

National Postal Mail Handlers Union

Join the Union -- Join the Fight
It's a Career Decision!



An Invitation to all Mail Handler Non-Members

On behalf of nearly 40,000 active members of the National Postal Mail Handlers Union (NPMHU), we ask that you take a few minutes to review this brochure, which highlights some of the reasons that we believe you should join the NPMHU. As the two resident National Officers of this great Union, we invite you to join your fellow mail handlers in the fight to preserve the United States Postal Service, and in the continuing struggle to obtain and secure higher wages, increased benefits, and improved working conditions.

Without the National Postal Mail Handlers Union, and its thousands of dedicated representatives – who are working day in, and day out, to protect your interests – Mail Handlers certainly would not enjoy the level of job security, anti-discrimination protection, seniority consideration, wages, benefits, or safety and health protections that are currently in place. The National Postal Mail Handlers Union has been in the trenches – for many decades – fighting to obtain, and protect, these important benefits.

The NPMHU relies on the collective strength of its membership to continue the struggle for a better workplace. We respectfully ask that you join us in these worthwhile efforts. We ask that you join our Union, and that you join our fight. Remember: It's a Career Decision!

Please review our brochure, which highlights some of the benefits of membership, and contact your shop steward or other union representative to become a member today.

John F. Hegarty
National President

Mark A. Gardner
National Secretary-Treasurer

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It's Your Job.
Join the Union, and Fight to Protect it!

MEMBERS (40,000 Strong and Still Growing)

The National Postal Mail Handlers Union (NPMHU) is recognized as the exclusive collective bargaining agent for Mail Handlers employed by the United States Postal Service.

NPMHU membership is open to any Mail Handler of the USPS regardless of race, color, sex, age, sexual orientation, or national origin. Anyone else employed by the Federal Government or the Postal Service, who does not otherwise qualify for regular membership in the Union, may join as an associate member.



PURPOSE (What's It All About?)

The NPMHU is a national organization of employees dedicated to advancing the interests of its members and their families. The primary purpose of the Union is to negotiate and enforce a National Agreement with the U.S. Postal Service, a contract that establishes wages, cost-of-living adjustments and other pay increases, working conditions, and fringe benefits for all workers within its jurisdiction. The Union also protects workers' rights by representing them in day-to-day problems on the job, like discipline, violations of seniority, discrimination, or other management abuse, and addresses such workplace concerns as safety, health, and the impact of technological change.



DEMOCRACY (A Union Controlled by its Members)

The membership controls the NPMHU. Every level of the NPMHU operates democratically on the principle of majority rule. As a member of the Union, you have a right to be heard and the right to vote to express your concerns. All local and national officers are elected by the members by secret mail ballot. Any member can become a candidate for elected office simply by being nominated in accordance with the requirements of the NPMHU Constitution. All members also vote on ratification of the National Agreement, and elect delegates to the National Convention. The Convention convenes every four years and is the highest governing body in the Union. Between Conventions, the National Executive Board directs the Union's policy and programs.



NATIONAL CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS (Establishing Our Collective Strength)

Mail Handlers employed by the USPS are covered by a National Agreement, which is our collective bargaining agreement covering a wide array of issues relating to wages, hours, benefits, categories of employment, and working conditions. The NPMHU has a National Negotiating Team that meets with the Postal Service management several months before the contract expires. Based on suggestions submitted by rank-and-file Union members, the team proposes contract language to which the Postal Service responds, and through a concentrated series of discussions, and with the give and take of negotiation, they attempt to reach an agreement that works for everyone.



If a tentative agreement is reached, each and every Mail Handler who is a member of the Union is sent a package containing the details of the tentative agreement, along with a ratification ballot affording the membership the opportunity to either accept or reject the terms of the proposed agreement. Although the NPMHU believes that the right to strike is an inalienable right of all American workers, federal law prohibits strikes by postal employees and requires that contract negotiations not resulting in an agreement be submitted to an impartial third party for binding arbitration. If this occurs, all of the Union's resources are used to obtain the best possible contract for all Mail Handlers.

CONTRACT ADMINISTRATION (Policing and Enforcing the Agreement)

Once the National Agreement has been established, the officers and representatives of the NPMHU – at the National, Regional, Local, and Branch level – work to police and enforce the contract, and to protect the rights of Mail Handlers on the work room floor. Article 15 of the National Agreement allows Mail Handlers to file grievances with postal management – through their Union Shop Steward – when their contractual rights have been violated. The National Postal Mail Handlers Union is here to protect and represent each and every Mail Handler.



DUES (What Dues and What For)

National dues pay for all the operating expenses of the Union. This includes contract negotiations, grievance handling above the local level, and the costs associated with national level arbitration. Members' dues also cover the cost of publications, professional fees, legislative activities, education and training, and community service programs. Much of the membership dues is retained by the Local Union, and is used to fund operations at the facility, state and/or Local Union level.

Dues are very reasonable, and can vary from local to local. Your shop steward or local officer can tell you the amount that will automatically be deducted from your paycheck once you fill out a Form 1187 - Authorization for Dues Deduction.

GOVERNANCE (Local and National Roles)

Mail Handler members belong to a local union, with jurisdiction in their city, town, or area. Locals elect their own officers and conduct their own day-to-day business. They negotiate a Local Memorandum of Understanding to supplement the National Agreement on certain local concerns.



Nationally, NPMHU has its headquarters in Washington D.C. to administer the Union and to implement programs and policies mandated by the Constitution and the National Executive Board. The national resident officers include the National President and the National Secretary-Treasurer. They are joined on the

National Executive Board by five Regional Vice Presidents, each of whom are elected to a four-year term of office in a process that begins at the quadrennial National Convention, and culminates, as necessary, in a mail ballot referendum sent to all NPMHU members.

PROBLEMS? (Your Grievances are Heard)

If you feel that management has violated your rights, subjected you to harassment, or discriminated against you, you should immediately discuss the problems with your steward. The steward, your Union representative on the workroom floor, will determine whether a violation has occurred and will try to reach a settlement with your immediate supervisor. If this effort fails, the Union can appeal management's action to a higher level. If all of these efforts fail, the Union may request that an impartial arbitrator be called in to settle the grievance.



BENEFITS (How Membership Works for You)

The most important benefit you gain from union membership is the power to be heard. You can determine your own future by participating in local meetings, voting for local and national officers, voting on the contract, and running for office or petitioning for changes throughout the Union.

AFFILIATIONS (Organizations Working Together)

The NPMHU is affiliated with a variety of other organizations, including the Laborers' International Union of North America (LIUNA), the AFL-CIO, UNI Global Union, and the Postal Employees Relief Fund (PERF). All of these organizations work to promote the rights and interests of Mail Handlers. As a member of the NPMHU, you automatically become a member, at no additional cost, of all of these organizations, and become eligible for all benefits that they offer.



KEEPING CURRENT (Union Participation and Information)

Participating in Union meetings and the activities of the local will ensure that you know what is happening and what issues and concerns are currently being discussed within the Union. In addition, you'll be kept informed with local and national union publications, such as the monthly Mail Handler Update and the quarterly Mail Handler magazine. The NPMHU National Union also maintains a website at www.npmhu.org which is full of useful and timely information important to its members.

POLITICS AND LEGISLATION (The Union's Active Role)

The NPMHU maintains a very effective legislative program that monitors legislation being considered by Congress that will have an impact on postal workers and/or their families. The NPMHU has a presence on Capitol Hill, and is often invited to testify before House and Senate Committees considering legislation affecting postal and federal employees. The NPMHU also manages and directs the activities of a political action committee. Using only voluntary contributions, the Mail Handlers PAC provides support to congressional candidates who support the Union's efforts to preserve Mail Handler jobs and to improve the legislated benefits received by Mail Handlers and their families.



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To become a member of the National Postal Mail Handlers Union, complete a Form 1187 (available from your shop steward or other Union officer). Dues will be deducted from your paycheck automatically. If you work in a very small office, or if you have any difficulty getting information, please contact the National Office of the NPMHU at 1101 Connecticut Avenue, NW, Suite 500, Washington, D.C. 20036 / (202) 833-9095 or visit our website at www.npmhu.org