

# New Jersey postal facility set to close as part of nationwide restructuring of the US Postal Service

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*Are postal facilities being closed in your area? Contact the WSWWS to tell us how you and your coworkers have been affected. All submissions will be kept anonymous.*

The post office's Greater Newark New Jersey Processing and Distribution Center (PDC) in Kearny, New Jersey is slated to close early next year, threatening hundreds of jobs. Its operations will be consolidated in the Jersey City Network Distribution Center (NDC), which will become the Regional Processing & Distribution Center (RPDC) for the region.

In 2022, this facility employed as many as 800 mail handlers, mail processing clerks, equipment operators, and other workers and supervisors. Of these, the roughly 250 PSEs (Postal Support Employees) non-career or temporary employees were given letters telling them that they will be terminated with no recourse.

Career employees are being offered "noncompetitive consideration" for lateral or downgraded positions at other facilities within 50 miles of the closed facility. Those who do not find an equivalent position to the one which they now hold will have to accept downgraded positions to keep a job, with their current pay grade guaranteed for only two years. Those who don't take an available position will be terminated.

The situation at Kearny is just a taste of what much of the USPS work force will face in the near future. It is part of the misnamed "Delivering for America" program, a vast restructuring effort which will close thousands of local post offices and shed tens of thousands of jobs.

A key component of the plan is the restructuring of

the USPS network along Amazon lines, centered around a smaller number of huge distribution centers. According to a recent article on the Save the Post Office website, the initial wave of consolidations is supposed to be accomplished by June of 2024, and will involve the creation of 13 Sorting and Distribution Centers (SDCs) at various locations across the country. Thirty-seven existing post offices will be converted to "spoke" facilities, sending their routes to the SDC hubs. SDCs, in turn, will feed into larger Local Processing Centers and Regional Processing and Distribution Centers.

In New Jersey, three new SDCs are planned. These are: the New Brunswick SDCs, located in Edison, the Newark SDC and the last in Trenton. Additional ones may be created, depending on information gathered during the initial process.

The first of these to be created, termed a "pilot," will be the New Brunswick SDC, to be housed in the existing Kilmer facility. It will subsume 11 existing local post offices, some of which will likely be closed, with consequences similar to those at Kearny.

What is happening in New Jersey is only the beginning of the wholesale onslaught against postal workers across the country, that is DFA. DeJoy has stated that his goal is to reduce the USPS workforce by 50,000. This is to be accomplished by drastic reorganization and the creation of increasingly onerous and poorly paid working conditions. That would be in addition to the 270,000 jobs that have already been eliminated since 2000. All of this is aimed at increasing "efficiency," with the ultimate goal of privatization, regardless of the impact on postal workers or mail service.

The postal unions, APWU, NALC and NRLCA, have openly collaborated with USPS in developing and implementing DFA. Meanwhile, letter carriers are working under brutal wage cuts and speedups through new electronic monitoring systems such as RRECS, which has led to cuts in annual pay of up to \$20,000 per year for rural carriers, and TIAREAP, which is used to discipline city carriers for “stationary events.”

In the August issue of its *Postal Record* Magazine, the NALC even published an article *promoting* DFA, carrying the lying headline: “There Will Be No Post Office Closures or Employee Layoffs as Part of Our S&DC Roll Outs.”

In response to collusion by the union bureaucrats, workers have formed the USPS Workers Rank-and-File Committee to organize opposition to DFA and prepare joint actions with other key sections of the working class, including letter carriers in other national postal systems around the world, where workers are also facing huge cuts.



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