



THE BRANCH 324 BUZZ

October 2020



Thinking about retirement?

I know many of us have received mailings from companies holding seminars and wanting to help us prepare for retirement. BE CAREFUL! Many of these companies want to help you so they can get a piece of your retirement. That is how most of them operate. We will be holding a retirement seminar in Denver in January that will be FREE and taught by the NALC. More details will be in the Fall newsletter.

Why am I being told to not work off the clock?

There are several reasons why no one should be working off the clock. Not only is it a violation of the National Agreement but if you are injured, workman's compensation might not get paid out and all of your medical bills will be your responsibility. You could also be disciplined for it. Just imagine, the supervisor who knows you are working off the clock to help them out never says anything to you. Then you get hurt while doing that task and they discipline you a few days later for something they allowed. Is it right? NO. Has it happened? YES! No employee should be coming in on their non-scheduled day to help another employee carry mail while not being paid and having the protections of OWCP. If you have worked off the clock, stop now. Management might look the other way but it's not right. When you clock out, go home. Don't go to the case to work on your holds, mark-ups, etc. That work is done on the clock. Leave it for the next day. Even if you're not on the route the next day, explain to the carrier the following morning the circumstances and allow to help clean it up on the clock in the morning.

Another reason for not working off the clock is getting the proper counts on all of the routes. Each carrier doesn't have to adjust to the route. Each of us have our own speed, pace, etc. When you take over a route, you adjust the route to you. If the carrier before me could do it in 7 hours, good for them. Management might even make comments asking why you can't get it done like them. I always ask if I should get that carrier a ribbon or trophy. It doesn't matter how quick someone carried a route. Did they even know their route? Were they putting mail in the right boxes? Did they actually deliver their coverages or throw them in UBBM every week? Was the carrier not delivering "or current resident" mail and throwing it in UBBM marked as vacant? Did they wear their seatbelt while the vehicle is in motion? Curb their wheels? Shut off the vehicle when out of the driver's seat?

These are only a few questions that come up that is a part of job everyday on our routes that is required in the Handbook M-41 that we are required to follow. Does anyone know everything in the M-41? No, but you know where to find it. Every case should have one in the route book. Do your job right every day and you will have a long career here and retire with dignity. **"It takes what it takes"**

Ready for a vacation?

The calendar committees in each office are getting ready for the 2021 vacation calendar sign up period. Please start thinking about what you want to plan on for next year. There have been times in the past where some offices wait on passing the calendar to the next person because a carrier needed more time. We will be following the LMOU in each office. If you don't have it figured out when the deadline comes up for your choice, it will be passed to the next carrier. Now is the time to prepare.

Why are vehicle checks so important?

Vehicle checks should be done daily. I know in many of our offices, we are having issues with getting vehicles fixed in a timely manner. I am working on this and Denver seems to be the main problem. We are having issues with getting new tires and additional parts replaced. Check your vehicle tires now. Don't until the snow gets here. If you write up something up more than once and it's not getting fixed, make a copy of the PS 4565 (Vehicle Repair Tag) or take a picture and send it to vehicle@nalcbranch324.com. We will get it reported to management and contact OSHA if necessary for the safety issue. There is also a link on the homepage of the website to report vehicle issues.

Did you make a copy?

There have been many times when an employee is upset about a broken promise made by a supervisor. This could involve being allowed to take time off, opting on a route, taking a "no lunch", etc. As carriers, we are not in control of our hours at work most of the time. We do have the availability of signing the overtime list but management still has the possibility of mandating and should follow Article 8 of the National Agreement. Does this always happen? No it does not. One of the first questions asked is if the carrier made a copy or took a picture of their request to management. "Did you make a copy?" Two CCAs put in for the same opt. One CCA made a copy and the other did not. Did management accidentally lose the other copy? Guess who gets the opt? Always make a copy of everything prior to turning it in to management. We aren't saying that management intentionally loses your paperwork, but we've seen things get lost. Hours not put in because the 1260 time-card was misplaced. Now we have to fight to get those hours paid sometimes. Make a copy of the PS 3971 (Leave Request) before turning it into management. Management should also be signing it that they have received it. Make a copy of it after they sign showing it has been received. The supervisor might not immediately approve it, but be aware of the LMOU for your office and make a copy. The LMOU for each office can be downloaded at our website on the "Downloads" page.

Knowledge is Power!