

# THE Mail Bag NEWS

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NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LETTER CARRIERS AFL-CIO

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## Thank You, Thank You, Thank You!

By Ray Hill, President

**A**s you are all painfully aware, *most* of the world has come to a screeching halt as a result of the COVID-19 Virus Crises. I write *most* of the world, knowing that the USPS is part of the critical infrastructure of the nation that provides an essential service and that our Letter Carriers have continued working, in spite of the dreaded COVID-19 crises.

Delivering mail in the face of dangerous conditions is nothing new for the hard working Letter Carriers of the USPS. Whether it be working through natural disasters such as fires, storms and earthquakes or the current COVID-19 crises, Letter Carriers brave difficult conditions every day to ensure that the American public continues to receive their prescription medications, census materials, government stimulus checks, voting materials and the occasional letters and

cards sent from beloved relatives to brighten their spirits during these troubled times.



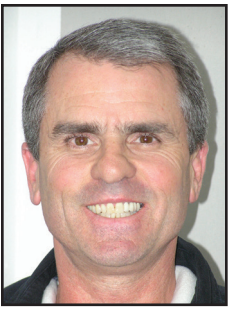
On behalf of myself, the other officers of Branch 2902 and the entire NALC family, I thank all of you from the bottom of my heart for going *way above and beyond the call of duty* and carrying on, no pun intended, through the absolute worst of conditions. Thank you, thank you, thank you! The reports I have received and stories I have heard indicate that the overwhelming majority of the American people thank you as well and truly appreciate what you do for them.

Unfortunately, President Donald John Trump can't be included in the ranks of American people who *truly* appreciate your hard work and the hard work of the entire USPS workforce during the dreaded COVID-19 crises. I know that many of you readers voted for, and support, President Trump and I do not begrudge you your choices, although I may disagree with them. As I have written here before, I am a selfish voter and I vote

### The New Normal?

Carriers all over the country once again "gear up" to deliver the mail. Delivering the mail in the face of dangerous conditions is nothing new for Letter Carriers. Whether it be fires, earthquakes, Anthrax threats or the current COVID-19 pandemic, Letter Carriers brave difficult conditions every day to ensure that the American public continues to receive the prescription medications, census materials, government stimulus checks, voter materials or just a card from a distant relative they depend on.

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## Thank You! Thank You! Thank You!

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for candidates that support the issues vital to the USPS and to letter Carriers to ensure that USPS survives in these horrific economic conditions. President Trump has no great love for Letter Carriers as demonstrated in his budget proposal for Fiscal Year 2021 in which the following **anti-Letter Carrier provisions** were proposed:

- **Increase FERS contributions.** This proposal would raise the pension contributions of Letter Carriers by 1 percent of pay a year for up to six years, **resulting in a take-home pay cut of up to \$3,700 annually after six years for active Letter Carriers.** The exact impact would depend on when FERS employees were hired.
- **High-5 average.** The proposal calls for reducing Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS) and FERS pension benefits for new retirees by basing annuities on workers' highest average yearly salary over five years (high-5) instead of over the highest three years (high-3).
- **Eliminate annuity supplement.** It also would eliminate the annuity supplement that covers the gap for employees who retire under FERS before they qualify for Social Security benefits at age 62.
- **Slash COLA's for all retirees.** The administration's budget calls for eliminating or reducing cost-of-living adjustments (COLA's). For current and future annuitants under FERS (which covers any employee hired after 1984), the budget would eliminate basic annuity COLA's entirely. For those under CSRS, COLA's would be reduced by 0.5 percent each year. These changes would devastate the finances of retirees who rely on annual COLA's to keep up with the cost of living.
- **Reduce the TSP's G Fund interest rate.** This proposal includes a change to the government bond fund ("G" fund), the largest and most popular investment vehicle available in the Thrift Savings Plan. Millions of active and retired G Fund investors would receive a reduced rate of return. The new rate would be tied to the interest rate on 90-day Treasury bills instead of an average of medium- and long-term Treasury bond rates. This proposal would take \$10.5 billion in retirement investments from federal employees, retirees, active military personnel and veterans over the next 10 years.

Do these White House budget proposals, released in February before the COVID-19 issues facing USPS, sound like they came from someone who appreciates you and cares about the work you do and your pay and benefits?

Currently, the survival of the USPS is at stake and we all need to *pull our heads out of the sand* and get involved in the political fight, as I will discuss at the conclusion of this article.

### Meetings and Events Cancelled or Postponed

NALC President Fredric V. Rolando and his team of NALC Resident Officers have been working tirelessly, negotiating several new Memorandums of Understanding (MOU's) regarding the multitude of challenging issues arising from COVID-19. President Rolando has granted Dispensation for branch and state event schedule changes due to issues arising from COVID-19; we have cancelled our Executive Board meetings, Steward Trainings and Branch meetings in March and April due to the Center for Disease Control (CDC) recommendations and California State restrictions. Our California State Association of Letter Carriers (CSALC) State Convention scheduled for the beginning of May has been rescheduled for the fall. Although our National Convention has not yet been officially postponed or cancelled, I expect that NALC will have no choice but to do so. Hopefully, I am wrong. Our annual NALC/USPS Food Drive has been postponed with the date yet to be determined.

President Rolando has issued several statements regarding COVID-19 issues. In his latest statement dated April 17, 2020 President Rolando wrote as follows, in part:

*"So much has changed in our lives over the last several weeks as a result of this virus. There is tremendous uncertainty about how the future will unfold for us, our families, our employer, and our country. Yet there are two overriding and immediate goals of the NALC that will not change. First, our overwhelming priority on a daily basis is to protect the health and safety of letter carriers-and therefore the health and safety of their families, co-workers, and customers-from the effects of this pandemic. Second, we will continue to seek legislative relief to ensure that our employer has the resources necessary to maintain operations during this crisis. The national officers, staff and NALC representatives throughout the country are in constant communication and negotiation with management officials at every level of the organization regarding supplies, equipment, policies, protocols, and work procedures necessary to keep letter carriers safe. Please continue to contact us with any questions, and to report offices that are not being sanitized on a regular basis, that do not have sufficient supplies (hand sanitizer, disinfectant wipes, masks, gloves, etc.), that are not following Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC) protocols for employees to be quarantined, that have not implemented social distancing practices, that are not providing daily communication regarding stand-up talks, safety precautions, and instances of infection in the building, that expect employees to work without protection or in an unsanitized environment, or that have any other issues that put employees at increased risk. You should immediately contact your shop steward, branch officers, National Business Agent, or NALC head-*



quarters at [COVID19@nalc.org](mailto:COVID19@nalc.org). There is a lot of information related to the virus on the "COVID-19" page under "News & Research" on the NALC website, such as:

- My statements to the members regarding the pandemic
- Links to the podcasts in which Executive Vice President Renfroe delivers regular updates on COVID-19
- New memorandums of understanding in effect during the pandemic
- All the mandatory standup talks which should be given in your office
- Information from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
- COVID-19 Information from USPS Remember, if you have questions or issues in your facility related to COVID-19, and you don't have immediate access to a steward or branch officer, or are unable to contact your NBA office, please contact NALC headquarters at [COVID19@nalc.org](mailto:COVID19@nalc.org).

Headquarters staff and national officers answer every question and address each issue sent to this email address. When using this resource, please be sure to include your name and NALC branch number in your email. Having this information upfront allows NALC headquarters to quickly address your concerns..."

### COVID-19 Information Overload

The amount of information we are receiving regarding the COVID-19 situation is overwhelming and is evolving from day to day and bordering on information overload. As written above, NALC and USPS have agreed to several Memorandums Of Understanding (MOU's) to deal with the challenging workplace issues caused by the COVID-19 Virus Crises. I urge you all to check the NALC Website ([NALC.ORG](http://NALC.ORG)) for updates on the various workplace issues involved. Also, check the Branch 2902 Website ([www.nalcbranch2902.org](http://www.nalcbranch2902.org)) for the latest updates on our meetings that may have to be cancelled or postponed in the near future.

### When Will it All End?

Last night I was standing in line at a local grocery store when I looked around and surveyed my surreal surroundings. The store has placed placards on the floor, 6 feet apart, so all customers know where to stand in order to maintain "social distancing" while waiting to check out and pay. Everyone in the store wore a mask, which is now required when shopping in the city of Los Angeles. Many products were out of stock and most other products have a limit of two per customer. The cashiers were protected by Plexiglas partitions and customers are required to bag their purchases themselves. There have been zero sporting events taking place since March 12. I am an unapologetic sports junkie and I normally spend all of my free time watching sports, much to the annoyance of my beloved wife. Once the NCAA College tournament games were cancelled on March 12, it really started sinking into my

sports addicted brain that there were now no sporting events of any kind taking place! No more NBA, no more NHL, spring training MLB games cancelled, March Madness cancelled! Shock, disbelief, anger and depression quickly followed. Fast forward 6 weeks and I have finally started accepting the fact that the only televised sports, until God only knows when, are replays of classic games on ESPN, the MLB, NBA and NFL networks. Apologies for my selfish whining but I must ask; **when will it all end?**

### Survival of USPS at Stake

The NALC website ([NALC.ORG](http://NALC.ORG)) gives up to the minute legislative updates. The following was posted today:

**"Support USPS in next emergency stimulus.** As letter carriers on the front lines of serving 160 million Americans and businesses every day, you know that the Covid-19 pandemic is something we have never experienced before. While our letter carriers show their resilience, strength, and continued service to the public every day, the Postal Service looms closer to shuttering due to the staggering loss in mail volume and revenue during this crisis. It's a desperate situation that only Congress and the Administration can help solve. We cannot allow the USPS to fail. Unfortunately, instead of providing much needed immediate financial assistance urged by NALC and stakeholders, the last stimulus gave the Postal Service a slap in the face by giving it access to a conditional line of credit. Those conditions aren't new to letter carriers - as they seek to destroy the network and attack letter carriers at the behest of private shippers. This is not a solution. It is a way to weaken the Postal Service by riddling it with more debt to the point where opponents of the constitutionally mandated service will destroy it. While it's been 40 years since we have needed taxpayer funding, we need financial relief to continue to serve this country through this crisis - and we need it now. Please take a minute to send a letter by clicking the button below to your members of Congress and tell them that we need: an immediate and significant injection of money - and secure, regular appropriations for the Postal Service until this crisis is over..."

NALC sent a survey to all the candidates running for President this fall and only two of them, Joe Biden and Bernie Sanders, responded. President Trump did not respond, which came as no surprise; he failed to respond to NALC's last survey prior to his election in 2016. President Trump has not hidden his disdain for the USPS and it is obvious that he does not give a rat's ass about the survival of our beloved employer. The USPS has long played a crucial role in U.S. elections, though perhaps never more so than right now, as mail-in ballots will be in great demand due to COVID-19 restrictions. All sensible Democrats and Republicans recognize this fact while President Trump argues, via twitter, that efforts to expand absentee balloting have "tremendous potential" for fraud and don't "work out well for Republicans."

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# NALC

Department of Legislative and Political Affairs — National Association of Letter Carriers, AFL-CIO  
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## The Postal Service and the COVID-19 Crisis

*April 8, 2020*

At the height of the 2008-2009 recession, more than 800,000 Americans per month lost their jobs. In recent weeks, millions of workers per week are filing for unemployment insurance. The COVID-19 crisis is both a public health crisis and an economic crisis. The U.S. Postal Service is a vitally important tool for battling these twin calamities. The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the Postal Service's financial situation will pose grave danger to its ability to provide crucial service to our country if decisive action isn't taken by Congress and the Administration.

### **Value of the Postal Service in Normal Times**

In ordinary times, the Postal Service, which has fully funded itself through the sale of postage since the early 1980s, plays a vitally important role in our economy, our society and our health care system.

- It is the nation's only truly universal delivery and communications network, connecting 160 million homes and businesses in every corner of the country. It's the hub of a huge mailing industry - comprised of the paper, printing, marketing, publishing and e-commerce and shipping sectors of the economy - that together generate \$1.6 trillion in sales and employ nearly 7.0 million private sector workers. The USPS, with 640,000 employees, is among the largest employers in all 50 states - and the single largest civilian employer of veterans.
- The Postal Service provides American citizens, residents and businesses with the industrial world's most affordable and efficient delivery services. Postal services and post offices are particularly critical to rural areas, small towns, the elderly, military veterans, and most American companies, which are typically small or medium-sized enterprises and include millions of home-based businesses. Households and business depend on the reliable receipt of checks and payments to keep functioning - indeed, hundreds of billions of payments still go through the mails each year.
- The Postal Service is also essential to the political and cultural life of America, delivering hundreds of millions of magazines and weekly newspapers each year, not to mention billions of birthday cards, wedding invitations and other personal communications. It routinely handles tens of millions of ballots delivered to voters who request absentee ballots or who live in states that conduct elections by mail - for elections at every level, from school boards to city councils and state legislature to federal elections. The USPS is also a trusted presence in neighborhoods across the country, especially for the elderly and the disabled who value a daily visit and assistance when needed. Nearly everywhere local post offices serve as community hubs and letter carriers perform acts of everyday heroism when house fires, car accidents or crimes befall ordinary citizens.
- The USPS also plays an important role in the U.S. health care system by handling 1.2 billion prescription drug shipments a year - that's nearly 4 million every day, six days a week. It also delivers hundreds of millions of lab tests and medical supply shipments - from blood testing strips and insulin needles to contact lenses. The Postal Service is and has been a partner with law enforcement and government agencies that deal with natural disasters and other emergencies.

### **Importance of the Postal Service During this Crisis**

In a major public health crisis like the one we face today; the Postal Service is more important than ever. In late March, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention sent a mailing to every American household to give our



citizens the information they need to protect themselves and their loved ones from the COVID-19 virus. The FDA is currently working on a self-testing nasal swab that must, once available, be efficiently delivered to 135 million households across America. As a matter of public health, there is no substitute for the Postal Service's universal delivery network, especially now with medical needs rising exponentially. A collapse of the Postal Service at this crucial moment or a severe disruption in service would undermine our fight to defeat the COVID-19 virus.

The Postal Service is also crucial for fighting the pandemic-induced recession. With foot traffic plummeting, small businesses increasingly depend on package deliveries to continue generating revenue and employing workers. Without postal deliveries of orders and checks, many will collapse. Similarly, the USPS is stepping up for large enterprises facing disrupted supply chains, empty stores due to quarantines and self-isolating consumers. It offers reliable end-to-end services to these firms while also providing "last-mile" delivery for tens of millions of packages for FedEx, UPS and Amazon. The universal reach of the postal network is invaluable to all Americans, but especially to those in rural, inner city and exurban areas that would not be served if not for the Postal Service.

And the Postal Service is vital to the functioning of the national government during this crisis, offering an affordable universal means to distribute paperwork for vitally needed Small Business Administration loans, household stimulus checks, tax returns and decennial Census mailings – all of which must go forward despite the crisis.

There is simply no substitute for the U.S. Postal Service as we battle both the pandemic and the deep recession it has caused.

### **What We Need Now**

The Postal Service has experienced financial problems for several years now, for reasons unrelated to the coronavirus, and lawmakers have been considering postal reform measures for more than a decade. But the pandemic has created a separate and immediate threat to America's postal network. Now is not the time to debate longer-term reforms; now is the time for urgent and bold action to save the agency from the potentially devastating impact the COVID-19 impact will likely have on its ability to operate and serve the American people.

Indeed, in recent weeks, mail volume has plunged by the largest percentage since the Great Recession of 2008-2010 and is likely to drop by more than it did during the Great Depression of the 1930s. Postal management believes that volume and revenue may drop by 50% or more over the next year. The pandemic-induced loss of revenue facing the Postal Service is no less dramatic than that facing the airline and hotel industries. The Postal Service, and the segment of the private economy it supports, needs the same level of assistance provided those industries.

Unfortunately, the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act, P.L. 116-137) signed into law on March 27, 2020 did not offer the same kind of support for the Postal Service that it did for airlines (\$61 billion), private cargo shippers (\$17 billion) and other corporations (\$425 billion). It provided \$10 billion in new debt authority, subject to control by the Treasury Department's Federal Finance Bank (FFB). That is woefully inadequate for two reasons:

First, it fell far short of the stimulus legislation introduced in the House of Representatives on March 23, 2020. That bill would have provided the Postal Service substantial relief, including an emergency appropriation of \$25 billion. Second, by making the coronavirus credit line subject to the control of the Treasury Department, there is no guarantee that the Postal Service will receive access to this credit. In any case, adding to the Postal Service's existing debt is not a real solution.

Indeed, the Federal Finance Bank has restricted access to the Postal Service's remaining \$4 billion in borrowing authority since September 2018, demanding ideological and operational changes supported by special interest groups before extending further loans to the Postal Service. Media reports imply that the Treasury is using the credit line as leverage to force massive price increases on competitive products (which will be especially damaging to small businesses and Americans in rural areas) and to interfere with postal collective bargaining matters. To its credit, the USPS Board of Governors has rejected these unacceptable pressure tactics.

Given this record, the CARES Act offers virtually no relief to the Postal Service - more debt with unacceptable

strings attached. Congress can and must do better in the next round of legislation to strengthen and preserve the Postal Service.

Therefore, to both protect public health and to stabilize our economy, we call on Congress to enact provisions in the next stimulus bill that would:

1. Make a direct “public service” appropriation of at least \$25 billion to the Postal Service to help it weather the pandemic and the deep recession it is causing. Although the Postal Service has not received taxpayer appropriations (other than for military/overseas voting and free mail for the blind) since the early 1980s, the present crisis warrants such appropriations now.
2. Authorize an emergency “public service” appropriation for the duration of the crisis, distributed quarterly, starting in Fiscal Year 2021 (which begins in just six months) to cover the difference between postage revenues and total USPS expenses. This would signal to the American people and the business community that the Postal Service will be there to: battle the pandemic (with the delivery of tests and public health information, etc.); deliver online purchases and prescription drugs; support the economic recovery; and facilitate absentee voting as well as other vital civic functions.
3. Provide a mechanism to reimburse the Postal Service for the cost of the COVID-19-related leave (both sick leave and family medical leave) provided by the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (P.L. 116-127).
4. Ensure equal treatment for postal employees in any legislation that authorizes, and funds hazard pay for other front-line workers exposed to health risks related to the COVID-19 virus. Such legislation should cover postal workers, who face heightened exposure risks to the virus on a daily basis.
5. Remove the Federal Finance Bank’s discretion to impose operational changes and policy conditions on any of the Postal Service’s existing borrowing authorities – changes and policies that should properly be set by the Postal Service Board of Governors and the Congress, not the Treasury Department – and eliminate any annual limit on these authorities. (These authorities are provided by Section 2005 of Title 39 and Section 6001 of the CARES Act of 2020.)

## **Conclusion**

The postal unions will work with the Congress, stakeholders in the mailing industry and the general public to advance a significant relief package and other measures to preserve the Postal Service, a vital part of our national economic infrastructure.

The USPS is a source of comfort and a welcome sign of normalcy to the American people. That has been true during recoveries from hurricanes, tornadoes, floods and other disasters in the past, and it should be now as we grapple with the current national crisis.

All American leaders, Democrats and Republicans alike, should work together to ensure that this pandemic does not destroy the U.S. Postal Service, a true national treasure and a vital part of America’s response and eventual recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic





# Fear Of The Unknown

## Letter Carrier Concerns During the Pandemic

By James Perryman, Executive Vice President

**A**s Letter Carriers, we face many challenges when it comes to safety. There are challenges of avoiding injuries while lifting heavy packages and avoiding vehicle or industrial accidents, such as dog bites. There is also the challenge of being aware of your surroundings to prevent us from being personally attacked by a thief or someone with the intent to vandalize Postal Service equipment. However there is one safety challenge that may be difficult to prepare for and/or avoid. It's a challenge that concerns everyone and has already caused changes in our daily lives and activities. That challenge is the

### Fear Of The Unknown.

Letter Carriers are professionals when it comes to safety, especially when dealing with the adversities that we face while at work. In most cases we are able to avoid accidents and hazards. However, working through a medical pandemic disease that you cannot see, smell, taste or hear, is a hazard that is very difficult to avoid.

The United States Postal Service is an essential service provider to our country. Just as importantly, the employees of the USPS are essential to the survival of the service. While facing the challenge of working in hazardous conditions daily, Letter Carriers are at the forefront and in the direct path of the unknown hazards.

A great deal of our time at Branch 2902 (Union Hall) is spent addressing the concerns of Letter Carriers during the Corona virus pandemic. Some of these circumstances have involved Letter Carrier's fears of being exposed to the virus either at work or elsewhere. Other concerns are the

needs of childcare caused by a large number of schools and/or daycares that have closed. In addition, there is the need to care for dependents that are or may have been infected by the virus as well.

Moreover, during my station visits, I encounter many of the same questions and concerns from Letter Carriers at each office. "Are we going to get laid off, and if not, are we going to get paid hazard pay and what type of leave do I use if I or someone in my family is infected by the virus"? My response

to these concerns will be addressed throughout my article.

The Postal Service may run out of money to operate effectively during the pandemic. Just like any and all companies, there is an operational cost to conduct business. The Postal Service collects and delivers over a billion pieces of mail daily which includes letters, flats, spurs, and parcels. There is an operational cost to provide the above services such as: wages, benefits, plants/installations, transportation, and maintenance. With most of the country shut down and without the needed funds to cover the operational expenses the service may be unable to function. Therefore, there is a real threat that the Postal Service may shut down, unless Congress and the White House administration act immediately to properly fund the

Postal Service during this pandemic as it has done for other companies.

As to the type of leave that can be used related to the COVID-19 issue, effective April 1, 2020, the Families First



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Coronavirus Response Act provides employees with additional leave. Employees with qualifying circumstances as defined by the ACT will be eligible for up to 80 hours of paid emergency sick leave, in addition to their sick leave balance. This provision will apply from April 1, 2020 through December 31, 2020.

With everything that is going on during the pandemic, Letter Carriers will continue to step up to the plate while demonstrating bravery and professionalism. In some cases Carriers are being asked by our customers to subject themselves to testing for COVID-19 at some delivery sites. However Letter Carriers are not required to conform to such testing while delivering mail to these facilities. Any Letter Carrier that is prohibited from delivering mail at an address unless he/she submits to being tested for COVID-19 should inform the customer that other arrangements can be made for them to pick up their mail. Letter Carriers should inform their Supervisor immediately if they encounter the inability to deliver any mail due to any COVID-19 issues.

Adding insult to injury, management has conducted route inspections in some of our offices recently just before the pandemic and has now implemented the new adjustments. Some adjustments were OK but most of them are pretty bad. Some Letter Carriers are not only faced with dealing with the COVID-19 virus issues and concerns, they are also faced with dealing with overburden routes. While most Letter Carriers suit up in their coronavirus shields/armor, such as hand sanitizer, gloves, disinfecting wipes, and masks, in order to take on the unforeseen challenge to case and deliver mail safely, management continues to make the task even more difficult by creating overburden routes. Additionally, management's adjustments impacted some senior Letter Carriers who were originally awarded mounted routes that have now been adjusted to mostly park and loop delivery. It appears that management didn't even consider the negative adverse impact on Letter Carriers over the age of 55 years old with 30-plus years of service when they implemented some of these adjustments. Apparently seniority meant nothing and was not taken into consideration in the decision making process prior to the implementation the route adjustments.

Nevertheless, Carriers will continue to do a fantastic job and push forward. Letter Carriers are a source of comfort and a welcome sign of normalcy to the American public. Although, the current new Postal motto appears to be; through medical pandemics, bad route adjustments, and Postal financial crises, the mail will get delivered. Letter Carriers will survive through unknown fears of pandemics and exercise their rights to combat contractual violations and/or bad decisions made by management.

As stated by NALC President Fredric Rolando, the union will strive to protect the rights of Letter Carriers and provide the most current information possible, while continuing to navigate through this pandemic together. Following the

Center for Disease Control's (CDC) recommendations it is important for everyone, but particularly for the essential work of Letter Carriers that serve the public every day. It's important to do everything you can to protect yourself, your family, your co-workers, and your customers. Letter Carriers are advised to see their Shop Stewards if they feel their rights are being violated, including any non-compliance of the CDC recommendations for the COVID-19 virus by management.

In the meantime, the NALC will continue to remain very involved with Congressional representatives in regards to the proposed stimulus packages related to the COVID-19 virus. The union will again pursue appropriations to keep the Postal Service healthy through the crisis. Additionally, the NALC wants Letter Carriers included in any hazard pay provisions for the front line workers.

## Letter Carrier Political Fund

The Letter Carrier Political Fund (LCPF) contribution pays for the NALC to lobby congress to prevent the Postal Service from bankruptcy. It also pays to secure the rights of Letter Carriers to have good paying jobs, benefits, and retirement. All of the gains that the union has fought for Letter Carriers can be taken away with the stroke of a political pen. It is up to us to have a seat at the political table, to fight for the jobs and rights of Letter Carriers. This is why it is important for every active and non-active Letter Carrier to make small campaign contributions to the Letter Carrier Political Fund. It provides a path to reach out to political figures that will protect the interest and concerns of Letter Carriers.

The Letter Carrier Political Fund contributes to candidates *who support issues important to Letter Carriers regardless of their political party*. Only NALC members can contribute to the Letter Carrier Political Fund, it's our Political Action Committee.

Letter Carrier Political Fund contributions cannot be taken from union dues, it is prohibited by Federal Campaign Laws. We only ask that you donate \$5.00 a pay period, which is a very inexpensive way to insure the future and way of life for Letter Carriers and their families. Letter Carriers can make contributions by using POSTALease, Electronic Funds Transfer, OPM Annuity, Check and Cash. There are applications available online or at the union hall that are user friendly to help you set up to make campaign contributions. If you have any question or need my assistance, please contact me. I am the LCPF coordinator for our branch and I will be happy to assist you.

Our political involvement can save the USPS from privatization, bankruptcy, and the loss of jobs for Letter Carriers. The LCPF provides the vehicle to secure our future and the success of the United States Postal Service.

Thanks, to all who make campaign contributions to the Letter Carrier Political Fund. God bless you and stay well.

THIS SPELLS  
HELP FOR LOTS OF  
FAMILIES THIS  
YEAR!



JEFF  
and  
Pete  
KEANE  
©BKI

# LETTER CARRIERS'

## FOOD

**POSTPONED**  
New Date TBD

PUT

MAILBOX.

FOOD BANK.

National Partners





# New Products from MBA

By Chris Alessi, MBA/NSBA Representative

**G**ood news from the MBA (Mutual Benefit Association), they have just announced that there are three new **Term Life Insurance** plans offered to all NALC Members including CCA's. All policies are only from the ages of **17 to 60 yrs old**. The insured can have a death benefit from **\$10,000 to \$100,000** worth of Insurance. All of these plans qualify for the Members, the Member's Spouse, Children, Grandchildren, Great Grandchildren, Step Children, Step Grandchildren, Step Great Grandchildren, Parents, and CCA's. Below are the new Plans.

**5-Year Renewable and Convertible Term Life -** This plan is the same as our 10 year renewable and convertible term insurance plan only with a shorter term to 5 years. So after 5 years you can covert this plan to a whole life with the same death benefit without taking a medical exam up to the age 65 or you can renew the existing plan for another 5 years without a medical exam up to the age 80. After renewal, premiums will adjust based on the Insured age.

**20-Year Term Life -** This plan is a 20 year term that gives you Insurance Protection for 20 years and the premium never goes up and is based on the Insured age and the amount of insurance at time of issue. The insured is guaranteed life insurance for the whole 20 years as long as the premiums are paid on the policy.

**The Term to Age 65 -** This Plan will give you insurance protection up to the anniversary date after your 65th birthday, no matter what your age was at time of issue. The premium rate will never go up and is guaranteed based on the insured age and the amount of insurance at time of issue.

Each one of these Plans Provides the Insurance Protection for your Loved ones at a very reasonable cost, and it is especially good for the **CCAs** who are not yet qualified for the Federal Employees Group Life Insurance.

In Closing I just want say please be careful and protect yourself during this time as best you can, I just lost my Half Brother on March 30th from this Corona Virus (Covid-19). You just never know who might have this terrible disease. Please Stay Safe! In Solidarity, God Bless You.

## Thank You! Thank You! Thank You!

*continued from page 3*

Aside from his suspect claims that voting by mail is highly conducive to fraudulent activity, President Trump's gripes with the USPS aren't only about voter suppression. Of course, there is educated speculation suggesting that our President's attacks on USPS are intended to punish Amazon CEO Jeff Bezos, with whom the president has a long-standing feud. The other issue here is President Trump's suspected preference to privatize the USPS.

Despite his ongoing denigration of USPS, President Trump is facing backlash from sensible Congressional leaders and calls to action to save the agency. Vermont Senator Bernie Sanders, who recently ended his 2020 Presidential Campaign, has tweeted that *"Congress must act now"* to save the agency. *"We cannot allow Donald Trump to use this horrific pandemic as an opportunity to bankrupt and privatize the Postal Service. Now, more than ever, we need a strong and vibrant postal system to deliver mail 6-days a week,"* Sanders said. I know some of you do not like Bernie Sanders but, love him or hate him, he sure as hell supports USPS and Letter Carriers.

### Join in the Fight

I received a phone call from a young CCA member of our branch today who was concerned with the rumors he had heard about the economic struggles of USPS. I told him he wasn't hearing rumors; the USPS is in dire straits. I advised him to check the NALC Website and to take the time to contact his member of Congress and our Senators to ask their support for our issues. He asked me why he had to do that and wanted to know why it wasn't my responsibility to do this for him since he was paying NALC dues. I explained to him how important it was for every voter to *individually* contact their representatives to truly make an impact.

If you care about your job and the pay and benefits that come with it, pull your head out of the sand and join in the fight. Check the NALC.ORG website daily and notify your member of Congress and your Senators to support our issues; the survival of USPS and our livelihoods are hanging in the balance. Until next time, stay well and thanks again for your efforts during the crises.





# Covid-19 Stalls Postal Reform

By David Hyman, Branch 2902 Trustee & Political Liaison

**G**reetings Sisters & Brothers. Hope you've been able to ride out the Covid-19 virus safely and you and your families are well.

The Letter Carrier National Food Drive has been postponed from the May 9th date and a rescheduled date has not been announced as of the writing of this article.

There are no major updates on the bills and resolutions before Congress that are of importance to our cause since most of their attention has been on the pandemic. The 2 Trillion dollar stimulus package passed in late March had a 10 billion loan option for the USPS to help offset a downturn of revenue that has happen due to the pandemic's effect on business revenue. The USPS will run out of liquidity before 2021 without intervention. The Democratic House bill approved 25 billion for the USPS to use in the next 2 years plus it would have removed 11 billion of USPS debt & offered up to 15 billion in loans. The larger USPS House aid was not accepted by the GOP senate majority and in the compromised version all the USPS got was the 10 billion loan.

Those who filed tax returns for 2018 or 2019 making \$75,000 or less as an individual or under \$150,000 filing a joint return should have received their \$1200 stimulus check. Those that filed for an electronic refund should have received theirs in April, otherwise checks are being mailed in May at the rate of around 5,000,000 per week.

The Cayman Islands & DHL in Germany had to declare "Force Majeure" which is the suspension of services invoked when an entity can not fulfill a contract due to unforeseeable circumstances. Transporting mail and passengers has been interrupted during this crisis.

Your responses to the Census have been extended from July 31st to August 14th, just in case you or any of your patrons have not responded yet. You can participate via internet by going to My2020Census.gov. It is important for all of us to participate in the Census because federal funding is allocated based on our population and federal house seats are based on the population that the census reflects. It is expected that California will lose one seat in the House of Representatives once the final numbers are calculated.

There is a special election on May 12th to fill the house seat that was vacated by Katie Hill. Labor endorsed State Legislator Christy Smith to fill the remainder of the term and endorsed Smith in the November election for the two-year term.

Despite the damage this pandemic has caused, there have been several positive benefits. Traffic is down significantly. Some auto insurance companies are refunding part of their premium profits, the air is cleaner, crime is declining and there are fewer telemarketer calls. Continuing with the good news, those of you with Spectrum Networks will be able to watch Dodger baseball on TV if and when the season gets started. They have added Sportsnet L.A., so those of you with DirecTV or AT&T will also be able to watch games at home later this year. The L.A. Federation of Labor was planning on doing a union night at the stadium. We will have to wait and see if that is still going to be an option. Branch 2902 usually does one social event at Dodger Stadium each year and we will most likely participate in that event if it occurs.

Be safe, you are heroes to our communities.

## Letter Carrier Political Fund

By making a contribution to the Letter Carrier Political Fund, you are doing so voluntarily with the understanding that your contribution is not a condition of membership in the National Association of Letter Carriers or of employment by the Postal Service, nor is it part of Union dues. You have a right to refuse to contribute without any reprisal. The Letter Carrier Political Fund will use the money it receives to contribute to candidates for federal office and undertake other political spending as permitted by law. Your selection shall remain in full force and effect until cancelled. Contributions to the Letter Carrier Political Fund are not deductible for federal income tax purposes. Federal law prohibits the Letter Carrier Political Fund from soliciting contributions from individuals who are not NALC members, executive and administrative staff or their families. Any contribution received from such an individual will be refunded to that contributor. Federal law requires us to use our best efforts to collect and report the name, mailing address, occupation and name of employer of individuals whose contributions exceed \$200 per calendar year. Any guideline amount is merely a suggestion, and an individual is free to contribute more or less than the guideline suggests and the Union will not favor or disadvantage anyone by reason of the amount of their contribution or their decision not to contribute.



# Extended Coverage

By Mary Stanley, Assistant Health Benefits Representative

**F**or those members covered under the NALC Health Benefit Plan, yes, you read that correctly. During this COVID-19 Crisis, the NALC HBP is supporting its members in getting the care needed. I think this is an important message to all of our NALC HBP members, so I am going to quote it directly from their website. *“As a result of the rapidly evolving COVID-19 pandemic, the Plan has made it a priority to remove any barriers that would prevent our members from getting the necessary testing.”* This extended coverage applies to all members: High Option, Consumer Driven Health Plan (CDHP), and Value Option (VO). The extended coverage includes Diagnostic Testing, Office Visits, Telehealth/Virtual Visits, TeleMental/Virtual Visits, and Prescription Benefits.

**Diagnostic Testing for COVID-19:** Our plan will cover a physician-ordered diagnostic testing at 100% for patients who meet the CDC guidelines for COVID-19. Members, *Please be Aware* that not all medical facilities currently have testing kits available.

**Office Visits for COVID-19:** If you use a PPO provider, High Option, your office visit copayment will be waived. CDHP/VO- your office visit coinsurance of 20% will be waived.

**Telehealth/Virtual Visits:** Now covers medically necessary online Telehealth Office Visits, in addition to the virtual doctor visits available through NALC/HBP Telehealth. Telehealth and Virtual Visits are also known as virtual care. Basically, it's interactions between the patients and doctors through the use of digital tools (i.e, cell phone, iPad,

computer, etc.) to communicate in real-time. Members refer to the NALC HBP website for copayment/coinsurance information. To locate a Telehealth PPO network provider, contact NALC HBP, Telehealth (medical) High Option visit [www.nalchbptelehealth.org](http://www.nalchbptelehealth.org) or call 888-541-7706. CDHP/VO visit [www.MDLIVEforCigna.com](http://www.MDLIVEforCigna.com) or call 888-726-3171.

**TeleMental/Virtual Visits:** To ensure that our plan members affected by COVID-19 have the support and resources needed for mental health you can access **TeleMental** or Virtual visits rendered by in-network providers such as psychiatrists, psychologists or clinical social workers. Members refer to the NALC HBP website for copayment/coinsurance information. To locate a PPO provider in the TeleMental health network, contact the following: High Option visit [liveandworkwell.com](http://liveandworkwell.com) or call 877-468-1016. CDHP/VO visit [MyCigna.com](http://MyCigna.com) or call 855-511-1893.

**Prescription Benefits:** CVS Pharmacy (locations vary where available) is now offering the option of home delivery for prescription medications at no charge. They are also waiving early refill limits on 30-day supply for maintenance medication prescriptions ahead of their normal fill schedule.

During this critical time that the COVID-19 threatens the health and safety of us all, the NALC HBP will continue to maintain its focus on how to provide the best service to their members. Refer to the NALC HBP brochure (RI 71-009) for complete details on member coverages. Visit the NALC HBP website for other valuable services and a wealth of information available to its members. If you have any questions, call the NALC HBP at 888-636-6252 to talk to a knowledgeable representative.

May we all stay safe and healthy during this difficult time. God Bless us all. Wishing you all a Happy Spring and a Fun-in-the-Sun Summer.

*The Mail Bag News* is the official publication of Tri-Valley Branch 2902 (Chatsworth, California) of the National Association of Letter Carriers. All opinions expressed are those of the individual author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the NALC or its officers. The Mail Bag News welcomes articles and letters to the editor; however the editorial staff of *The Mail Bag News* assumes complete authority to decide which letters are presented for publication. Anonymous articles are not accepted. Permission is hereby granted to reprint articles. We just ask that you give the author and the publication appropriate credit.

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\*Legal Advisory

## RETIREES LUNCH

**RAFFLE AT 12:30**

**MAY**

**Where:** Golden Panda  
1825 Madera Rd.  
Simi Valley

**When:** Tuesday, May 19, 2020

**Time:** 11:00am to 1:00pm



**JUNE**

**Where:** Golden Panda  
1825 Madera Rd.  
Simi Valley

**When:** Tuesday, June 16, 2020

**Time:** 11:00am to 1:00pm

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- Laura Rowe

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- Chris Alessi

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- Joe Gutierrez

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- Mary Stanley

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- Bob Golden

### TRUSTEES:

- Greg Gaddis
- David Hyman
- Louie Rodriguez
- Frank Salazar
- Walter Williams

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- Larry Orcutt

## SHOP STEWARD LIST

|                           |                 |
|---------------------------|-----------------|
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| Chatsworth Chief S.S.     | Angel Hale      |
| Fillmore Chief S.S.       | Connie Ramirez  |
| Moorpark Chief S.S.       | Adriana Serrano |
| No. Hollywood Chief S.S.  | Louie Rodriguez |
| Chandler                  | Greg Gaddis     |
| Laurel Canyon             | Louie Rodriguez |
| Studio City               | Greg Gaddis     |
| Valley Village            | Louie Rodriguez |
| Northridge Chief S.S.     | Onofre Varela   |
| Porter Ranch              | Onofre Varela   |
| Ojai Chief S.S.           | Philip Navarro  |
| Oxnard Chief S.S.         | Johnny Boyd     |
|                           | Kathi Albritten |
|                           | Pablo Galvan    |
| Alternate S.S.            | Louie Tanglao   |
| Pacoima Chief S.S.        | Call Office     |
| Reseda Chief S.S.         | Oscar Cortez    |
| San Fernando Chief S.S.   | Albert Reyes    |
| M.C.A.                    | Albert Reyes    |
| North Hills               | Albert Reyes    |
| Sylmar / Main Office      | Martin Diaz     |
|                           | Robert Tracy    |
| Santa Paula Chief S.S.    | Marcos Aldrete  |
| Simi Valley Chief S.S.    | Sal Lopez       |
| Simi Valley S.S.          | Sandra Dearborn |
|                           | Durim Kamberi   |
| Mt. McCoy Station S.S.    | Sal Lopez       |
| Thousand Oaks Chief S.S.  | Alex Lopez      |
|                           | Walter Williams |
|                           | Mary Stanley    |
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There are many characteristics that combine to help someone be resilient. In this time of uncertainty surrounding the Coronavirus (COVID-19), building your resilience will help you through these tougher times.

## Coronavirus

Encouraging Resilience

Resilience is what helps you successfully get through change and challenging times. There are many characteristics that combine to help make one resilient. By focusing on these traits, you can encourage resilience and increase your resiliency skills.

**By striving to be better at each of the following, you will naturally increase your ability to be resilient not only during the current Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, but in your every day life:**

- Have a sense of purpose
- Have a positive outlook
- Take an active approach to problem-solving
- Build relationships
- Have a sense of humor
- Expect change
- Care for yourself
- Continue to learn

As always, your EAP is here for you and your family. Whether you are staying home or continuing your routine, there are a variety of ways to connect with your EAP including: by telephone 800-327-4968 (800-EAP-4YOU), TTY: 877-492-7341, online at EAP4YOU.com, through video, by live chat or text message. Reach out to us to learn more about the many options you have to receive support from your Employee Assistance Program.

This is an emerging, rapidly evolving situation. For the latest information visit [CDC.gov](https://www.cdc.gov).



CALL US TODAY: 800-327-4968  
800-EAP-4YOU | TTY: 877-492-7341  
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## Calendar of Events

- MAY 7** Executive Board Meeting 6:00pm  
**(Subject to Covid-19 restrictions)**  
Executive Council Meeting 7:00pm
- MAY 9** NALC Food Drive  
**(Postponed, rescheduled date to be determined)**
- MAY 19** Retiree Lunch 11:00am  
**(Cancelled due to Covid-19)**  
Golden Panda-Simi Valley
- MAY 21** Regular Branch Meeting 7pm  
**(Subject to Covid-19 restrictions)**  
Union Hall-Chatsworth  
Dinner served 6pm
- MAY 25** Memorial Day-Holiday
- JUN 4** Executive Board Meeting 6:00pm  
**(Subject to Covid-19 restrictions)**  
Executive Council Meeting 7:00pm
- JUN 16** Retiree Lunch 11:00am  
**(Cancelled due to Covid-19)**  
Golden Panda-Simi Valley
- JUN 18** Regular Branch Meeting 7pm  
**(Subject to Covid-19 restrictions)**  
Union Hall-Chatsworth  
Snacks served 6pm