



NATIONAL POSTAL MAIL HANDLERS UNION

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2025 Contract Update #16

Negotiations Move to Interest Arbitration

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You are reading the sixteenth Contract Update produced and distributed by the NPMHU during the course of the 2025 negotiations. These updates, along with the Union’s magazine and monthly bulletins, will keep mail handlers throughout the country informed and involved in the issues raised during this round of bargaining.

Collective bargaining between the NPMHU and the Postal Service over the terms of the 2025 National Agreement has reached a new stage, as the NPMHU has initiated the process for starting interest arbitration under Section 1207(c) of the Postal Reorganization Act (PRA), as amended in 2006. It is through that arbitration that the terms of the 2025 agreement will be set.

The upcoming arbitration will be conducted under the supervision of a three-member panel, with a neutral arbitrator serving as chair of the panel. The parties are currently discussing selection of the neutral arbitrator; if no agreement is reached, the parties will ask the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service (FMCS) to produce a list of potential arbitrators, and the parties will strike names from that list until one remains.

The arbitration phase of the dispute resolution process follows more than a year of negotiations, including additional rounds of discussions that took place following the Union’s declaration of impasse. Notwithstanding those efforts, we remain – as we previously reported – far apart on key economic issues and it is unlikely that further discussions will result in a negotiated agreement.

What has also complicated the negotiations are the agreements that the Postal Service reached with the American Postal Workers Union in 2024 and the arbitrated agreement with the National Association of Letters Carriers that was decided in 2025. Furthermore, the NALC is also currently negotiating a successor agreement to that arbitrated award. The status of the bargaining agreements for our three sister postal unions have an effect on what is already an exceedingly complicated process regarding the NPMHU-USPS contract dispute.

With history as a guide, it likely will take several months to schedule, implement, and conduct the NPMHU arbitration process. To the extent possible, the National Office will keep all Mail Handlers informed of developments through the various modes of NPMHU communications, including monthly bulletins, Contract Updates, and website postings (at www.npmhu.org). Please continue to read these communications as they are distributed.

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