



## The Pavement Pounder

### Branch 111 NALC

### “The Wasatch Branch”

Publication

2026.2

February

edition

The President's Report

## Comfort Stops

I have recently taken several phone calls from Letter Carrier who were being pressured to not use the restroom during their workday. I have written articles about this in the past, and it is time to do so again.

Letter Carriers have the right to use the restroom whenever they need to, for as long as it takes. There is no limit to how many times you can go, nor does any limit exist for how long it takes you to go. This is an inalienable right, and if we must fight for it, we will always win.

If your manager or supervisor is ignorant enough to instruct you to not use the restroom when you need to, then my recommendation is to immediately inform your Shop Steward of the improper instruction (and harassment), and to use Postal Form 1767 (Report of Hazard, Unsafe Condition, or Practice) to document the unsafe work condition. (Form 1767's are found hanging on the wall of every Postal Facility, and Management has 24 hours to respond and address how they will ameliorate the unsafe work condition). Some of the reasons why it is patently unsafe for management to harass us or improperly instruct us regarding the number of trips to the bathroom, or the duration of said trips, are as follows:

1. Failure to use the restroom can result in: Toxic shock, bladder infections, kidney stones, prostate problems, constipation, impacted bowels, gall stones, distracted driving, distracted casing, distracted walking, diabetic problems, as well as countless other issues, all relating to not using the restroom as often as is necessary for good health and safety.

2. Failure to spend enough time in the restroom (forcing the issue, so to speak) can result in: Prostate Problems, Bladder Problems, Hemorrhoids (and many Hemorrhoid related problems which, in deference to the weak of stomach, I shall not print here), sanitary issues (not spending the time to thoroughly wash hands, etc...), and

other health and safety issues.

3. You may wish to include many of the above-mentioned safety issues when filling out a Form 1767.

Now, all of this being said, I do not mean to say that anyone has the right to go to the restroom for any other reason than a biological need or a safety related need. And I do not mean to imply that anyone should spend more time in the restroom than is necessary. If carriers are “hiding” in the restroom, as management has occasionally alleged, then those carriers are an affront to their craft. They should be ashamed to look at themselves in the mirror as they are unnecessarily washing their hands. However, I do not know of any carriers who do this. As I have said before, the more NALC carriers I work with, the more ethical and honorable people I have met.

On a side note, our Local Memorandum of Understanding guarantees us “reasonable wash-up time”, after we have performed “dirty work”. It goes without saying that we also have “reasonable wash-up time” after using the restroom.

The contract further states that during a route count and inspection, “Reasonable comfort stops will not be deducted from the carrier’s actual time.” There is no definition of what is considered “reasonable”, so it will be addressed on a case-by-case basis. **The bottom line is that our personal safety and comfort is a negotiated part of the contract that management should not be attempting to curtail or deny.** It is grievable, winnable, and ultimately a legal requirement under OSHA. Please do not ever allow management to deprive you of this right.

Fraternally,  
Michael Wahlquist  
President  
Branch 111, NALC



# USING ZOOM FOR BRANCH MEETINGS

Since 2020, Zoom has evolved from a temporary "COVID fix" into a vital resource for our branch. I want to be 100% clear: **I fully support Zoom as a permanent option** for those who cannot attend in person. Providing this access is a priority I will always defend. However, I hear your frustrations. I am personally committed to "dialing in" this experience, and I am investing the time and the branch's resources to ensure our technical issues are resolved.

## The Mission: Quality, Security, and Order

To protect the integrity of Branch 111, we are focusing on two key elements:

- ◆ **Technical Reliability:** We are upgrading our hardware to solve issues with sound, video, and connectivity.
- ◆ **Procedural Integrity:** Per our bylaws, we must adhere to Robert's Rules of Order. This means ensuring the integrity of every vote, verifying member eligibility, and maintaining a professional environment.

## The "Member's Side" Checklist

The success of a virtual meeting depends on your setup. To ensure you can participate without interruption, please follow these steps:

- ◆ **Use a Computer:** Mobile phones are more likely to drop feeds or fail to display voting polls.
- ◆ **Use the Zoom App:** Do not join via a web browser, as it often fails to trigger voting features.
- ◆ **Stay Updated:** Ensure your Zoom app is on the latest version to avoid "drop-offs."
- ◆ **One Email, One Identity:** Use the same email to register and log in so we can verify your eligibility.
- ◆ **Arrive Early:** Log in 5–10 minutes early to test your audio and the "Raise Hand" function.
- ◆ **Do Not Share Your Link:** Your invite link will be emailed to you right after your registration is confirmed. The link is unique to you and only allows one entry per name.
- ◆ **Multiple Members per Household:** If you share a screen, you only get one vote. To vote individually, you must each register and log in on separate devices.
- ◆ **Members Only:** If you are not yet a member, contact your steward to sign up.

## Meeting Etiquette & Security

- ◆ **Professionalism:** Disrespectful behavior or outbursts will not be tolerated.
- ◆ **The Chat:** The Executive Board voted unanimously in February to disable the chat during meetings to maintain focus and order.
- ◆ **Recognition:** Use the "Raise Hand" feature. I will notify the Chair of your request. If not recognized within a reasonable time, you may unmute (if no one else is speaking) to ask for the floor.
- ◆ **Stay Muted:** You must remain muted unless recognized by the Chair. Background noise from your home disrupts the meeting for everyone.

## In-Person Attendance

While I support the Zoom option, it is my hope that you attend in person when possible. Zoom should be the exception, not the norm; it is difficult to build true solidarity unless we see each other. We want to get to know you.

I am fully committed to making our technology work for you, but I am even more committed to the strength of this Branch. Let's work together to keep our meetings productive and respectful.

In Solidarity,

Mike Hansen

Executive Vice President

Branch 111, NALC



Use this QR code to register for the next Branch 111 meeting.



# Steward Elections

It's that time again. Steward elections are here. Steward elections must be held no later than March 22, 2026.

As we move into this new term, I want to extend a heartfelt welcome to our incoming shop stewards—both those returning to the role and the new faces stepping up to the plate.

The role of a steward is one of the most challenging, yet rewarding, positions in our union. You are the first line of defense for our members and the face of the NALC on the workroom floor. Whether you are navigating a complex grievance or simply offering a word of advice, your presence ensures that the **National Agreement** isn't just a booklet in a locker, but a living document that protects us all.

Being a steward isn't just about knowing the contract front-to-back (though that certainly helps); it's about leadership and integrity. Here are the qualities that define a successful NALC representative:

- **Approachable Integrity:** A good steward is someone carriers feel comfortable talking to. You listen without judgment and provide honest, realistic feedback.
- **Consistency:** Management and carriers alike should know exactly where you stand. Applying the contract fairly and consistently is the key to gaining respect.
- **Resilience:** The "front lines" can be stressful. Great stewards keep a cool head under pressure, especially when dealing with difficult supervisors or tense situations.
- **Detail-Oriented:** From the *Joint Contract Administration Manual (JCAM)* to the *M-39* and *M-41*, a steward's best weapon is their documentation. *If it isn't in writing, it didn't happen.*
- **A Teacher's Heart:** The best stewards don't just solve problems; they educate the membership so every carrier knows their own rights.

To Our Incumbents: The Backbone of the Branch

To those returning: **Thank you.** Your institutional knowledge is irreplaceable. You've seen the cycles of management, and your experience provides the steady hand our junior carriers need. We look forward to your continued mentorship.

To Our New Stewards: The Future of the Union

To those just starting: **Welcome aboard.** It's okay if you don't have every Article memorized yet. Lean on your brothers and sisters, attend the trainings, and never be afraid to say, "I'll check the JCAM and get back to you." Your energy and willingness to serve are exactly what keeps this union vibrant.

In Solidarity,  
Destiney Carrillo  
Vice President  
Branch 111



**"You are never strong enough that you don't need help." – Cesar Chavez**

**NALC BRANCH 111**  
**Minutes of the Regular Union Meeting**  
**February 12, 2026**

The meeting was also broadcast over Zoom for those unable to attend in person.

**Conducting:** Mike Wahlquist, President

**Pledge of Allegiance** conducted by Michael Galvan

**Moment of Silence for Brenda Ford** who passed away 10/6/2025

**Roll Call** by Steve McNees

**Minutes** of the January union meeting were posted. With no objection the minutes will be filed for future reference.

**Reading of the Communications** by Steve McNees

- We received notice of a 271-B Special Inspections for routes 1616 and 1621 at the Northwest Post Office, commencing on Feb. 28, 2026.
- We received notice that Kim Tipler has been designated as Management's Formal A Representative for all route count and inspections at the Northwest Office.
- We received a receipt for the \$500 donation the branch made to the AFL-CIO Food Pantry last month.
- President Wahlquist sent a letter to NALC Secretary Rhine, documenting our donation to the Food Pantry and requesting a matching donation from NALC headquarters.
- We received a letter from Evan Done who is running to State Senate District 13. He is requesting the branch's endorsement and asking to meet with us to learn from us how we can work together to advance the interests of working families.

**Application for Membership** by Mike Hansen

Jaron Cox, Grace Lamoreaux. Grace Lamoreaux was sworn in as a member of Branch 111.

**SPECIAL GUEST SPEAKERS:** **Zach Robinson** is running for SL County Council At-Large. He's a Former Sandy fire fighter and union member. He is a former Sandy Council member. See Zachforcouncil.com

**Taylor Paden** is running for State Senate District 13. He is a public employee. He is a member of the CWA local 7765 (organizing the U of U campus). He is endorsed by CWA. He would like to make child care more affordable. He is a democratic socialist (running as a Democrat. He supports mail-in ballots.

**At the recommendation of the Executive Board, the charges against Stormy Blood and Michael Wahlquist would be taken up prior to the order of business. There was no objection.**

**CHARGES AGAINST STORMY BLOOD:**

An objection was made indicating that both committees were not impartial. The objection was called out of order because it should have been made at the meeting when the committees were formed (Dec.11th). An appeal was made to the chair's decision and the formation of the committees. A motion to overturn the president's decision was voted down.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS-** Each charge is read, the committee's decision is announced and then Stormy may respond before a vote is taken by secret ballot, on each charge. Jayne Hogan, Kortnie Chatterton, and Brent Bray reported their finding on the four charges. Their decisions were all unanimous.

**Charge 1:** In a meeting with Mike Wahlquist, Tony Cline, and Angela Lopez, she was asked many times and lied about how many grievances were due on August 1, 2025, filed in the 84103 zone. She repeatedly said she had 2 grievances to meet on that day. The truth was there were 10 grievances, and that she wanted to file grievances that management refused to meet on 8 grievances to get more union time. The committee found in subsequent interviews with those in the meeting on 8/1/25 and subsequent interviews, there were various opinions on what transpired. The committee determined that due to inconsistent statements and evidence, the charge was found to be unsubstantiated. Stormy spoke and then the ballots were passed out. The vote was 37 for and 54 against the charge. Charge 1 was dismissed.

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Minutes (continued)

**Charge #2** - Stormy lied repeatedly at the October branch meeting in an attempt to sway votes and get her duties reinstated. She lied to the members of Branch 111. She lied that there were only 2 grievances due on August 1st and further lied on the history of "no meets" in the 84103 zone. She said that the 2 grievances due on Friday became 20 grievances the following Tuesday. This was not the case and was enhanced by being reported in the next branch meeting. The committee determined that the number of grievances was misstated and there was not sufficient evidence that Stormy willfully and repeatedly misrepresented her position on the number of grievances that were due on Aug. 1st. Stormy gave her reply. The branch voted that the charge was not substantiated. The vote was 33 for and 60 against the charge. Charge #2 was dismissed.

**Charge #3** - Stormy filed meritless grievances. The amount of grievances without any meritless whatsoever continued to increase as we were getting results from the B Team. She filed hundreds upon hundreds of meritless grievances, many are not accounted for and were assumed not accounted for or withdrawn and not turned into the branch. It is clear she was trying to create work for herself to justify getting more pay from the branch and the USPS. This was theft. There was a great volume of the grievances. An OIG report on the abnormal volume of grievances found that there was a pattern of frivolous grievances filed. At one point the committee found there were 422 withdrawn grievances and 776 cases open where Stormy was shown to be the Informal A steward. The sheer number of grievances was so numerous that she could not do all the paperwork herself. This caused a large payout by the USPS and caused a financial burden on the branch by a large increase in office supplies and equipment. This also harmed the regional office by causing similar operating expenses. There was also an increase in costs for steward hours because other stewards were assigned to assist with grievances filed by Stormy. The committee sustained the charge. Stormy gave her reply. The votes for charge #3 were 73 for and 29 against the charge. The decision of the committee was sustained.

**The penalty phase:** (relevant portions of Art. 10 of constitution were read): A motion was made to call the president out of order. The motion was defeated.

A motion was made that no penalty be imposed. An amendment was made to change the penalty to a reprimand only. The amendment failed (34 for and 57 against). An amendment was made for the penalty to be a 6-month suspension from the branch.

A motion was made to extend the meeting by 30 minutes. An amendment was made to extend the meeting to one hour. The amended time (1 hour) passed (51-31). The vote to amend the original motion to make the penalty a 6-month suspension was voted on and approved 55 for and 30 against.

The vote to approve a 6-month suspension passed 57 for and 30 against. Stormy will be suspended for 6 months from today.

**Charge #4** - Stormy unjustly enriched herself 2024 through July 2025. She rarely carried mail instead working to the maximum number of hours on working on grievances, with an exceptionally large number having no merit whatsoever.

In addition she filed addition grievances to be paid to work off the clock to work on grievances above and beyond the maximum hours available to her on the clock. She also requested payouts for herself for equitability that weren't contractual. She intentionally delayed grievance that had daily payouts to herself and others. Turning a 20-hour violation into more than 2,500 payout to herself and a .83 hour violation into a nearly 4,000 payout to herself.

**Committee's report:** Did Stormy unjustly enrich herself? The carriers in the 84103 zone, including Stormy, received large payouts for the grievances filed on their behalf. The large payouts appear to be more than double the gross pay for many of the carriers including Stormy.

**Committee's decision:** Was there sufficient evidence of exploiting the grievance process in order to enhance the quality of value of the carriers position.

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Minutes (continued)

Considering the OIG report and the overwhelming volumes of grievances filed and the sustaining of charge #3, it is the opinion of this committee that this charge that Stormy Blood unjustly enriched herself, be sustained. Stormy was given time to reply. Voting results were 56 for and 28 against. The decision of the committee was sustained.

**Penalty:** A motion was made to suspend Stormy from the union for 1 year, to run consecutively with the 6 months. The motion passed: Vote: 54 for and 30 against. She will be suspended from the union for 18 months.

A motion was made to end the meeting. The motion passed at 9:25pm. All reports and business will continue at the March Union Meeting

DRAW AND ADJOURN: 9:25 pm

- \$50 DRAWING WINNERS: Crystal Reeves and Joan Larsen
- RETIREEES – \$175 (Jeff Asay was present). Next month it will be \$25.
- PROGRESSIVE A - \$50 (Philip Schow was not present). Next Meeting it will be \$75.
- PROGRESSIVE B - \$325 (Michael Porter was present). Next Meeting it will be \$25



## Thanks to everyone who donated towards the Branch 111 Super Bowl Squares for MDA.

Branch 111 raised **\$3,000** that will be donated to MDA from Branch 111.

**Congratulations** to the winners:

1st quarter prize: Gourmia dual basket Air Fryer— winner **Tracy Uresk**

2nd quarter prize: Nintendo Switch 2 — winner **Danny Watson**

3rd quarter prize: Power Wheels mail truck—winner **Troy Sherzinger**

Final score prize: 75" TCL TV— winner **Donovan Mamo**

Our next event will be our bowling event! I will be reaching out to individuals and businesses for sponsorships. If any of you know any that you think might be willing to help out, please send me their information. I'll reach out to them so you don't have to. Email me at **[natechester8@gmail.com](mailto:natechester8@gmail.com)** or text **(801)450-0617**. It would be great to reach out to as many potential donors as possible. Thanks again to everyone who donates.



**NALC - #111 Salt Lake City, UT**

NALC 2025

It really is a good charity that does good work for kids and families. Also, if you are willing to help with this project, I could always use some help! It's nice to get to know good people in Branch 111.

# Compound Drugs– Are you covered?

## Health Benefits

Jim Kerekes

Recently I received a call about compound drugs. What does the health plan cover for them? There is not much written in the official brochure of NALC about it. You can find information on pages 83 and 91. One paragraph on each page. For clarity, I'm printing them in this article.

"A compound drug is a medication made by combining, mixing, or altering ingredients in response to a prescription, to create a customized drug that is not otherwise commercially available. Certain compounding chemicals (over-the-counter (OTC) products, bulk powders, bulk chemicals, and proprietary bases) are not covered through the prescription benefit and will be determined through preauthorization. Refill limits may apply. All compound drugs require prior authorization. Call CVS Caremark at 800-933-NALC (6252) to obtain authorization. FDA-approved prescription weight loss drugs require prior authorization. Call CVS Caremark at 800-294-5979 to obtain a list of medications or to obtain prior authorization."

I called the health plan and asked for details about these types of drugs. The compounding company has to send to the health plan the following details about each ingredient that the compound is going to be made. Each ingredient has to have a National NDC number, quantity of the ingredient and the cost of each ingredient. All of this occurs to create a compound drug list for availability for medical use. If your doctor and you decide to take a compound drug make sure you preauthorize and make sure it is covered. You or your doctor can make that call.

Another topic I noticed in the official brochure was 3rd party copayment assistance for some specialty medications. Years ago an active employee could use a coupon, rebate or card to get a discount on some drug costs. Those were mainly used for specialty drugs. According to the information in the official brochure, this is for specialty drugs. These types of drugs also require prior authorization. The specialty drug benefit includes the Advanced Control Specialty Formulary. (see top paragraph page 83 of the brochure). If your doctor prescribes a specialty drug call CVS Specialty at 800-237-2767 for prior authorization.

"Some specialty medications may qualify for third party copayment assistance programs which could lower your out-of-pocket costs for those medications. When specialty medication is purchased with a third party copayment assistance coupon, rebate, or card, the Plan will not apply the amount of the discount towards your out-of-pocket maximum."

It also might be helpful to ask the pharmacy if there are any discounts available.

For those on Medicare, The Official Brochure on page 91 says: "Manufacturer copayment assistance coupons, rebates, or cards." Anti-Kickback Statue [42U.S.C. 1320a-7b (b)] law prohibits people using Medicare drug coverage from using manufacturers coupons or discounts."

If you don't have the brochure, you can go to [www.nalchbp.org](http://www.nalchbp.org) to read those pages I referred earlier to in this article.

The way health plans had to change their drug payments this year, don't put the total blame on them. Most of it might be the drug manufacturer's cost. Hopefully we can get more member signups. Also hope the health plan can continue to negotiate to help us have good coverage.



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Letter Carriers  
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Salt Lake City, Utah  
84119

Non-Profit  
U.S. Postage  
Paid  
Salt Lake City,  
UT  
Permit No. 1981

**UPCOMING DATES:**

February 25	NALC and USPS are scheduled to open contract negotiations
March 5	EBoard Meeting
March 12	Branch Meeting
March 18	Steward Training
April 2	EBoard Meeting
April 9	Branch Meeting
April 12-16	Steward College (Year 2)
April 15	Steward Training



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