

Questions about COVID-19?



Special Assistant to the President Tim McKay

As a union, we have always taken great pride in providing our members and union representatives the resources necessary to assist them with staying informed about the union, their rights, benefits and issues that affect their jobs as letter carriers. Throughout the years, the way NALC communicates with its members has changed greatly. As the rest of the world increased its electronic means of communication, so too did NALC.

Since the NALC website was launched in the 1990s, the goal of our union has been to give all members the information they need online, and in the most convenient form possible. While NALC certainly still utilizes print forms of communication such as *The Postal Record*, the *NALC Bulletin*, and countless NALC-created guides and documents, in general, online versions of those publications are made available to our members as well. Since 2016, when the NALC Member App was introduced, everything available on the NALC website is also readily available to users on their iPhone and Android smartphones. Additionally, NALC also uses various social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter to provide information to our members, and as a means for our members to communicate with each other and with Headquarters.

The obvious benefit of electronic forms of communication is the ability to disseminate information quickly. Never has this been more important and useful to NALC members than it currently is during the COVID-19 pandemic. In response to so much new information coming quickly and changing rapidly, NALC created and keeps updated a page on the NALC website dedicated solely to providing such information to letter carriers as they work and live in the midst of the pandemic. At the “COVID-19” page under “News & Research” on the NALC website, you will find:

- President Fredric Rolando’s statements regarding the pandemic
- Links to podcasts in which Executive Vice President Renfro delivers regular updates on COVID-19 issues
- New memorandums of understanding in effect during the pandemic
- All the mandatory standup talks which should have been given in your office
- Information from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
- Information from USPS
- The newly created COVID19@nalc.org resource

Earlier this year, the idea of launching a podcast for NALC members called “You Are the Current Resident” became a reality. The podcast is a conversational one, hosted by Executive Vice President Brian Renfro and Assistant to the President

for Contract Administration Mark Sims, with the goal of both entertaining the listening audience and providing useful information. The latter goal has been of the utmost importance to letter carriers during these unprecedented times. Multiple podcast episodes so far have included such topics as:

- Every COVID-19 related statement from President Rolando
- The importance of social distancing with co-workers and customers
- Changes to scanners that were jointly developed to promote social distancing between letter carriers and their customers
- What to do if supplies such as hand sanitizer, disinfecting wipes, nitrile gloves and/or masks are not made available
- Discussion of the various COVID-19 related memorandums of understanding designed to provide benefits and protection for letter carriers dealing with issues related to the pandemic
- Legislative issues affecting letter carriers and related to COVID-19 stimulus packages
- Answers to questions from NALC members
- Frequent updates related to COVID-19

“A new resource for members to report issues related to, or ask questions about, the pandemic: COVID19@nalc.org”

The “You Are the Current Resident” podcast has quickly become a very popular means for our members to use to stay informed about vital issues that affect their jobs. For those who may have not yet taken advantage of this important resource, you can subscribe to the podcast on Podbean.

NALC also recently introduced a new resource for members to report issues related to, or ask questions about, the COVID-19 pandemic: COVID19@nalc.org. In addition to letter carriers being able to contact their shop steward, branch officer or national business agent, this email address is another way for letter carriers to receive help. Many NALC members have used this new resource to ask any and every question you can imagine related to the pandemic, and to report problems such as a lack of supplies to keep themselves safe or failure of their managers to keep their workplace safe.

Our members receive quick responses from one of several dedicated Headquarters letter carrier staff members and officers who monitor the incoming emails. COVID19@nalc.org has proven to be a vital resource for letter carriers, in addition to their local and regional representatives, as they deal with the effects of working through this pandemic.

NALC is committed to providing our members with all of the resources necessary to stay informed about their jobs, now and into the future. If you have not been taking advantage of these resources, I encourage you to do so now. Just like the old saying goes, “Knowledge is Power,” and NALC strives to provide each of our members with that power.