



# Tampa Letter Carrier

VOLUME 20, ISSUE 7

JULY 2021

## — Notice —

Until further notice, as has been our practice, everyone attending Branch Meetings is required to wear a facial mask... your cooperation is appreciated.

## Around The Horn from The President's Desk



**Tony Diaz**  
President  
Branch 599

Brothers and Sisters, many veteran letter carriers begin feeling the effects of the carrier job due to the repetitive motions, the bending, stooping, twisting, lifting/carrying, climbing, kneeling, grasping, and pushing/pulling. These effects could happen at any time, some sooner than others. The timeline, while some occur with less than 15 years, usually 15 years and beyond are what I see more. The form that covers these types of injuries, occupational disease, is a CA-2.

There is a big difference between a CA-1 and a CA-2, below are the differences:

### Filing a CA-1 for a Traumatic Injury

A traumatic injury is defined as: *A wound or other condition of the body caused by external force, including stress or strain, which is identifiable as to the time*

*and place of occurrence and member or function of the body affected. The injury must be caused by a specific event or incident or series of events or incidents within a single workday or work shift.*

The majority of calls are for Form CA-1, getting hurt on the job. However, the calls for information about Form CA-2 has increased. Very few calls are received for information about Claim for Recurrence of a previous injury, which is Form CA-2A.

### Filing a CA-2 for an Occupational Disease

Occupational diseases are defined as injuries that occur over a period longer than one day or one work shift. To file a claim for an occupational disease, letter carriers need to fill out a CA-2 and provide a description of their work duties along with a

medical narrative from a doctor that makes a causal connection between specific work factors and your diagnosed condition(s).

**Step 1: Employee narrative**  
Prior to filing the CA-2, you need to explain your day-to-day duties as a letter carrier to your doctor. A written explanation of your job duties as a letter carrier provides your doctor with the information to write a medical opinion connecting specific work factors to your diagnosed conditions. Most doctors are very busy, so you need to **keep your explanation to one page.**

Describe an average day on your route. Mail volume and deliveries fluctuate every day

*(Continued on page 3)*

Branch 599  
serving  
Brandon  
Plant City  
Sun City  
Tampa

Branch 599  
Meeting  
Thursday  
July 1  
7:30 PM

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**National Association of Letter Carriers, Branch 599,**

3003 W Cypress Street,  
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publishes the *Tampa Letter Carrier* monthly. The opinions expressed in this publication are those of the writers and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of Branch 599, NALC. It is the policy of this publication that all articles submitted for print must be signed by the writer.

Please submit any and all articles to be published in the *Tampa Letter Carrier* to the Editor via email at editor.nalc599@gmail.com and also to the Branch Office at nalc599@verizon.net no later than the 5<sup>th</sup> of each month in order for us to meet our time limits to the publisher.

# Officers

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# Shop Stewards

<i>Station</i>	<i>ZIP</i>	<i>Steward</i>	<i>Station No.</i>	<i>Steward's No.</i>
Tampa Stations/Branches Chief Steward, Brian Obst 727.458.0679				
Brandon	33510/11	David Rivadeneira	813.661.1636	813.403.9525
Brandon	33510/11	Luis Cruz	813.661.1636	813.431.3223
Carrollwood	33618	Tina Bausch	813.961.2962	813.892.2282
Commerce	33602	Cynthia Williams	813.242.4507	813.778.4373
Forest Hills	33612	JR Sanchez	813.935.2954	773.849.6229
Forest Hills Annex	33613	Juan Andujar	813.935.2954	813.377.7266
Hilldale	33614	Brian Obst	813.879.4309	727.458.0679
Hilldale Annex	33634	Latoya Dupuy	813.879.4309	305.414.3527
Interbay/Port Tampa	33611/16	Clement Cheung	813.831.2034	813.758.5910
Interbay/Peninsula	33629	Clement Cheung	813.831.2034	813.758.5910
Palm River Annex	33619	Pam Benton	813.663.0048	813.475.0753
Plant City	33564	Warren Sumlin	813.719.6793	813.486.7612
Produce	33610	Jerry J.D. Lewers	813.239.4084	813.528.5519
Ruskin/Sun City Ctr	33570	Cherry Berry	813.634.1403	585.230.0266
Seminole Heights	33603	Michael Smith	813.237.4569	813.326.0717
Sulphur Springs	33604	Stephen Hall	813.237.4569	813.494.4669
TCA/Hyde Park	33606		813.873.7189	
TCA/Peninsula	33609		813.873.7189	
TCA/West Tampa	33607	Michael Williams	813.873.7189	813.541.3092
Temple Terrace	33617	Lori McMillion	813.988.0152	813.263.7101
Town 'N Country	33615/35	Brian Obst	813.884.0973	727.458.0679
Ybor City	33605	Maurice Rice	813.242.4507	813.334.3189

# Around The Horn from The President's Desk

(Continued from page 1)

so avoid exact numbers. Describe how long you sort and deliver mail. Estimate mail volumes, weights, distances, and repetitions. Never exaggerate. Use action words that describe your work factors like walking, carrying, reaching, pushing, pulling etc.

To fully explain the range of letter carrier duties you can provide your doctor with the appropriate copies of/or the link to these Letter Carrier Duties ([nalc.org/workplace-issues/body/Letter-Carrier-Duties.pdf](http://nalc.org/workplace-issues/body/Letter-Carrier-Duties.pdf)) photos and explanations. **Letter carrier duties are available at our Branch office.**

## Step 2: The doctor's narrative

Once you have your job description completed, take a copy of it to your doctor. OWCP requires a *rationalized* medical narrative that describes the causal relationship between specific work factors and the diagnosed injury. A rationalized narrative is one based on objective medical evidence such as tests, x-rays, or MRIs that describes the physiological mechanism by which specific work factors caused, aggravated, or accelerated the diagnosed condition.

Your doctor must state his or her opinion with *reasonable medical certainty*. Reasonable medical certainty is a bureaucratic term required by OWCP. The medical opinion of a board-certified specialist with expertise in your particular injury will have more weight with OWCP than a general practitioner.

**Again, it is imperative that your doctor fully understands your everyday work activities. From my experiences, the lack of a causal relationship defined between your actual letter carrier job duties and your related injury are the number one contributor for denied claims.**

## Step 3: Submitting the CA-2

Once you have the medical narrative describing the causal relationship between your work and your medical condition, ask your supervisor for a CA-2, Notice of Occupational Disease, and a CA-17, Duty Status Report.

As you fill out the CA-2, you will come to question 11: Date you first became aware of the disease or illness. Answer question 11 as best as you can; OWCP needs to have a rough idea of when you had an initial diagnosis. Question 12 asks the date you first realized the disease or illness was caused or aggravated by your employment. The date your doctor signs his or her medical report will be the date you enter in question 12.

You should file the CA-2 as soon as possible, preferably within the 30 days from the date listed in question 12. However, the CA-2 will meet the statutory time requirement if filed no later than 3 years after the date of your last exposure to the work factors that caused the injury.

Complete your portion of the CA-2, make a copy of it and hand the original along with your narrative to your supervisor, do not place it on their desk or in their inbox. The supervisor's instructions for the CA-2 requires them to give you the signed receipt (page 4) immediately.

Request a copy of the completed CA-2 for your file.

The Postal Service is required to send your CA-2 to OWCP within 10 working days of receiving it from you. If OWCP has not received your CA-2 after 10 working days, contact your shop steward or National Business Agent's office.

Once OWCP gets your CA-2 they will assign you a claim number and send you a letter. If you do not receive a letter from OWCP, call your OWCP district office and ask for your file number.

Medical reports should be sent directly to OWCP, not the Postal Service.

Once you have the file number, you can mail the medical information – test results, medical narratives etc. directly to:

Office of Workers' Compensation Programs  
PO Box 8300  
London, KY 40742

Please follow these steps should the years of being a letter carrier begin to cause you pains and limitations. I am available to answer any of your questions. The questions I cannot answer will be forwarded to our OWCP specialist at our Region 9 National Business Agent's Office.

## Quick Hits:

### Information you should know

- \* CCAs converted to career (PTF) should have received cash-out for annual leave.
- \* There is no probation for the newly converted CCAs to PTF.

**Look forward to talking to you again on the next *Around The Horn***



# Contract Signed for Sale of Hall

With the guidance of Mr. Tyler Hudson, Real Estate Attorney, we have made a contract that is in our best interest. We have had negotiations with the buyers who are a development company, ONYX+EAST, since January. We look forward to the developments coming and moving forward on improving our service to the members. Yours in service, Lorraine McMillion, Ch. Trustee



Trustees: José Oliva, Lori McMillion, and Jim Good

## BIRDSEYE View

This article is dedicated to the values of union membership, both as active carriers and the benefits of remaining a member in retirement. First and foremost for active members, the value of job protection and representation is a benefit that many members take for granted but could be taken away at anytime by aggressive legislation designed to diminish middle class jobs and their hard fought-for benefits. In retirement those who choose to continue membership still receive representation that fights to maintain the benefits that you have paid into and invested in to support you in your life outside of the workplace and at a very minimal dues rate, currently about \$2.10 per month or \$25.20 per year.

**Let us look at some benefits that you only receive as a union member whether active or retired:**

NALC Health Benefit Plan, the Mutual Benefit Association, (life insurance for members and family), and the NALC Members App for your cell phone. These are just some of the member benefits that are there for your protection and the protection of your families. NALC also allows all members to participate in the scholarship program for their children who are planning to go

to college.

NALC provides an accident death benefit for all NALC members. The NALC group insurance coverage has been provided since 1985. All active, retired, and city carrier assistants of the NALC in good standing are eligible for the benefit. It also includes other non-supervisory postal career service employees. The basic benefit coverage is \$5,000 and there is no cost to members.

There is some benefit for everyone who needs protection for themselves and their family.

On the legislative side, NALC has a Congressional District Liaison in every congressional district of the federal government nationwide to continue discussion with our representatives on US Postal issues as well as working conditions and benefits for active and retired members that include postal reform legislation.

As a member of the National Association of Letter Carriers both active and retired, know that at work or retirement you will always have an old dog in the fight to protect you and your family, and keep you **worry free!**



Alan Peacock  
Financial Secretary  
Branch 599

During the past year and a half, we have taken a very lenient effort to protect deferred missing dues beyond our usual policy during COVID-19. The time has come where this policy has made great progress to protect our members especially those who have our health benefits to protect you and your families.

This is your responsibility to do your part, pay your dues, keep updating your address if changed and phone number that is current, and always inform your NALC Branch if you are injured, on the job or off the job disability. The other thing you are responsible to do is notify your Branch if you are deployed for military duty with a copy of your orders.

The alternative when you fail to do your part is cancelation of membership that keeps you protected for you and your families, and that is not what your union wants for any of our members or their families.

Fraternally and Faithfully,  
*Alan Peacock*  
Financial Secretary

# Unionism – The Dispute Resolution Process – Article 15 National Agreement

One of the main jobs of a union steward is to protect the membership by ensuring contract compliance from management. This is the most important job of the steward, and it is where they will spend most of their union time when defending members from unwarranted discipline actions from management.

That said, it falls on the steward as well as the individual member to become familiar with the complexities of the Dispute Resolution Process as detailed in Article 15 of the National Agreement.

Article 15 details the various steps in the Dispute Resolution Process as well as the time limits for grievance actions to be taken by the union. It is important for all union members to be aware of the time limits for grievance actions as they are not suggestions, they are iron clad rules. Failure to abide by the time limits detailed in the Dispute Resolution Process shall be cause for the defeat of any filed grievance issue. Each step of the process has its own time limit, so one must be aware of the time limit for the particular step of the process where their grievance may be at that particular time.

The steps of the process are as follows:

**Step 1: Informal A** – the grievance issue is filed at this step when an issue is known or reasonably should have been known about. (Example: A carrier is given a Letter of Discipline; the time limit starts the next day after issue.)

The time limit for this step of the process is 14 days from when one knew or reasonably should have known about the issue. In discipline issues this is why it is important to notify your steward as soon as you receive any disciplinary action. While I am aware that you are

not required to sign any discipline letter, it is in your best interests to sign and date the discipline letter when it has been issued to you as it sets the start of the time limits for your grievance and it locks management into the time they issued the letter, thus preventing them from attempting to state a different date of issue which could affect your time limits. Remember, signing the issued discipline is not an admission of guilt, it is simply an acknowledgement of receipt of the issued discipline and nothing else.

After the Informal A hearing on the grievance is held there are two ways the grievance can go: 1 – *Settlement* where the parties agree to settle the issue at this level and the settlement shall be committed to written form and signed by both parties thus resolving the grievance issue. 2 – *Impasse* where the parties disagree on the issue and cannot find any middle ground so they will agree to disagree and impasse the case to the next step of the process. At this point the time limits for the union to appeal the case forward to the next step of the process is 7 days, day one being the day after the decision to impasse is agreed upon. The union will provide copies of the entire case file with an appeal request to the Installation Head or their designated representative within the 7-day period. Once the appeal has been received by management, they have 7 days to respond to the union and schedule the hearing at the next step of the process.

**Step 2: Formal A** – is the second step of the process where the grievance is heard by the Installation Head or the designated representative and the Union Formal A representative. The parties will address the issues and contractual guidelines and attempt to

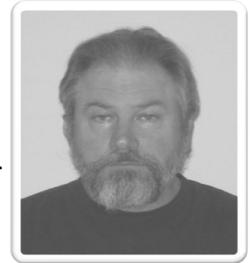
come to a resolution of the issue.

One change happens to the grievance at this step and that is the grievance, which belonged to the individual at the Informal A hearing now becomes the union's grievance at Formal A. The parties are free to bring in additional information to help make their respective cases and if the parties are in agreement, they may jointly interview witnesses, and in removal cases they may present 2 witnesses in addition to any agreed upon witnesses that they interview jointly.

At the conclusion of the Formal A hearing the parties will reach one of 3 positions: 1- *Settlement* as previously discussed it will be annotated in written form. 2- *Remand* is a position where the parties agree that the case file has not been fully developed and the parties agree that it is in the best interests of the parties and the process as a whole if the case is sent back to the Informal A level for further development and possible resolve at that level of the process. 3- *Impasse* as previously discussed above, the parties will write letters of contentions for their own positions and sign the associated paperwork (Form 8190).

At this time the union, being the moving party, has time limits of 7 days to process the case package for appeal to the next step of the process. Many managers will try to tell you that you must mail it out together with them after the hearing, but this is not so. The steward will prepare the case file for appeal by gathering all the documents used in the hearing process and assembling them in a logical order,

(Continued on page 6)



**Brian Obst**  
Vice President  
Branch 599

## The McEndrees retired!



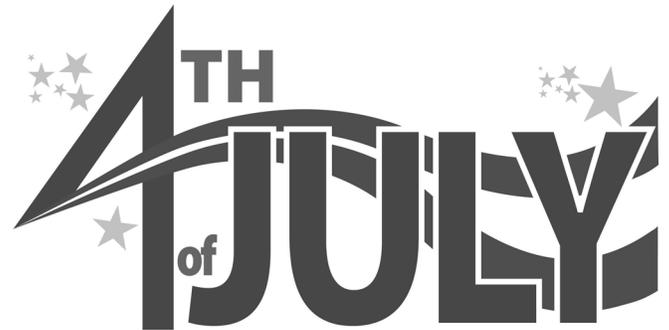
George, Tony Diaz, and Debbie

### George and Debbie McEndree

[TCA Hyde Park; Sulphur Springs] are believed to be the first married couple to receive their gratuity at the same Branch meeting (June) in the history of Branch 599. This follows the first brothers, David and Eddie Berroth, a few months ago, to receive their gratuity together.

*Congratulations, George and Debbie!*

## Stay safe and healthy as you enjoy the



Independence Day has been a federal holiday since 1941.

On July 2, 1776, the Continental Congress voted in favor of independence and two days later, delegates from the 13 colonies adopted the Declaration of Independence. From 1776 to now, July 4 has been celebrated as the birth of our independence.

This year, the 4th of July is on a Sunday, so the federal holiday will be observed on Monday, July 5. *Enjoy!*

## Unionism – The Dispute Resolution Process – Article 15 National Agreement

*(Continued from page 5)*

number all the pages and prepare a table of contents to go along with the package. Prior to sending the appeal to the next step, the union has the option of writing a letter of additions and corrections to address any new information that they are adding to the package or to address any information management may have added or brought up at Formal A that had not been previously addressed. The letter must be sent to the Step B team with the entire case package, a copy of the entire case file must also be sent to the management Formal A representative at the same time, and management has the opportunity to respond by letter, with a copy being sent to the union prior to a decision being reached at the next step of

the process. If management delays responding and the case has been decided at the next step before they respond, they lose the right to respond.

This article has covered the first two steps of the Dispute Resolution Process which most members will access at some time during their postal careers. Next month I will address the next two steps of the process: Step B Hearing and Arbitration Hearing. The information referenced in this article can be found in the JCAM (Joint Contract Administration Manual) which is the agreed upon interpretation of the National Agreement. The JCAM can be found in every station because both the national parties agreed to each pay one half of the cost to provide every office

with a copy and it is for all craft employees to be able to reference as well as all management members to review in an attempt to help resolve disputes prior to them becoming grievances. Additionally, NALC members can also find the JCAM on the NALC website at [nalc.org](http://nalc.org) so they can review it at their leisure. I highly recommend that you take the time to start reading through this manual as it is what sets the guidelines for your employment and the more you know the better it is for you. Like I always say.....  
**Knowledge is the Key!**

Until next month,  
*Brian Obst*  
Vice President



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**NOTICE**

Meetings are subject to change  
due to any upsurges of COVID-19.

**Shop Stewards will Meet**

Tuesday 7 PM

June 29

August 3

**Executive Board Meets**

Thursday 6:30 PM

July 1

August 5

**Branch 599 Meetings**

Thursday 7:30 PM

July 1

August 5

September 2

October 7

November 4

December 2

**Retirees Breakfasts**

Monday *Date to be Announced* 9 AM

Denny's Restaurant

at Dale Mabry & Spruce

2004 N Dale Mabry Highway, Tampa

Tuesday *Date to be Announced* 8 AM

Bob Evans Restaurant off Fletcher

12272 Morris Bridge Road, Temple Terrace 33637



**A.R. Tony Huerta Branch 599**

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Tampa Letter Carrier  
Volume 20 • Issue 7 • July 2021

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