

The Local Line

"A PPA Award Winning Publication"

The Official Voice of the
Northwest Illinois Area Local

Floor Edition

Update by: Jackie Engelhart

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Palatine Clerks to Move on May 9th.

We were informed on 4-16-09 that letters had been sent out to the 74 impacted Palatine Clerks and the target date for moving them is May 9th. We were previously told the move date would be May 23rd as they did not expect to have all of the Palatine Mail Handler residuals in time for a May 9th move, but due to a reduction in the number of Mail Handler residuals from 38 to 28, the move was bumped back up to May 9th. 32 Clerks will be reassigned to other crafts within Palatine and 42 will be reassigned outside of Palatine. The number 74 will be reduced by any Clerk attrition prior to May 9th. Clerks excessed from the craft will retain saved grade to their former salary level and should file a written request to return to the first vacancy in their former craft and installation to maintain retreat rights to the Clerk craft at Palatine.

Correction on Who Stays at Palatine...

We have been telling impacted Clerks that the contract requires junior Clerks to be assigned to residuals within Palatine in other crafts, and senior Clerks are to be reassigned outside the facility because of language in Article 12.5 as follows - "make reassignments of excess full-time employees who meet the minimum qualifications for vacant assignments in other crafts in the same installation; and "Reassignments to other installations after making reassignments within the installation." In the past management has reassigned junior Clerks into residuals within their office and excessed senior Clerks out. To clarify any confusion we contacted Regional Coordinator Sharyn Stone and NBA John Clark for clarification. They agreed that all of the impacted Clerks should preference by seniority on the listed residuals including those in Palatine. Sometimes the contract is fair.

Part-Time Regulars

"Part-Time. Employees in this category ...shall be assigned to regular schedules of less than forty(40) hours in a service week, or shall be available to work flexible hours as assigned by the Employer during the course of a service week."

Flexible hours refers to Part-Flexible Clerks, which we do not have in facilities with over 200-man years. Regular schedules of less than 40 hours per week refers to Part-Time Regular Clerk bids which are normally posted as 6 hours per day and 30 hours per week. The option of changing to a PTR in lieu of involuntary reassignment was added in the last contract, but unless you want to work less than 40 hours you should not volunteer to change to a PTR.

Senior Volunteers in Lieu of ...

Clerks not subject to the excessing may volunteer for reassignment in lieu of the senior Clerk subject to the excessing and will go with the seniority of the senior impacted Clerk who will not be excessed.

Jackie Engelhart
President
Alan J. Czerwinski
News Director

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Letter in the Palatine Lobby

There is a large copy of a management letter in the Palatine lobby-Request to be Reassigned into Full-Time Withheld Assignment in Lieu of Junior Regular. This information letter is for non-impacted Clerks who may want to volunteer in lieu of an impacted Clerk for reassignment outside of the facility. It states you will not have retreat rights to your previous facility or position, once you submit your volunteer slip it is irrevocable, and your failure to fully qualify for the new assignment may result in your removal from the Postal Service.

Meeting to be Scheduled with Impacted Clerks

Management has instructed the impacted Clerks to return their selections to the district at Carol Stream by Friday, April 24th, which gives them only one week to make their choices. We have asked for a meeting in the next day or two to answer questions. In the meantime all impacted Clerks should be clear on the fact that they can preference on all listed residual vacancies, both inside and outside of Palatine and these preferences will be assigned by seniority. If you do not submit a sufficient number of choices you could be assigned to a residual vacancy by management. It is not advisable to change to PTR because a Part-Time Regular works less than 40 hours per week. You must submit a written request to maintain your retreat rights back to the craft and installation. If you choose to volunteer in lieu of an impacted Clerk understand that you assume the seniority of the junior impacted Clerk in your new assignment and you do not have retreat rights.

Carol Stream Labor-Management Meeting on 4-28

We didn't want to schedule a Labor-Management meeting with the new A/Plant Manager right away, but she has been here long enough to start making some changes so she should be ready to respond to concerns about those changes. We have already communicated our desire to have bids posted to replace the assignments held by the tour 2 compressed Clerks. Every time I walk the main aisle in automation I am asked when bids will be posted. There is no reason not to post bids as these Clerks have been working in the same assignments since 1-3-09. We have some concerns about the serious changes made in light duty assignments in the last few weeks under the A/Plant Manager with some light duty assignments given for less than 8 hours, some for as little as 2 hours per day. A new management letter has gone out stating that the employee must use their leave while awaiting a response on their light duty request, which has not been done in the past. I know Nancy is concerned with productivity in manual flats and the 12% BPI she quoted to me, and that may be why she is looking to change some flat cases to flat racks like the ones at Palatine. She says some Clerks with no restrictions are using chairs in manual flats. Flats has long been an area of accommodation for injured Clerks at Carol Stream and a unit with few bids. Management has not posted bids because of the number of injured Clerks assigned to flats but if more bids were posted some of the injured Clerks might be able to get bids in flats. Injured Clerks are productive and some bids would be a win-win.

New Staffing Packaged Shared with Unions at Busse...

Plant Manager Ruby Branch and Cardiss Collins In-Plant Support Manager Matt Perry met with both Unions last week to share the new staffing package prepared by Chicago District In-Plant Support. The plan calls for an increase in SPBS bids for Clerks and the addition of three newly created Data Collection Technician bids, one on each tour. The main disagreement we have with the plan is the reduction in the number of General Clerk bids from four to two. Management has not scheduled a meeting with APWU which would be necessary before moving forward with any of these proposals. The good thing is the plan calls for no reduction in the actual number of craft employees in both the Clerk and Mail Handler crafts, so no employee will be excessed out of the facility. The mail volume decline is behind some of the more recent Clerk excessings but this won't happen at Busse as the number of Clerks (87) has dipped well below the former authorized complement (110) and there is no need to excess Clerks. The MVS and Maintenance crafts are still understaffed at Busse but residual vacancies for Tractor-Trailer Operators and Custodians are in withholding due to excessing. Custodial jobs have been included with the choices offered to the Palatine Clerks so some of these jobs may be filled on May 9th.

Retirement Seminar Date Changed to May 2nd...

Due to a last minute scheduling conflict for our special speaker, John R. Smith, we decided to change the date rather than have a substitute speaker. The date is the only thing changed. *JR*