

Fourth death in 2 years at Palmetto, Georgia, USPS facility: Demarcus Little dies after reporting feeling unwell

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Are you a postal or logistics worker? Contact the USPS Workers Rank-and-File Committee with information about conditions at your facility. All submissions will be kept anonymous.

Postal worker Demarcus Little collapsed and died at the Palmetto Regional Processing and Distribution Center (RPDC) in Georgia Wednesday night, according to local media reports.

According to a coworker's account reported by CBS News Atlanta, Little told a supervisor he was not feeling well and was dizzy, then collapsed shortly afterward.

Little was the father of a 21-year-old son, Demarcus Jr., and a four-year-old daughter, Lauren. Those who knew him described him as kind, considerate and an all-around great guy.

Little's death is the fourth at the Palmetto RPDC in the last two years. Whatever the cause of Little's death may have been, this is a staggering toll that exposes conditions not only inside the one-million-square-foot, state-of-the-art facility, but across USPS as a whole.

Workers took to social media to express outrage and grief on social media. On Facebook, one worker wrote: "The stress level is real at USPS and UPS which I retired from. The management doesn't care about employees' health or safety." Another commented: "This is happening way too often. How many of the USPS employees have to die before action is taken." A third reported: "Working there really messed with my son's mental health. It's toxic!" Yet another wrote simply: "All they care about is getting the mail out, not the employees."

At the same facility, Russell Scruggs Jr., 44, died last November when he suffered a cardiac event, fell and

struck his head. A supervisor had denied Scruggs' request to go, who reported he was not feeling well.

Coworkers told the WSWWS that supervisors stood around him without administering CPR, that no defibrillator was available and that it took over an hour for an ambulance to arrive after initially going to the wrong entrance. While the autopsy classified the manner of death as "natural," the circumstances were entirely preventable.

Eric Smith, 59, collapsed and died of a heart attack in the lunchroom on June 3, 2025. Another worker died at the facility just one week later; their name and cause of death was never made public.

Shannon Barnes, 48, collapsed during her night shift on August 18, 2024, after telling a coworker she wasn't feeling well. Because there is no cell phone service inside the building, someone had to run outside to call 911. It took 30 minutes for paramedics to reach her. She was already dead when she arrived at the hospital.

As the WSWWS wrote after Smith's death, a medical emergency in this facility "becomes a test of a system already at its limits." The USPS Office of Inspector General's July 2025 report documented disregarded safety issues, broken equipment left unrepaired and chronic absenteeism.

The USPS Workers Rank-and-File Committees, a nationwide group of workers formed in opposition to both management and pro-corporate union bureaucrats, is carrying out an independent investigation. Citing a source, it reported that the Palmetto facility "has never had written safety protocols." Billions were spent on automated equipment, the committee found, "yet there is no money for medical equipment, on-site health professionals, or even basic safety procedures," the

investigation concluded.

These conditions are the product of USPS's 10-year "Delivering for America" (DFA) restructuring program. Since its launch in 2021, DFA has produced chronic understaffing, inadequate training, operational failures and service disruptions at new Regional Processing and Distribution Centers (RPDCs) across the country. The Office of the Inspector General (OIG) audits repeatedly identified serious problems at all of the new RPDCs. Palmetto is among the worst.

The consequences extend beyond delayed mail. Since opening in 2024, the Palmetto facility has become associated with four worker deaths. Little's collapse is the latest indication that a workplace already criticized for operational dysfunction remains incapable of protecting the people whose labor keeps it running.

The same pattern extends beyond Georgia. On November 8, 2025, Nick Acker, a 36-year-old maintenance mechanic, was crushed to death inside a mail-sorting machine at the Detroit Network Distribution Center in Allen Park, Michigan. His body was not found for six to eight hours.

OSHA fined USPS just \$26,481 for Acker's death—a reduction from the initial \$66,200, roughly 10 seconds of USPS revenue and likely less than half of Acker's yearly salary.

At the Morgan PDC in Manhattan, a 28-year veteran died on the overnight shift in December; neither USPS nor the unions issued any public statement.

In Forest Park, Illinois, Keywan Glenn, 44, told his supervisor he was not feeling well, was brushed off, and collapsed at the time clock. No AED was apparently available. It took 15–20 minutes for an ambulance to arrive.

Days after Acker's death, Postmaster General David Steiner boasted of cutting 12 million labor hours and pledged "full steam ahead" in the agency's restructuring. He said nothing about worker safety.

The union bureaucracy has responded with silence. The APWU has issued no statement on the Palmetto deaths or on Acker's death in Detroit. The National Postal Mail Handlers Union has been equally silent. At Manhattan's Morgan PDC, workers reported that management and union officials focused on taking employees off the clock after a worker died rather than informing them about what had happened.

Having endorsed Delivering for America and

collaborated in its implementation, the postal unions function not as organizations of struggle but as partners of management while conditions continue to deteriorate and the death toll mounts.

Workers are fighting back. In April, postal workers at the Springfield, Massachusetts, NDC formed a local committee affiliated with the national USPS Workers Rank-and-File Committee, citing the APWU's failure to enforce contractual rights or respond to safety hazards.

The Springfield committee's founding statement declared: "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." It asserted "the right of postal workers to take decisions affecting our jobs, safety and the public interest into our own hands."

A statement by the National USPS Rank and File Committee issued earlier this year advanced immediate safety demands: defibrillators and nurses in every facility, an end to the blocking of cell phone signals, written emergency plans subject to workers' oversight and strict enforcement of lockout/tagout procedures. It stressed that these are "inseparable from broader demands needed to protect both jobs and lives by ending overwork."

As the committee warned: "The only way we will see justice is if we reveal the truth, hold accountable those responsible for the conditions that put us in harm's way, and set up our own shop floor organizations to take control."

Postal workers must build rank-and-file committees in every facility to expose unsafe conditions and place safety under workers' control. Contact the WSWs and the USPS Workers Rank-and-File Committee to report conditions and join this struggle.



To contact the WSWs and the Socialist Equality Party visit:

[wsws.org/contact](https://www.wsws.org/contact)