Pandemic forces cancellation of the NALC National Convention

The COVID-19 pandemic has forced the cancellation of the NALC’s 72nd National Convention. At the direction of the NALC Executive Council, Headquarters has notified the convention center, convention hotels and various convention vendors of its decision to cancel the convention, which was to be held Aug. 17-21 in Honolulu, HI.

The Council made the unprecedented decision after it became clear that the state government of Hawaii could not guarantee that gatherings with the scale that would be allowed in August, nor could it be assured that travel to Honolulu would be permitted under the state’s strict quarantine law, which currently requires all travelers to self-isolate for 14 days upon arrival in the islands.

President Rolando thanked the leadership of Honolulu Branch ABC for all their hard work in preparing for the convention and expressed the NALC’s hope that it would be possible to convene in Hawaii in the future. Please see the NALC website for information regarding cancellation of hotels and travel reservations.

No route inspections until at least September

In March, as a result of the inability to social distance during route counts and inspections, NALC agreed with USPS to instruct its field representatives to temporarily halt route inspections until further notice. After continued negotiations with NALC, later in April USPS further notified the area offices that all route inspections scheduled for the rest of the spring would be canceled. This includes retraining from conducting any PS Forms 3996, PS Forms 3838C and special route inspections. Additionally, the Postal Service has now also agreed that any pending implementation of the resolution of Post Office Operations and Management Training would be placed on hold until at least June 6. Since Handbook M 8-10 also states that June, July, August and December are to be excluded from any route counts and inspections, there should be no route inspections until September at soonest. Letter carriers who are subjected to counts and inspections in contradiction to these policies should immediately inform their local union representa-

New coronavirus federal aid package includes funding for USPS and hazard pay for carriers

A new coronavirus aid package was recently released by House Democrats that includes $55 billion in direct funding to the Postal Service. The bill would also remove restrictions on a $136 billion line of credit that was authorized in a previous stimulus package. There is also a hazard pay provision that would include postal employees. Certain members of the Senate and the administration will likely resist many of the provisions of the package once the negoti-
ations for a final bill begin.

“Letter carriers should continue contacting their senators to urge support for funding in the next stimulus pack-

New postmaster general named

On May 6, the U.S. Postal Service Board of Governors announced the selection of Louis DeJoy as the new postmaster general, succeeding current PMG Megan Brennan. PMG Brennan announced her intent to resign in October 2019 but remained in her role while the search for PMG continued. DeJoy is expected to begin serving in his new role effective June 15. He is the first PMG in more than 20 years not to rise through the ranks of the Postal Service. DeJoy is currently president of LD Global Strategies, a real estate development, private equity and consulting company based in Greensboro, NC. He also currently serves as the lead fundraiser for the Republican National Convention. Prior to that, he spent more than 30 years as a very successful CEO in the logistics field. In a statement released on May 2, NALC President Fredric Rolando congratulated Louis DeJoy on his appointment as the 77th postmaster general. “The National Association of Letter Carriers is committed to working in good faith with him to build a relationship based on mutual trust and a shared vision for the future of the Postal Service,” Rolando said. “NALC believes that this shared vision should embrace a strategy to grow a public institution that values its employees and that works with its unions to promote high-quality service, safety, efficiency and a workplace culture of mutual respect.”

USPS Board of Governors loses two members

Board of Governors Vice Chairwoman by David Williams unexpectedly resigned from his position on April 30. It is reported that Governor Williams resigned in protest over the Treasury Department’s inappropriate meddng in the management of the Postal Service. NALC had recently written to the Board members urging them to resist such medd-

Interest arbitration dates scheduled

The interest arbitration hearing dates for a new collective-bargaining agreement scheduled for May, June and July were previously postponed due to the continuing effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. New hearing dates scheduled for September through November have now been confirmed. Neutral arbitrator Dennis Nolan provided the parties sufficient hearing dates for this time period. There continue to be major issues at stake, as the parties still have many unresolved differences regarding economic, operational and workplace issues. NALC’s collective-bargaining goals have not changed. While discussions between NALC and the Postal Service continue, the union proceeds to prepare for arbitration to achieve those goals. The current collective-bargaining agreement remains in full force pending final resolution of the parties’ dispute.

Voluntary temperature-taking being tested in select USPS sites

As the pandemic persists, NALC and the Postal Service continue to discuss potential new temporary policies and procedures to protect letter carriers, other postal employees and customers. One such policy being discussed involves taking the temperature of employees when they are reporting to work.

Beginning May 18, the Postal Service began proof-of-concept testing at a few sites. The testing is solely designed to see whether the equipment works correctly, so the parties can then discuss the feasibility of how and where such a system would work. NALC and USPS are in the process of discussing the relevant policies and procedures that would be followed should the system be implemented in selected sites. The test involves taking the temperatures of employees as they enter the workplace each day using either a camera, from as far as 10 feet away, or by using a handheld scanner.

There are four proof-of-concept test sites. On May 18, testing began at the Menifee, VA PADC, Falls Church, VA Carrier Annex, and the Fairfax, VA main office. Testing will begin at the Oklahoma City, OK PADC on May 25. The tests will run for two weeks.

It is voluntary for employees to have their temperature taken and no health data will be collected or maintained. During the two-week test, if an employee has a temperature of 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit or higher, they will be informed in private and then sent home and paid either emergency paid sick leave or administrative leave until the fever subsides.