIVISION NATIONAL BUSINESS AGENTS

<b>John Gearhard</b>	<b>Craig Fisher</b>
<b>Jeffrey S. Beaton</b>	<b>Dawn Sarnacki</b>
<b>Louis M. Kingsley Jr.</b>	<b>Rector Bass</b>
<b>Curtis Walker</b>	<b>Jason Treier</b>
<b>Carole Paz</b>	

### MOTOR VEHICLE SERVICE DIVISION NATIONAL BUSINESS AGENTS

<b>Joseph LeCapria</b>	<b>Janette Pitman</b>
<b>Kenneth Piaz</b>	<b>William Wright</b>
<b>Bruce Anney</b>	<b>Dyrla Shaw</b>

### SUPPORT SERVICES DIVISION NATION BUSINESS AGENTS

**Judy McCann**

### OTHER NATIONAL BUSINESS AGENTS

<b>Daniel Sato</b>	<b>James M. Peterlin</b>	<b>Rufina Pagulisan</b>
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# APWU Departments and Divisions

## INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS DEPARTMENT

The Industrial Relations Director is responsible for Labor-Management, national negotiations, mechanization, health and safety for all divisions of the APWU and the administration of the contract.

## LEGISLATIVE AND POLITICAL DEPARTMENT

The Legislative/Political Director is responsible for directing all activities of the APWU with regard to legislation of interest to the members and their families; to develop publicity programs; be the Editor of the news bulletin and the Associate Editor of the official publication of the APWU; work in cooperation with the AFL-CIO and other national and international unions with regard to legislation and assist the President in the distribution of COPA (Committee on Political Action) funds.

## ORGANIZATION DEPARTMENT

The Organization Director is responsible for maintaining and increasing the membership of our union; directing the organization of the unorganized; promoting, encouraging and advising membership committees in all phases of membership recruitment programs; preparing and maintaining organizing material that appeals to respective membership of all divisions under jurisdiction of the APWU.

## RESEARCH AND EDUCATION

The Research and Education Director is responsible for conducting research and administering educational programs at the national, regional, state, area and local levels. Education shall be a mandatory part of the business of the APWU, particularly education in labor history, labor problems, grievance procedure, the objective and problems of the APWU, its members, and their families.

## HUMAN RELATIONS DEPARTMENT

The Human Relations Director prepares and direct programs in the area of equal opportunity, civic, community service, and other related programs. The President reserves the right to appoint representative(s) with the recommendation of the Human Relations Director to handle OWCP and EEO cases, on an "as needed" basis, to work under the direction of the Human Relations Director.

## RETIREE'S DEPARTMENT

The Retirees Department Director is responsible for directing the objectives of the department; legislative and political activity; administering retirement educational programs; organizing new members of the Retirees Department and Local and State Retiree Chapters; and services the needs of retired members and their survivors.

## CLERK DIVISION

This division is responsible for administering the clerk craft provisions of the contract found in Article 37. The craft officers are assigned to deal with clerk issues related to jobs, lay-offs, pay, assignments, bids and posting, representation, safety, light duty higher level work, craft work and other matters related to the clerk craft.

## MAINTENANCE DIVISION

This division, in addition to administering the maintenance craft provisions of the contract found in Article 38, also is responsible for handling USPS handbooks and manuals. This craft handles the issues related to work assignments, representation and other matters pertaining to the maintenance craft.

## MOTOR VEHICLE DIVISION (MVS)

The director is responsible for handling all problems and grievances pertaining to MVS. The director is a member of the Labor-Management Committee and the National Negotiations Committee; chairs the Motor Vehicle Service Division Council meeting to be held in conjunction with the National Convention and All-Craft Conference and is responsible for maintaining all records of the MVS membership.

## SUPPORT SERVICES DIVISION

This division is comprised of members from Information Service Centers, Mail Transport Equipment Service Centers, Mail Equipment Shops, Material Distribution Centers, Operating Service Facilities, Mail Transport Operations, Postal Medical Units, other non-mail processing facilities or operations and related operations in the private sector with the right to ratify their respective agreements.



# History of the APWU

Your Union, the American Postal Workers Union, AFL-CIO, represents more than 250,000 employees of the U.S. Postal Service who are clerks, maintenance, motor vehicle service, support services, and nurse employees as well as retirees.

Postal unions date back to the 19th Century and parallel the growth of the former Post Office Department.

The early unions had essentially no bargaining rights, preventing them from negotiating with management on working conditions, wages and the hours of employment. So, the unions were lobbying organizations because almost all of a postal employee's work and home life was dependent on the whim of Congress. Not until around 1900 did the American Federation of Labor (a federation of many industrial unions) include the Chicago Postal Union (Local #1), which helped bolster postal worker's efforts to fight for their rights. The struggles for better pay, recognition of the union by management, better conditions at post offices continued for years without much improvement.

From 1967 to 1969, postal wages did not increase at all, although Congress raised its own pay 41% over that period. Working conditions were getting worse, not better. Hours were at the whim of management and the mail was piling up in many cities.

In 1968 the situation was so bad within the Post Office that the President of the United States established a commission call the Kappel Commission. This Commission concluded that postal workers deserved the same collective bargaining rights afforded to private-sector workers under the National Labor Relations Act. Congress, however, failed to act on the commission's recommendation.

The Great Postal Strike of 1970 – In March 1970, full-time employees earned about \$6,200 to start and workers with 21 years of service averaged

only \$8,440. Workers grew increasingly frustrated with Congress' inaction and management's oppression. So, on March 18, 1970, thousands of New York City postal workers walked off the job in protest. Within days, they were joined by 200,000 others in 30 major cities. Mail service ground to a halt and the plight of postal workers was finally brought to the public's attention. The strike was soon settled, with Congress approving a 6% wage increase, retroactive to the previous December.

The strike helped the effort to push for the enactment of the Postal Reorganization Act of 1970, which granted unions the right to negotiate with management over their wages, benefits and working conditions. In lieu of the right to strike, a binding arbitration process was established for resolving contract disputes.

When the Postal Reorganization Act became law on Aug. 12, 1970, it replaced the cabinet-level Post Office department with the independent United States Postal Service. In 1971, the first union contract between the USPS and its unions was negotiated.

Seven postal unions participated in the first collective bargaining session. Seeing the need for a united front, five postal unions, the United Federation of Postal Clerks, National Postal Union, National Association of Post Office & General Services Maintenance Employees, National Federation of Motor Vehicle Employees, and the National Association of Special Delivery Messengers – merged to create the American Postal Workers Union in July 1971.

In the first contract, a starting postal worker's salary was raised to \$8,488. Four decades of struggle had finally brought dignity to hard working postal workers in the form of living wages, necessary benefits, and the ability to retire with seniority.





# You have a voice in Washington

You have someone in Washington, DC on Capitol Hill fighting to protect our postal jobs and the wages and benefits postal employees depend on. APWU has within its structure a Legislative & Political Department. The Legislative & Political Director's responsibility is to direct the legislative activities of APWU and be the voice of APWU members and their families, in the Halls of Congress.

The APWU Legislative and Political Department works non-stop to educate members of Congress and their staff on the impacts their legislation will have on working families. In recent years, certain members of Congress, and the White House, have proposed the sale of the Postal Service (privatization), plant consolidations, changing retirement rules, slowing down the mail, and reducing federal/postal benefits. Our work has never been more important. To continue fending off these attacks, we need your help, join our team and join the fight!


As an APWU member, you can pool your voluntary political contributions with your brothers and sisters. With our collective strength, we can fight back against corporate-funded politicians and support pro-worker members of Congress and candidates. Our Committee on Political Action (COPA) fund is narrowly focused, voluntary and a proven force in shaping postal policy. Alone our individual contributions would hardly be noticed,

but together we help even the score against large corporate donations. It is a cold hard fact that if we are not at the table... we are on the menu. COPA gets you a seat at the table.

There are several convenient ways to contribute to COPA that can be found by visiting the COPA page on the APWU website, [apwu.org/copa](http://apwu.org/copa). You can participate in our new COPA Thrives With \$5 campaign or join the previous campaign of Ten to Win. Any amount you can contribute is welcome! No amount is too big or too small.


COPA is the APWU's non-partisan Committee on Political Action created to raise voluntary, political contributions. By making contributions to COPA, you strengthen our voice on Capitol Hill and help advance our legislative priorities through supporting elected officials and candidates who are committed to maintaining a strong, public Postal Service and who will promote policies that benefit working people. To join our fight, please log into the members only portion of [apwu.org](http://apwu.org) and contribute to COPA today!

Elect A Congress  
That Supports  
Postal Workers  
& Their Families



**Ten  
\$10 to Win**

Elect A Congress That  
Supports Postal Workers  
& Their Families



**COPA  
Thrives  
with \$5**



# Building Strength in Communities

## THE AUXILIARY TO THE AMERICAN POSTAL WORKERS UNION

Welcome to the American Postal Workers Union. As part of the APWU family, we are constantly aware of the changes that affect our daily lives. The Auxiliary consists of caring family and friends of the APWU as well as retirees and their families. We welcome your family and friends as members in the Auxiliary through your sponsorship. Our main focus is to assist the APWU in attaining a better quality of life for their membership and their families.

By sponsoring a member in the Auxiliary, you and your family will share unique perspectives and accomplishments. We can help them understand the job benefits while getting them involved in ways to create a better work place environment. We are a grassroots organization of volunteers serving out a deep abiding commitment to our American Postal Workers Union and its members. United by common goals and interests, Auxiliary members are engaged in the kind of community and civic involvement that is necessary to present the best possible image of labor to the American People. The Auxiliary stresses both political and philanthropic work.

## WE ARE ALL ONE FAMILY – THE APWU FAMILY.

We invite you to be a part of our Auxiliary family. By returning the membership form below, you can enjoy the benefits of Auxiliary membership for six months. Our newsletter "Auxiliary New & Views" is a major communication link with our members. You can also visit our website at [www.apwuauxiliary.org](http://www.apwuauxiliary.org) and follow the links to join and/or pay your membership fee. Remember to enter the coupon code 6MOFREE. We hope you will consider extending your membership by joining the Auxiliary. The cost is minimal. \$5.00 per year pays your national dues. State and local dues vary according to your home address. By being informed, you can unite with others in your community. Come and join us as a member in the Auxiliary to the APWU.



## APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP AUXILIARY TO THE AMERICAN POSTAL WORKERS UNION

NAME \_\_\_\_\_  
PAID FROM \_\_\_\_\_ TO \_\_\_\_\_  
STREET ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_  
CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP CODE \_\_\_\_\_  
PHONE NUMBER \_\_\_\_\_  
EMAIL ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_  
SPONSORING MEMBER \_\_\_\_\_  
MEMBERS LOCAL \_\_\_\_\_



COUPON CODE: 6MOFREE

PLEASE MAIL TO:  
NATIONAL AUXILIARY TREASURER  
BONNIE SEVRE  
2506 HWY 68  
MINNEAPOLIS MN 55418

LOCAL DUES \_\_\_\_\_  
STATE DUES \_\_\_\_\_  
NATIONAL DUES \_\_\_\_\_  
TOTAL ENCLOSED \_\_\_\_\_

# Questions and Answers about the American

## 1. What is the APWU?

The APWU – American Postal Workers Union – is a national organization of employees of the United States Postal Service dedicated to advancing the interests of its members and their families. Representing more than 250,000 current and former postal employees in every state and territory in the United States, the APWU is the largest union of postal workers in the world. It is the exclusive collective bargaining agent for USPS employees in the Clerk, Maintenance and Motor Vehicle Service crafts. In addition, the APWU represents employees in Support Services, workers in Material Distribution Centers, Information Services Centers, Mail Equipment Shops and Operating Services Facilities.

## 2. What does a union do?

One of the primary functions of the APWU is to negotiate, interpret and enforce a National Agreement with the Postal Service. This is a contract that establishes wages, working conditions, and other benefits for all workers under its jurisdiction. We strive to protect workers' rights by representing them in day-to-day problems on the job such as discipline, violations of seniority, harassment, discrimination or other management abuse. Additionally, the APWU addresses other workplace concerns such as safety and health and the impact of technological change.

## 3. What are the benefits of belonging?

Membership in the APWU gives you a voice in determining your future. Members have the right to participate in local meetings, vote for local and national officers, vote on the contract, to run for office and to petition for change in the APWU.

Other membership benefits include "The American Postal Worker", a bimonthly magazine reporting on issues and programs affecting you, a safety and health program that educates workers about possible hazards in the workplace and provides technical assistance, and members are eligible to enroll in the APWU Health Plan, which provides comprehensive coverage at a very reasonable cost. In addition to having a voice and a vote in your union, and all of the collective bargaining rights you rely on you will have the opportunity to participate in the following programs: Scholarships – college and vocational – are awarded to qualified and outstanding APWU members and children of APWU members, APWU MasterCard, Voluntary Benefits Plan, Union Plus, Accident Benefit Association, and Affac.

## 4. Who can join?

Regardless of race, color, creed, sex, sexual orientation, nationality, disability, political affiliation, age or religion, any non-supervisory USPS employee, regardless of level or grade, who is within the jurisdictional claim of the APWU is eligible for membership. Those in supervisory or

management positions, or represented by other postal unions can join only in order to receive APWU's Health Plan.

## 5. Who is responsible for how the APWU runs?

You are! The members. Every level of the APWU operates democratically on the principle of majority rule. Members have a free voice and vote to express their views. All local, regional, and national officers are elected by the members, as are the officers and business agents in each craft/division. Members also ratify the National Agreement and elect delegates to the National Convention. The convention, which convenes every two years, is the highest governing body of the APWU. Between conventions, the National Executive Board directs union policy and programs.

## 6. How are officers elected?

Local and State Organizations have constitutions that dictate how leaders are elected locally. National union officers are elected by mail ballot of the membership every three years. Craft officers and national business agents are elected by the members in each specific division. Additionally, regional coordinators are elected by the members in each region. Any member may become a candidate for national office by filing a petition in accordance with the requirements spelled out in the APWU Constitution and Bylaws.

## 7. How much are dues?

Dues vary from local to local. They include national dues established by the National Convention and local dues determined by the local union. After you've joined APWU by completing Form 1187, dues are automatically deducted from your paycheck. Your steward or local officer can tell you the cost of dues; they will, of course, appear on your pay stub.

## 8. How are my dues spent?

As with any organization, a portion of the dues are spent for all the operating expenses, including contract negotiations, grievance handling above the local level and the cost for arbitration at the regional and national levels. Members' dues also cover the cost of publications, legal fees, legislative activities, education, training and community service programs.

## 9. How do we negotiate the National Agreement?

The APWU has a National Negotiating Team composed of the President, Executive Vice President, Director of Industrial Relations, as well as the directors of each craft. This team meets with Postal Service management several months before the contract expires. The team proposes contract language, the Postal Service responds, and through the give and take of negotiation, they try to reach an agreement.

# Postal Workers Union

## 10. Do I get to vote on the contract?

Yes. A negotiated National Agreement becomes valid only with approval by the membership through a mail ballot. After the National Negotiating Team reaches agreement with the Postal Service, a Rank and File Bargaining Advisory Committee reviews the proposed contract. If they approve it, the contract is sent to the entire APWU membership for ratification. If the committee is not satisfied, it can return the contract to the National Negotiating Team to reopen negotiations.

## 11. What about strikes?

The APWU believes that the right to strike is an inalienable right of all American workers. However, federal law prohibits strikes by postal and federal employees and required that if contract negotiations do not result in agreement, unresolved disputes are to be submitted to arbitration – to an impartial third party – for resolution. While our position is “no contract, no work” the 1982 APWU National Convention authorized our national leadership to continue negotiations past the contract deadline if they feel this is necessary to reach an agreement, but only as long as postal workers continue to be covered under the previous contract. Thus, the APWU views the strike as a weapon of last resort to be used only when all other means of reaching agreement have been exhausted.

## 12. Suppose I have a grievance?

If you have a grievance – if you believe that management has violated your rights or subjected you to harassment or discrimination – you should immediately talk to your steward about the problem. The steward, who is your union representative on the work floor, will determine whether a violation has occurred and will try to reach a settlement with your immediate supervisor. If this effort fails, we can appeal management's action to a higher level. If all these efforts fail to result in a satisfactory solution, we may insist that an impartial arbitrator settle the dispute.

## 13. How is APWU fighting privatization?

Privatization is the Postal Service's attempt to contract-out postal work – your work – to private companies that hire low-wage, non-union workers. The APWU has been successfully fighting efforts to privatize postal services for decades. The APWU monitors all management attempts to contract-out work that belongs to our bargaining unit and makes sure that the National Agreement is upheld. In May 1993, APWU won an important privatization dispute at the national level when an arbitrator ruled that Remote Bar Code Sorting (RBCS) work should have been offered to bargaining-unit workers. The Postal Service had contracted the work out to several companies that hired non-union workers at sub-postal wages. As a result of subsequent negotiations between the APWU and the

USPS, Remote Encoding Centers are not staffed by APWU-represented postal employees.

## 14. Is the APWU affiliated with other organizations?

Yes. The APWU is affiliated with the American Federation of Labor - Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO), a federation of 54 national and international labor unions with a combined membership of 16 million workers. The APWU also is affiliated with United Network International (UNI), an organization of labor unions representing workers in the field of communications in nations throughout the world.

## 15. Is the APWU involved in legislations and politics?

Because legislation has an important impact on our members, we are actively involved in legislative matters. The APWU maintains an effective program to monitor legislation being considered by Congress that will have an impact on postal workers and their families. APWU COFA - The Committee on Political Action – raises voluntary contributions to assist the campaigns of legislators who support working families, and to defeat those who consistently oppose us.

## 16. How can I find out what's going on in the union?

You can stay informed by attending union meetings and participation in the activities of your local. Remember, you have an equal voice and vote with all other members. Your steward and local officers can answer questions you may have about specific union programs and policies. Additionally, you can stay informed about union activities by reading local and national union publications such as The American Postal Worker magazine and periodic APWU News Bulletins, and by staying tuned to our website, [www.apwu.org](http://www.apwu.org).

## 17. I'm not a member yet. How do I join?

Ask your steward or a local officer for a Form 1187 and fill it out or visit the APWU website, under the Organization Department for more information on joining. Your union dues will automatically be deducted from your paycheck. If you work in a very small office where you have difficulty getting information, contact the Organization Department at (202) 842-4227.

## 18. I'm already a member, how can I help?

It's important to keep in mind that you are the union; members are the lifeblood of the APWU. The best way to improve the APWU is to get involved. In addition to attending union meetings, consider joining a committee, working to organize non-members, becoming a steward and volunteering to help in union activities. Your union brothers and sisters will appreciate your participation.

# Representation

## NEGOTIATIONS

After the 1970 strike and the reorganization of the Post Office Department into the United States Postal Services in 1971, postal workers were legally permitted to negotiate with postal officials over wages and conditions of employment.

Under federal labor law both parties meet to discuss and act to reach an agreement on these work-related matters. When an agreement is reached by the postal service management and union officials, the product of those efforts is called The Collective Bargaining Agreement, the National Agreement or simply the contract.

It is a collective bargaining agreement because the representatives of the members are authorized to negotiate and act on behalf of the collective members. Once an agreement is reached, the APWU membership – you – must approve or ratify the contract for it to go into effect.

Our current contract contains more than 400 pages of provisions covering hours, working conditions and wages. Working conditions include assignments and work rules. The contract is administered by the Local, Regional, State and National Union.

## ENFORCEMENT

"Administered" means the contract is interpreted and applied by certified union representatives. These representatives police and enforce the contract. This enforcement takes place

at Labor-Management Meetings held between postal and union officials and by giving the employees and/or union representative the right to file grievances over violations of the contract provisions.

The contract contains graduating steps under which these grievances are handled. This is called the grievance-arbitration procedure. The contract declares that the main intent of this procedure is to resolve the grievance at the lowest possible level. The lowest possible level (Step 1) is on the work floor with you, your supervisor, and your shop steward.

A shop steward is a union member elected or appointed (in accordance with your local constitution) to be your designated authorized representative and certified by the union leadership to enforce your rights under our contract.

If the grievance is not resolved locally, the matter can be appealed to Step 3 to be discussed and acted upon by an APWU National Business Agent and postal area Labor Relation Representatives. If the grievance is still not resolved it may be appealed by the union to binding arbitration in which a neutral arbitrator will conduct a hearing to determine which side is correct in the application of the contract provisions in dispute and award a remedy. Not all grievances are suitable to be appealed to arbitration based on the circumstances.

## WEINGARTEN RIGHTS

In 1985 the United States Supreme Court upheld a National Labor Relations Board decision in which employee have the right to union representation in investigatory interview. These rights are known as Weingarten Rights.

In the event you are called into a discussion with management, postal inspectors or an Office of Inspector General (OIG) Agent, and you believe that discipline could result from the interview/discussion read the following statement:

*"If this discussion could in any way lead to my being disciplined or terminated, or affect my personal working conditions, I respectfully request that my union representative, officer, or steward be present at this meeting. Without my union representative present, I respectfully chose not answer any questions or participate in this discussion."*

# Your Safety and Health at Work

## WHAT WORKPLACE EXPECTATIONS DO MEMBERS HAVE?

Postal workers are expected to work in a safe manner, be attentive to duty and to report hazards at work.

## WHAT ARE MANAGEMENT'S SAFETY RESPONSIBILITIES?

Management is responsible to provide safe working conditions in all postal facilities where postal workers are assigned and to comply with federal safety laws. Management must also take immediate steps to correct unsafe conditions that are reported.

## DOES THE UNION HAVE A RESPONSIBILITY IN REGARDS TO SAFETY?

Yes. The union's responsibility is to cooperate with and assist management in efforts to fulfill their responsibility and to enforce the contractual provisions on safety and health.

## HOW DO EMPLOYEES REPORT UNSAFE AND/OR UNHEALTHY WORKING CONDITIONS/PRACTICES?

If you believe you are being required to work under unsafe conditions or practices you should:

- Notify your supervisor by filing a PS Form 1767 Report of Hazard, Unsafe Condition or Practice. Identify the work area and facility, then briefly describe the unsafe condition you believe exists. Do not use general statements.
- Submit your completed form to your supervisor or safety office.

- Your supervisor is required to immediately investigate the condition and take necessary corrective action.
- Notify your shop steward or local union who will then discuss the alleged unsafe condition with your supervisor.
- File a grievance if your supervisor takes no corrective action to abate the condition during your tour of duty.
- Make a written report to your APWU Representative on the Joint Labor-Management Safety and Health Committee to discuss the issue.

## WHAT PROOF IS THERE THAT A REPORT OF A HAZARD OR UNSAFE CONDITION HAS BEEN REPORTED?

Pursuant to postal regulations your supervisor is required to state what actions they take to correct the matter reported and issue you the blue copy of the PS 1767 as a receipt and report to you every seven (7) days until the matter is corrected. If management claims there is no unsafe condition you should contact your Shop Steward to ensure safety regulations are complied with.

## DOESN'T THE GOVERNMENT PROTECT ME ALREADY?

Not entirely. The government enacts the safety laws but it is union leaders that helps enforce contractual safety provisions. In addition, an employer or union representative may contact the Occupational Safety & Health Administration and file a complaint if, after reporting a hazardous condition, postal management has not corrected the unsafe condition.



*More than 42,000 postal workers are injured at work each year. USPS spends more than \$1 billion a year in workers compensation costs and unfortunately postal workers die on duty every year.*

**DO NOT BECOME A POSTAL STATISTIC  
TAKE WORKPLACE SAFETY SERIOUSLY!**

# Family and Medical Leave Act

## BASIC LEAVE ENTITLEMENTS

Eligible employees who work for a covered employer can take up to 12 weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave in a 12-month period for the following reasons:

- The birth of a child or placement of a child for adoption or foster care;
- To bond with a child (leave must be taken within 1 year of the child's birth or placement);
- To care for the employee's spouse, child, or parent who has a qualifying serious health condition;
- For the employee's own qualifying serious health condition that makes the employee unable to perform the employee's job;
- For qualifying exigencies related to the foreign deployment of a military member who is the employee's spouse, child, or parent.

An eligible employee who is a covered servicemember's spouse, child, parent, or next of kin may also take up to 26 weeks of FMLA leave in a single 12-month period to care for the servicemember with a serious injury or illness.

An employee does not need to use leave in one block. When it is medically necessary or otherwise permitted, employees may take leave intermittently or on a reduced schedule. Employees may choose, or an employer may require, use of accrued paid leave while taking FMLA leave. If an employee substitutes accrued paid leave for FMLA leave, the employee must comply with the employer's normal paid leave policies.

## BENEFITS & PROTECTIONS

While employees are on FMLA leave, employers must continue health insurance coverage as if the employees were not on leave. Upon return from FMLA leave, most employees must be restored to the same job or one nearly identical to it with equivalent pay, benefits, and other employment terms and conditions. An employer may not interfere with an individual's FMLA rights or retaliate against someone for using or trying to use FMLA leave, opposing any practice made unlawful by the FMLA, or being involved in any proceeding under or related to the FMLA.

## ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

An employee who works for a covered employer must meet three criteria in order to be eligible for FMLA leave. The employee must:

- Have worked for the employer for at least 12 months;
- Have at least 1,250 hours of service in the 12 months before taking leave; and
- Works at a location where the employer has at least 50 employees within 75 miles of the employees' worksite, this does not apply to USPS employees.

## REQUESTING LEAVE

Generally, employees must give a 30-day advance notice of the need for FMLA leave. If it is not possible to give a 30-day notice, an employee must notify the employer as soon as possible and generally follow the employer's usual procedures.

Employees do not have to share a medical diagnosis, but must provide enough information to the employer so it can determine if the leave qualifies for FMLA protection. Sufficient information could include informing an employer that the employee is or will be unable to perform his or her job functions, that a family member cannot perform daily activities, or that hospitalization or continuing medical treatment is necessary. Employees must inform the employer if the need for leave is for a reason for which FMLA leave was previously taken or certified.

Employers can require a certification or periodic recertification supporting the need for leave. If the employer determines that the certification is incomplete, it must provide a written notice indicating what additional information is required.

## EMPLOYER RESPONSIBILITIES

Once an employer becomes aware that an employee's need for leave is for a reason that may qualify under the FMLA, the employer must notify the employee if he or she is eligible for FMLA leave and, if eligible, must also provide a notice of rights and responsibilities under the FMLA. If the employee is not eligible, the employer must provide a reason for ineligibility. Employers must notify its employees if leave will be designated as FMLA leave, and if so, how much leave will be designated as FMLA leave.

## ENFORCEMENT

Employees may file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Labor, Wage and Hour Division, or may bring a private lawsuit against an employer. The FMLA does not affect any federal or state law prohibiting discrimination or supersede any state or local law or collective bargaining agreement that provides greater family or medical leave rights.

For additional information  
call (866) 487-9243 or visit [dol.gov/whd](http://dol.gov/whd)

Information on this page excerpted from:  
<https://www.dol.gov/whd/reg/compliance/posters/fmlaen.pdf>



# TOGETHER. BETTER HEALTH.

Honored To Serve You



## – Health Plan Highlights –

### HIGH OPTION

- Low copays for office visits, including specialists, urgent care centers and generic drugs
- Low deductibles
- Routine dental coverage
- Alternative care: Chiropractic and acupuncture
- Hearing services
- Cancer Centers of Excellence paid at 95%

*100% coverage when you choose in network providers for:*

- Preventive care and screenings
- Maternity care
- Accidental injury within 72 hours (outpatient care)
- Lab tests when you use LabCorp and Quest Diagnostics
- Health management programs: Healthy Pregnancy, tobacco/e-cigarette cessation, weight management, diabetes management

### CONSUMER DRIVEN OPTION

- A Personal Care Account (PCA) provides 100% coverage for the first \$1,200 of your annual medical expenses for Self Only coverage or \$2,400 for Self Plus One & Self and Family coverage.
- No upfront deductible, coinsurance or copay until your PCA is exhausted.
- Unused funds in the account rollover to the next year provided you remain a Health Plan Member
- Completing a Health Risk Assessment adds additional funds to your PCA.
- Cancer Centers of Excellence paid at 90%.
- Dental and vision coverage is available under your Personal Care Account.

*100% coverage when you choose in network providers for:*

- Preventive care and screenings
- Maternity care
- Health management programs: Healthy Pregnancy & tobacco/e-cigarette cessation

*Under both APWU Health Plans you will have available to you:*

- Secure online access to healthcare data
- Ability to receive care nationally and abroad
- Nearly 1 million providers to choose from
- Virtual doctor visits via computer or mobile device

*\*Coverage for the above options may change during open season*



**FOR MORE INFORMATION GO TO  
WWW.APWUHP.COM OR CALL 1-800-222-2798**



# Benefits at a Glance

Below are some examples of what APWU members can and have achieved by working together. Joining the APWU allows you to give input into benefits that are negotiated on your behalf and how your union is run. Don't let someone else decide your future, be a part of the decision making!

## ALL APWU MEMBERS

- Union Democracy
- A voice and a vote
- Membership ratification of contracts
- Direct elections of all union officers
- Access to a wealth of information at union meetings, union publications, news bulletins and websites
- Opportunities to participate at all levels of the organization
- Discrimination protections under the APWU Constitution
- Outstanding representation at all levels of the organization
- A team to represent you in contract negotiations
- An effective grievance-arbitration procedure to adjudicate disputes with management
- Protections against unjust discipline, including termination
- Prohibitions against unilateral actions by our employer
- An active legislative program that fights for the interest of postal workers on Capitol Hill
- Representation and provision for safe working conditions

## CAREER EMPLOYEES

- Wage protections
- Regular pay increases
- Cost of Living Adjustments (COLA)
- Night differential pay
- Sunday premium pay
- Enforcement of overtime provisions
  - Time-and-a-half for overtime
  - Penalty pay for excessive overtime
- Out-of-schedule premium
- Comprehensive Health insurance options
- APWU Consumer Driven Health Plan - with 95% of the total premiums paid for by the USPS
- Basic Life insurance with additional insurance options available
- 10 paid holidays
- Annual Leave accrual
- Sick Leave accrual
- Flexible Spending Accounts for health care and dependent care
- Holiday scheduling and overtime rights
- Allowances for uniform and work clothing
- Contractual provisions against layoffs
- Jobs awarded by seniority, not favoritism
- Excellent job security
- Excessing limitations
- Defined-benefit and a defined contribution retirement plans

## POSTAL SUPPORT EMPLOYEES

- Wage protections
- Regular pay increases
- Annual leave accrual
- Night differential pay
- Enforcement of overtime provisions
  - Time-and-a-half for overtime
  - Penalty pay for excessive overtime
- Higher level pay when performing higher level work
- Work hour guarantees when scheduled, and you report, for work.
- USPS Health benefits eligibility upon entering on duty
- Opportunity to enroll in Federal Employee Health Benefit program after first 360-day term and upon reappointment – with 75% of the total premium paid for by the USPS for any PSE who selects the APWU Consumer Driven Health Plan
- 6 paid holidays and option to have annual leave balance credited in lieu of holiday leave pay if you work
- Annual uniform allowance
- Strong contractual language that provides opportunities for career appointments
- Representation in the grievance procedure
- Reappointments by seniority, not favoritism

## WHEN YOU ARE CONVERTED TO CAREER

Conversion refers to the process of changing a non-career employee's status to a career appointment. PSE's should not be separated and then given a career appointment unless the employee's appointment expires before the employee can be converted to career status. A few benefits available to you once converted are listed below. Be sure to note there are critical time limits in which you have to enroll.

**FEDERAL EMPLOYEES HEALTH BENEFIT PROGRAM (FEHBP)** — Outside of Open Season, newly eligible employees may enroll within 60-days of becoming eligible for the program. [opm.gov]

**FEDERAL EMPLOYEES GROUP LIFE INSURANCE (FGLI)** — You will automatically receive Basic Life Insurance coverage. You must have Basic Insurance to elect any additional Optional Insurance and must enroll within 60 days of becoming eligible. [opm.gov]

**THRIFT SAVINGS PLAN (TSP)** — All career employees are permitted to enroll or change their TSP at any time. If you are a career employee hired after July 31, 2010, you are automatically enrolled in the TSP, and 3% of your basic pay is deducted from your paycheck each pay period and deposited in the traditional balance of your TSP account, unless you have made an election to change or stop your contributions. [tsp.gov]

**FLEXIBLE SPENDING ACCOUNTS (FSA)** — Once converted employees who wish to enroll in this program must do so within 60-days after becoming eligible.

## WEBSITES YOU MAY FIND USEFUL

APWU – [apwu.org](http://apwu.org)

APWU Health Plan – [apwuhp.com](http://apwuhp.com)

APWU Auxiliary – [apwuauxiliary.org](http://apwuauxiliary.org)

AFL-CIO – [aflcio.org](http://aflcio.org)

Coalition of Black Trade Unionists – [cbtu.org](http://cbtu.org)

Coalition of Labor Union Women (CLUW) – [cluw.org](http://cluw.org)

USPS – [liveblue.usps.gov](http://liveblue.usps.gov)

Merit System Protection Board (MSPB) – [mspb.gov](http://mspb.gov)

Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS) –  
[opm.gov/retirement-services/csrs-information](http://opm.gov/retirement-services/csrs-information)

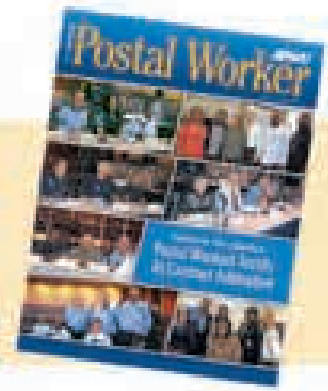
Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS) –  
[opm.gov/retirement-services/fers-information](http://opm.gov/retirement-services/fers-information)

Postal Employees' Relief Fund (PERF) – [postalrelief.com](http://postalrelief.com)

U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) – [opm.gov](http://opm.gov)

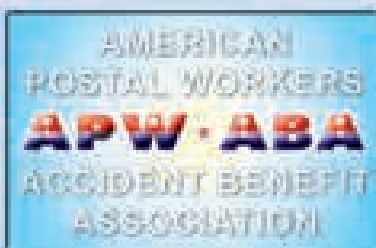
# Member-Only Privileges

The *American Postal Worker* is a magazine dedicated to providing you information about what is happening within our union and throughout the nation. Here you will read about issues we face as a union and find important information from your national officers.



Union Plus benefits are only for union families. Through Union Plus you can find members-only discounts on auto buying and insurance, cellular phone service, vacations, entertainment discounts, AAA and much more! Visit [www.unionplus.org](http://www.unionplus.org) to see what else is available. For more information on the APWU MasterCard sponsored by Union Plus, and developed solely for union members by the AFL-CIO visit: [www.apwucard.com](http://www.apwucard.com)

Voluntary Benefits Plan has been providing benefits to APWU members and their families since 1986. We offer Dental, Disability Insurance, Home/Auto Insurance, Legal Services, Cancer Insurance, Life Insurance, a Free Vision Discount program and many other products. The plans are available to Active, PSE, Retiree & Associate dues-paying members only! Call 800-422-4492 or check out our website [www.VoluntaryBenefitsPlan.com](http://www.VoluntaryBenefitsPlan.com)



Accident Benefit Association is member-owned and offers disability and accidental death and dismemberment benefits, guaranteed issue whole and term life insurance and extended accident wage replacement benefits. Visit [www.apw-aba.org](http://www.apw-aba.org) or call 800-526-2890 for more information.

APWU Members enjoy substantial savings on the Aflac Personal Indemnity and the Specified Health Event insurance plans. The plans pay cash benefits directly to members to help with the significant expenses associated with major illnesses regardless of health plan coverage. Members have direct access to the Aflac call center at 855-378-4712.





## Your Membership Matters ~ It Takes All of Us!

American Postal Workers Union, AFL-CIO / 1300 L Street NW, Washington, DC 20005

### UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE AUTHORIZATION FOR DEDUCTION OF DUES

I hereby assign to the American Postal Workers Union, AFL-CIO, from any salary or wages earned or to be earned by me as a member (in my present or future employment) such regular and periodic membership dues as the APWU may certify as due and owing from me, as may be established from time to time by the APWU. I authorize and direct the USPS to deduct such amounts from my pay and to remit same to the APWU at such times and in such manner as may be agreed upon between myself and the APWU at any time while this authorization is in effect, which includes a yearly subscription for The American Postal Worker magazine as part of the membership dues.

This assignment, authorization and direction shall be irrevocable for a period of one (1) year from the date of delivery to the APWU, and I agree and direct that this assignment, authorization and direction shall be automatically renewed and shall be irrevocable for successive periods of one (1) year unless written notice by certified mail using PS Form 1185 is given by me to the APWU not more than twenty (20) days and not less than ten (10) days prior to the expiration of each period of one year, or within ten (10) days after the date I start work if I am rehired for any new term of Postal Support employment. In addition to the above, if I am a Postal Support Employee, this assignment shall remain in effect if I should be rehired within 180 days after the conclusion of my present term of Postal Support employment. This agreement is freely made pursuant to the provisions of the Postal Reorganization Act and is not contingent upon the existence of any agreement between the Union and the Postal Service.

NAME OF EMPLOYEE Last Name, First Name, Middle (Print Legibly)		SOCIAL SECURITY NO. or EIN (Entire # Is Required)	
MAILING ADDRESS		CITY	STATE
			ZIP
HOME PHONE NO. (     )	MOBILE PHONE NO. (     )	EMAIL ADDRESS	
WORK LOCATION (Post Office) & STATE	WORK FINANCE NUMBER	CRAFT	POSITION TYPE (Check One) <input type="checkbox"/> CAREER <input type="checkbox"/> PSE
SIGNATURE OF EMPLOYEE	DATE	IF PAYING DUES TO ANOTHER UNION - CANCEL DUES TO: <input type="checkbox"/> NALC <input type="checkbox"/> NPMHU <input type="checkbox"/> NRLCA	

Would you like to receive mobile text alerts from APWU? ☐ YES ☐ NO

If you choose to receive mobile alerts, you are authorizing the mobile communications. Note: Msg & data rates may apply. Text STOP to 91990 to stop receiving messages. Text HELP to 91990 for more information.

Preferred Contact Number ☐ HOME ☐ MOBILE

By selecting my preferred contact number, I am authorizing the APWU to call me or send me recorded messages using automated technology to the telephone number entered above.

## JOIN THE FIGHT *for a* BETTER TOMORROW

### HOW CAN YOU HELP IN THE FIGHT?

- \_\_\_ Outreach – Representing the APWU at events and meetings, etc.
- \_\_\_ Welcoming New Members – Orientations, organizing, etc.
- \_\_\_ Work Place Safety – Daily huddles, weekly talks, safety captain, etc.
- \_\_\_ Community Involvement – Talking with neighbors, family and friends about issues
- \_\_\_ Transportation – Getting people to and from events, meetings, etc.

You Are  
The Union!

As a member, in addition to having a voice and a vote in your union, and all of the collective bargaining rights you rely on you will have the opportunity to participate in the following programs: APWU MasterCard, Voluntary Benefits Plan, Union Plus, Accident Benefit Association, and Aflac.

### FOR USE BY UNION OFFICIAL

I hereby certify that the regular dues of this organization for the above named member are currently established at \$ \_\_\_\_\_ biweekly.

SIGNATURE AND TITLE OF AUTHORIZED UNION OFFICIAL	DATE
LOCAL UNION NAME (or State if MAL office)	EMPLOYEES HOME FINANCE NUMBER
ORGANIZER'S NAME:	NOTES:





American Postal Workers Union, AFL-CIO

**ORGANIZATION DEPARTMENT**

MARK DIMONDSTEIN, PRESIDENT

ANNA SMITH, ORGANIZATION DIRECTOR

Revised April 2020

