

**West Virginia Postal Workers Union
PO Box 9054 Huntington, WV 25704**

From the Desk of the President

Forgotten rights all PTFs and PSEs should know.

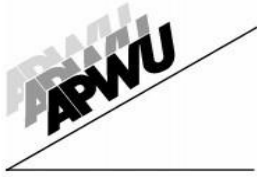
One of the most frequent phone calls I receive from our members is regarding work hours. They are either too much or too little. I have found myself reminding not only our clerks, but management what the proper pecking order is to fill needed hours. You do have rights as PSEs and PTFs. The biggest issue is regarding PSEs from 4-hour RMPOs. Here is the general pecking order for using hours in level 18 offices:

1. All PTFs in the APO must be used up to 40 hours before using help from other offices or RMPOs (unless simultaneous scheduling is needed).
2. All PTFs within 50 driving miles who have not put in writing to opt out of traveling outside their APO. This is up to 40 hours in a work week. Keep in mind, if you do not want to travel, you must put it in writing, and it goes into effect within 2 weeks. The same applies if you change your mind.
3. PSEs from the 4-hour RMPOs in your bid cluster may provide coverage at the APO only if there is an absence. They're also only allowed to work the window. No distribution. This cannot last for more than 2 weeks and again, up to 40 hours in a work week.
4. Finally, PTFs who have put in writing they have a preference not to travel may be used at this point.

The rules are simple and are laid out in the Post Plan Q & A and the PTF HUB MOU. If you feel you are being forced to work too many hours or too little as a result of management not following this pecking order, please contact the Union ASAP. We have 14 days to file timely grievances. Don't sit back and let your rights and life be affected by management's disregard of this policy.

Finally, the final issue regarding hours? Cleaning. I know, some of you dread this. You were hired to be a clerk, not clean. Maintaining your post office is not beneath you. These are hours the Union has fought for to give you more hours. In the past year, the district has updated the cleaning hours in the TL-5 MS-47. What does that mean? The cleaning hours were reduced. And then COVID came along. All cleaning hours and COVID cleaning are in addition to your clerk hours. Do you work at a 4-hour or 6-hour RMPO? Your hours are not just the 24 or 36.5 hours; it is also cleaning hours. Management must schedule your cleaning hours in addition to your window hours. You do not have to run in between customers to mop or sweep your lobby. This applies to all offices without custodians. Do you have a contract cleaner in your office? We've found many offices still have these even though contractually they should not. If there are 2 or less hours of cleaning a day (12 a week), those hours belong to our clerks. Want to know how many hours you are allotted a week or day to clean? Contact the Union!

President Sinikka Melvin
smelvin@wvpwu.org



**West Virginia Postal Workers Union
PO Box 9054 Huntington, WV 25704**

From the Executive Vice President The Importance of being involved in your Union

First, it's important for the membership to understand that the Union is not just the Officers and Stewards that represent it. It is the membership as a whole. It you! Being part of a Union has many advantages: Workplaces that have Unions have better wages, personal protection for the employees, equality, better workplace health & safety, solidarity, etc. It's important to also be involved in your Union. There are many ways to do this –

- Educate yourself. Read your contract. That is one of the most powerful tools of being a Union member. Knowing your rights brings power.
- Know your Weingarten Rights. When called into a meeting with management, requesting your rights can be as simple as saying, "I want my shop steward here." You should ask before the meeting starts, "Can this meeting lead to me being disciplined?" If they answer "yes," you need to request representation. You should learn this statement or carry it with you at all times:

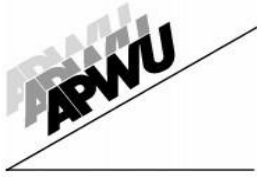
If this discussion/meeting could in any way lead to my being disciplined or terminated, I respectfully request that my APWU representative, officer, or steward be present at this meeting. Until my representative arrives, I choose not to participate in this discussion.

- Always know who your Representatives are. Feel free to reach out with any concerns or questions you may have. Also you can become a Steward. Step up, be involved - make that change happen! That is how I started, as a Steward.
- Attend and help out with events.
- Vote in your Union elections.
- If you notice a Health and/or Safety Hazard report it to your Supervisor and on a PS Form 1767. If it is not fixed contact your Representative.

Every member has a roll in their Union. It's important for all of us to be involved in some way.

Not a member? Join now and start being involved. When we receive your application, you'll receive a \$25 gift card of your choosing. Is there a non-member in your office? Get them to join and let us know. We'll send you both a \$25 gift card of your choosing.

Executive Vice President Amy Haga
amyhage@wvpu.org



**West Virginia Postal Workers Union
PO Box 9054 Huntington, WV 25704**

From the Editor

The Importance of Orientation

As part of my duties, I do orientations for newly hired employees. Some of you may have seen me at orientation. During which I explain about the Union the benefits and safeguards that come along with being a union member. I normally bombard everyone with so much information that I doubt most people remember it all. For a quick reference of some of the benefits for belonging to the union. Please check out our website for more detail wvpwu.org .

It is important for each member to know who represents them - who to reach out to when they have a question or the need to file a grievance. Please feel free to reach out to one of our state board members if any questions or issues arise. As that is what we are here to do.

During your career you will go from a newly hired employee (most start as a Postal Support Employee – PSE) to career position. When this transition happens, you should have another orientation so we can go over all the options and opportunities that comes along with being a regular. If you did not receive your career orientation, please reach out to one of our board members so we can give you information or answer any questions you might have.

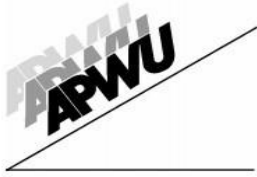
Editor Chris Smith
chrissmith@wvpwu.org

From the Secretary-Treasurer

Changes to TSP in 2020

There were several new things implemented with the Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) in 2020. Here are a few of them:

1. Additional TSP webinars – These webinars are always free and cover topics to help you better save and plan for your retirement. You can find a schedule of current sessions at tsp.gov/webinars.
2. A redesigned tsp.gov – They built a new website making it easier to find information you need; whether it be preparing your first withdrawal request, learning more about different TSP funds, or looking for the most upto-date forms and publications.
3. 5-year Lifecycle (L) Fund – L funds were added in 5 year increments so you can now choose one with a date that is closer to your retirement date.
4. 5% auto-enrollment rate – If you were hired or rehired on or after October 1, 2020, you automatically contribute 5% Of your basic salary each pay period (the full matching contribution from USPS).
5. Forms upload – Certain forms can now be uploaded after logging into MY ACCOUNT.



**West Virginia Postal Workers Union
PO Box 9054 Huntington, WV 25704**

Secretary-Treasurer Renee Steele
reneesteele@wvpwu.org

From the NEW Legislative Director Important Legislation That Impacts all Postal Workers

USPS Fairness Act (HR 695) This bill repeals the requirement that the USPS prepay 75 years of retirement benefits. This bill passed the House of Representatives by a vote of 309-106 last year. Unfortunately, it was never brought to the Senate floor for discussion or a vote. The new bill (HR 695) was reintroduced the first week of February by a group of bipartisan sponsors from the House of Representatives. This bill could play a big part in restoring the financial integrity of the USPS. The APWU believes this bill has a good chance to make it to the Senate for a vote. We will need 60 votes in the Senate to pass.

The WVPWU and the APWU encourages all our members to contact members of the House of Representatives and Senate. The APWU will have a Day of Action in the near future. On this day, the APWU will put out a phone number to call and it will direct you to the offices of your Representative or Senators. I would still encourage our members to contact your Representative or Senator outside of that day. You can contact them through their websites or by phone. Here is the contact information for the Representatives and Senators in West Virginia.

Senators

Joe Manchin - manchin.senate.gov
Phone - 202-224-3954 or 304-342-5855

Shelly Moore Capito - capito.senate.gov
Phone - 202-224-6472 or 304-347-5372

House of Representatives

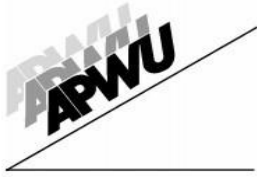
1st District David McKinley - mckinley.house.gov
mooney.house.gov Phone 202-225-4172 or 304-232-3801
2711 or 304-264-8810

2nd District Alex Mooney -
Phone - 202-225-

3rd District Carol Miller - miller.house.gov
Phone - 202-225-3452 or 304-522-2201

Chris Black has been appointed by the WVPWU E-board to the position of Legislative Director after the retirement of Glenn Wilson. Chris is a clerk in the Beckley Post Office and Legislative Director for the Beckley Area Local.

Chris Black
chrisblack@wvpwu.org



**West Virginia Postal Workers Union
PO Box 9054 Huntington, WV 25704**

From the Director of Union Services 2021 West Virginia State Convention

As we think of spring, that means it's time for our spring seminar and state convention. Prior to COVID-19, this was a three-day event where everyone could gather and attend valuable training, see and hear our national officers, and even talk to them one on one for that personal connection. We would conduct state business, hear state officer's reports, and have a good time at the hospitality room socializing. But then the virus hit. That changed the way we had to do everything. Last year, most states had to cancel or postpone their conventions. Because it was our year for election of officers, we had to go through with the convention. Here comes ZOOM technology. With our Editor, Chris Smith leading the way, we were able to have everyone sitting at home at their computer, or even using their phone or tablet and join in using the link sent to them by Chris. Once everybody logged on, it was a success. So, we are going to try it again this year. The dates this year are Thursday, and Friday, April 29 and 30.

I hope you can take this opportunity and join in our convention this year. No travel involved. If you are a Member-at-Large and would like to attend the State Convention, please contact the WVPWU no later than April 1, 2021. Once approved to attend, the state will send you a registration link.

Director of Union Services Stan Morgan
stanmorgan@wvpwu.org