



National Postal Mail Handlers Union

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January 3, 2019

TO: Local Union Presidents
FROM: Paul V. Hogrogian, National President *PVH*
RE: Update on Government Shutdown

As a result of the ongoing government shutdown, please make note of the attached list of government managed benefits and their possible impact on Mail Handlers. We will continue to monitor the impact of this action on federal agencies. If the shutdown is prolonged, additional information will be compiled, updated, and distributed as warranted.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. Please feel free to contact the National Office should you have any questions or concerns.

cc: National Executive Board

Impact of Federal Government Shutdown on Mail Handlers

As all Mail Handlers know, the U.S. Postal Service remains open and operational during the Federal Government shutdown that started on December 22, 2018. Here is a listing of other federal agencies or services of most interest to Mail Handlers.

National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) – The NLRB was fully funded through October 1, 2019 in September 2018, and therefore remains open and operational.

U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) – The DOL is fully funded and operational.

Office of Workers' Compensation (OWCP) – Employees at OWCP will continue to work during the shutdown, and therefore little impact is expected.

Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) – As a component of the DOL, OSHA remains fully operational during this government shutdown.

Health Insurance (FEHB) - No impact expected, although new enrollments or changes in coverage, for example because of a Qualifying Life Event, may be delayed at the Office of Personnel Management (OPM). The effective date for any change would still be the first day of the first full pay period in January.

FEDVIP – If you are enrolled in the Federal Employees Dental and Vision Insurance Program (FEDVIP), your coverage will continue during the government shutdown.

FSAFEDS – Your Federal Flexible Spending Account Program (FSAFEDS) payroll allotments should not be affected, but if you have questions about how the shutdown impacts your FSAFEDS enrollment or claims, please contact WageWorks, Inc. (who administers these processes for FSAFEDS).

Retirement (CSRS or FERS) – Retirement Services at the Office of Personnel Management are funded by the Trust Fund, not by annual appropriations, so these employees will still be working normal hours during the government shutdown.

Life Insurance (FEGLI) – No impact expected. Coverage continues for 12 consecutive months in a nonpay status without cost to the employee or to the agency. Neither the employee nor the agency incurs a debt during this period of nonpay.

Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) – The TSP will continue its normal daily operations during the federal government shutdown.

U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) – The EEOC is currently closed because of the federal government shutdown. While the federal government is closed, a limited number of EEOC services are available. Please note during the shutdown, the EEOC is not able to staff toll-free numbers: 1-800-669-4000 (voice); 1-800-669-6820 (TTY); or 1-844-234-5122 (ASL Video Phone). If you are trying to contact the EEOC, or have existing business with the agency, please refer to <https://www.eeoc.gov/shutdown.cfm>.

Merit Systems Protection Board (MSPB) – The processing of all appeals and other pleadings is suspended, regardless of whether such matters are pending in a Regional or Field Office, before the full Board in Washington, DC, or before an administrative law judge. No personnel are available in any MSPB office to answer inquiries during the entirety of a shutdown. MSPB's e-Appeal Online system also is not available.

MSPB understands that this situation requires adjusting certain deadlines and other processing requirements in many appeals. Therefore, all filing and processing deadlines will be extended by the number of calendar days MSPB is shut down. This extension applies to all deadlines before the MSPB, including those at the initial appeal and petition for review levels. Because the extension is automatic, parties are not required to show good cause and should not request an extension. This extension applies to deadlines in all matters before the Board, even if they involve agencies or employees who are not otherwise affected by this partial shutdown of the Federal Government. This automatic extension does not apply, however, to any deadlines that passed before the date of the shutdown.