

Massachusetts postal workers form rank-and-file committee: “USPS is a public service, not a profit-making enterprise”

Springfield NDC Workers Rank-and-File Committee
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The following statement was produced by the newly-formed Springfield Network Distribution Center Workers Rank-and-File Committee, a group of postal workers at a major distribution center in Springfield, Massachusetts. The group is affiliated to the national USPS Workers Rank-and-File Committee and the International Workers Alliance of Rank-and-File Committees.

To join the committee, or for help forming your own, fill out the form at the bottom of the page.

We are a rank-and-file committee focused on empowering postal workers to have a real voice on the job. Through unity and mutual support, we fight for fairness, dignity and respect in the workplace.

The United States Postal Service has continuously turned a blind eye to egregious safety hazards in its facilities across the country. Inadequately maintained HVAC systems, mold and mildew, disease-carrying pests, asbestos and uncleared walkways and parking lots are just few of the ongoing threats to workers’ safety.

This did not come out of nowhere. Decades of disastrous economic policy and the prioritization of war and corporate interests over the needs of working people have caused the current financial crisis within the United States Postal Service. Management is suspending employer contributions to our pensions, turning our retirement money into a slush fund.

This manufactured “liquidity emergency” is the product of the 1971 corporatization of the service and recent restructuring programs such as “Delivering for America,” which have increased precarious non-career staffing, intensified workloads, and produced unsafe workplaces and massive losses in first-class mail

revenue. Meanwhile, management and both parties in Congress demand further austerity.

This is only the beginning. Postmaster General David Steiner claims that USPS could run out of money as early as next February. This means that, over the next few months, they will try to carry out massive cuts in order to make USPS “profitable.”

But USPS is a public service, not a profit-making enterprise. Hundreds of thousands of living-wage jobs, employment for veterans, and a national lifeline for seniors and those living in rural communities are at stake. The situation is the same on an international level, from Canada to the United Kingdom, Germany and Australia. Some of these postal services have already been privatized.

The lack of support that postal workers have received from postal unions regarding workplace safety, contractual and legal rights and economic stability is unacceptable. Workers as well as the general public continue to be kept in the dark regarding the true financial status of the USPS and the intentions of corporations such as Amazon, UPS and FedEx when it comes to the future.

The above-mentioned factors mean one thing: we will continue to lose ground unless we form independent rank-and-file committees to advocate for our rights, investigate violations and wrongdoings, address safety concerns and educate our coworkers as well as our families, friends and neighbors to fight back against political and corporate interests that threaten to steal our livelihoods and create a bleak and desperate future for our children and grandchildren. Therefore, we reject the current, non-democratic union structure and strive to build a movement that is by the worker, for the

worker.

Our mission is to unite postal workers worldwide to build collective power, protect our rights, and improve wages, benefits and working conditions through solidarity, transparency and democratic action to actively counter the efforts of the 1 percent.

We assert the right of postal workers to take decisions affecting our jobs, safety and the public interest into our own hands. Our immediate demands include: **no mandatory cuts to service days or routes; no privatization; no mass layoffs; an immediate wage increase to restore real pay; protection of pensions and health benefits; an end to workplace surveillance and punitive “productivity” regimes; and full transparency of any company or government plans affecting the USPS.**

These demands are not reforms offered by management or union negotiators—they are non-negotiable red lines that require mass, democratic mobilization from below.

Our committee is independent of union apparatus, political parties and management. It is democratic, transparent and accountable to the shop floor. We reject the model of secret bargaining that trades away our interests for the sake of “stability.” Instead, we fight to build initiative and organization from below that gives us the power to fight.

We will work diligently to coordinate efforts with workers across international lines, removing barriers and misconceptions that have been deliberately put in place by those that seek to divide us.

IMMEDIATE ACTIONS:

- Conduct workplace meetings out of view of management to create plans of action and keep each other informed.
- Create secure contact lists as well as mutual-aid funds to support workers who take action.
- Publicize information regarding the abuse and exploitation of workers as well as the state of the postal service; adequately document safety and service failures; and circulate reports to build trust and support from the public.
- Initiate and maintain contact with other RFCs, the USPS Rank-and-File Committee network, and the International Workers Alliance of Rank-and-File Committees for collective efforts and solidarity.

This is not an isolated fight. Postal workers in the

UK, Canada, Germany, Australia and the US face identical attacks. We will affiliate with and coordinate with them through the IWA-RFC. International unity breaks the isolation imposed by national union bureaucracies and multiplies our leverage against multinational capital.

If you are ready to organize in your workplace, contact the USPS Rank-and-File Committee and build links with workers who have organized similar committees across the logistics sector.

Our power lies in our numbers and our ability to garner public support. The decision that postal workers across the globe must make is clear: accept ongoing abuse and economic destruction at the hands of unethical management and union complacency, or take control of our struggle, build democratic rank-and-file power, and link our fight to the international working class movement for a society that values human need over private profit. Join us.



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