



FYI

NPMHU LOCAL 321 MAY 2025

PRESIDENT TONY WILSON 303-455-6400 720 841-5020CELL EWILSON@LOCAL321.ORG

**Local 321 Issues Urgent Warning: Newly Converted Career Mail Handlers at Risk**

Local 321 is alerting all members to a troubling and escalating trend: an increasing number of newly converted Full-Time Regular (FTR) Mail Handlers are being terminated during their probationary periods. This growing concern primarily affects Mail Handler Assistants (MHAs) who were converted to career status before completing 360 days of service as non-career employees. Many of these employees believed that career conversion would bring job security—but instead, they find themselves vulnerable, unprotected, and without access to the grievance procedure.

Under the 2013 Fishgold Arbitration Award and the National Agreement between the NPMHU and USPS, the MHA position was designed as a transitional role toward career employment. According to the Contract Interpretation Manual (CIM):

MHAs who complete 360 days of service (not necessarily consecutively) and are then converted to career do not serve a probationary period.

MHAs who are converted before reaching 360 days must serve a 90-calendar-day probationary period as FTRs.

USPS in compliance with the MOU on residual vacancies and operational needs, has accelerated career conversions, often converting MHAs before they complete the required 360 days. While this fast-tracking may appear to be a positive development, it comes with serious consequences.

Newly converted FTRs who haven't completed 360 days as MHAs are now subject to a 90-day probationary period. During this time, management can separate the probationary employees for various reasons—and these separations are not subject to the grievance procedure.

If you were converted before completing 360 days as an MHA, you are currently in a probationary period. This means you can be separated for attendance, conduct, or performance issues etc-..even without progressive discipline. Management’s decisions during this period are generally not challengeable.

That’s why it is absolutely critical that you protect yourself:

**Be Present and On Time.** Every Day Counts Avoid lateness and unscheduled absences. Each occurrence could count against you.

**Document Everything** If you're sick, obtain a doctor’s note. If you're able to report to work, even if unwell, do so, and let management send you home. Every absence matters during probation. For emergencies, document the situation in writing and call your supervisor.

**Follow Proper Call-In Procedures** If you of to, use the required method and time frame. Do not rely on coworkers or informal channels.

**Stick to your assigned schedule.** Avoid following others who may be taking extended lunch or break times, you are still on probation, and different rules apply to you.

**Stay focused on your own responsibilities.** Avoid getting involved in workplace conflicts or the actions of other employees.

**Follow all instructions from any supervisor.** If you have concerns about any directive, do not ignore it, carry it out as instructed, and then immediately speak to your union steward for guidance.

**Know your rights.** You will always have access to the grievance process *except* in matters related to separation or evaluation during your probation period.

Your conduct and performance during probation are closely monitored, make smart choices that protect your position and future with the Postal Service.

Track Your 90 Days Know your conversion date. Once your 90-day probation ends, you regain access to the full protections of the grievance process per Just Cause principles. Keep your steward informed of your status.

**NPMHU Local 321 “Jeremy Barriault” Scholarship Award**

On Friday, April 25, 2025, Local 321 prepared to hold a drawing for five scholarships. There were only four applicants. Each scholarship is for the 2025 – 2026 school year and is worth five hundred (\$500.00) each. The four scholarship awardees are:

Emily Sanzone  
Emily Ngo  
Amaia Jones  
Jalouddin Allayarov

Congratulations to the winners. This is the 26<sup>th</sup> year that Local 321 has sponsored a scholarship program for the membership and their dependents.

**Union Victory in Denver GMF 030 Cross-Craft Case: Arbitrator Rules in Favor of the Mail Handlers**

In a significant win for the National Postal Mail Handlers Union, an arbitrator has ruled in favor of the Union in the long-standing Art 7.2, 030 cross-craft case. The decision, issued on April 25, 2025, confirms that management violated the agreed-upon sign-inventory provisions by improperly assigning clerk craft employees to perform mail handler duties.

The arbitration award covers violations dating back to July 2023, and the arbitrator has ordered compensation to be paid to the Union for the entire period leading up to the date of the decision. This ruling affirms the Union’s longstanding position that management’s actions were not only a breach of the negotiated sign-inventory agreement but also undermined the contractual rights of mail handlers.

The core of the dispute centered on management's recurring practice of assigning work in 030, which was clearly defined as mail handler

duties, to clerks, despite an established inventory and staffing plan that protected this work for the mail handler craft. The Union filed a grievance asserting that these assignments violated the collective bargaining agreement, especially the cross-craft work provisions, and that such actions deprived mail handlers of rightful work opportunities and compensation. The arbitrator agreed, stating unequivocally that management’s actions were in violation of the agreed-upon sign inventory, and that the Union had provided sufficient evidence to support its claim over an extended period of time.

"This is a victory not just for the Union, but for every mail handler who has been affected by this improper reassignment of duties," said a Union spokesperson. "This ruling reinforces the integrity of our negotiated agreements and sends a clear message that violations will not be tolerated."

The award of compensation from July 2023 through April 25, 2025, marks a major financial and moral victory for the craft, setting a precedent for future issues involving the improper assignment of duties outside the mail handler classification.

The Union will now begin working with management on the implementation of the award, including the distribution of compensation to affected mail handlers. Members are encouraged to stay in close contact with their local representatives for updates on the enforcement process.

**Denver NDC RI-399 Case Dismissed on Procedural Grounds**

In a recent ruling, the arbitrator dismissed the NPMHU’s jurisdictional case concerning the PSM 4 operations in Areas 11 and 13 at the Denver NDC, citing procedural deficiencies. The arbitrator determined that the case was improperly before him and therefore could not be considered on its merits.

The arbitrator sided with the APWU and USPS, stating that the NPMHU bypassed the National Dispute Resolution Committee (NDRC) in violation of the dispute resolution process outlined in Section 10(e) of the updated 2018 RI-399 Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).

The decision reinforces the critical importance of adhering to the agreed-upon RI-399 procedures, particularly when raising jurisdictional disputes. Because the NPMHU did not properly exhaust the NDRC process prior to arbitration, the case was dismissed without a ruling on the underlying jurisdictional claim.

While the outcome is disappointing, it highlights the need for strict procedural compliance under the RI-399 framework. The NPMHU will assess the implications of this ruling and ensure that future jurisdictional claims proceed through the proper channels.

*Tony Wilson*  
NPMHU-Local 321  
President