

Attend Canada Post Worker Rank-and-File Committee's first public meeting this Sunday!

Postal Workers Rank-and-File Committee (Canada)
8 November 2024

Are you a postal worker? Register here to attend the first public meeting of the Postal Workers Rank-and-File committee (Canada) on November 10 at 7 p.m. Eastern Time.

On Sunday, November 10 at 7 p.m. Eastern Standard Time, the Postal Workers Rank-and-File Committee (PWRFC) is hosting its first online public meeting. We urge postal workers across Canada, as well as delivery workers and workers from other economic sectors, to join our meeting. The meeting is a democratic forum to allow all postal workers to voice their demands and discuss the PWRFC's strategy of launching a political class struggle to counter the conniving of the union bureaucrats with Canada Post management and the Trudeau government to impose on us yet another concessions-filled contract.

Members of the Canadian Union of Postal Workers (CUPW) voted over 95 percent in favour of strike action, and workers want to know why we're not on the picket lines. Many postal workers have contacted us regarding the threat posed by the corporation's use of automation, AI and surveillance technology to undermine working conditions. Reports coming out of Winnipeg, Manitoba are exposing letter carrier walks of upwards of 42 Kms per day. Wetaskiwin, Alberta-based postal workers experienced a significant change to their workflows with the introduction of automated sorting immediately before CUPW agreed to a no strike/no lockout agreement against the wishes of 95 percent of its members. Separate sort and delivery transformations have been cascading across Ontario depots. Postal workers from all over Canada have described miserable working conditions punctuated by management bullying and overwork, overseen and enforced by the CUPW officialdom.

Given that our strike mandate has been overridden by the CUPW National Executive Board, how can we defend our jobs and wages against the threat of automation and AI? How are postal transformations and restructures affecting working conditions across the country? What can be done to defend our democratic right to strike? These questions and

more will be discussed at Sunday's meeting.

The PWRFC was founded in June of this year. Our founding statement begins by clarifying important issues such as CUPW's relationship with the federal government and the Canada Post Corporation:

CUPW is a key pillar of support for the Trudeau government through its important role in the Liberal/union/New Democratic Party (NDP) alliance, which is backed by the Canadian Labour Congress...

In opposition to the conspirators in Canada Post management, the federal government and the CUPW bureaucracy, we reject the claim that Canada Post must be run as a profit-making corporate enterprise. We oppose the use of new technologies to step up exploitation. We demand that workers on the shop floor make decisions about the operation of the postal service, the implementation of new technologies, and our wages and benefits. The Postal Workers Rank-and-File Committee will fight for these objectives in a political struggle against the corporatist partnership between CUPW, corporate management, and the Liberal government.

Additionally, the PWRFC's founding statement warned workers about specific attacks on our working conditions:

In some instances, routes have gone from an average of two sets of fliers per week to 15 or even 20 full sets. Management wants to bundle multiple fliers together for only one neighbourhood mail count, even though the full weight and volume are still present.

Separate Sort and Delivery (SSD) restructures are sweeping across the country. The balance of inside and outside work is being destroyed. One worker is

expected to work inside all day, while another's work is outside all day...

Dynamic routing, trialed against rank-and-file workers with the CUPW's approval in the Montreal area for over five years, takes advantage of automation and AI to overburden us and deny us a consistent route and work schedule.

Canada Post is now seeking to create another group of super-exploited workers called Permanent Flexible Employees. Their very title indicates that their working conditions would be under permanent revision and attack.

The statement went on to stress the necessity to broaden our struggle to other sections of workers, especially given the looming threat of a government back-to-work law or some other arbitrary use of the state's bureaucratic powers to rob us of the right to strike:

We face powerful enemies in our struggle, but our potential allies are even stronger. By building the Postal Workers Rank-and-File Committee, we are appealing to the working class in logistics and other economic sectors across Canada, as well as postal workers and the working class as a whole internationally, to join our fight. We say that there is no way forward within the suffocating, state-sponsored "collective bargaining" system. Rather, we can only counter the looming threat of strikebreaking legislation by making our struggle the starting point for a worker-led counteroffensive against capitalist austerity and war.

Our latest statement, published Sunday, is titled Stop CUPW's delaying tactics! Launch a working-class political struggle against Canada Post and the Trudeau government! Focusing on CUPW's attitude towards our strike mandate, we stated:

CUPW President Jan Simpson responded to our massive strike vote by announcing that any strike action would be delayed more or less indefinitely if Canada Post showed "real movement" to meeting our demands. What does "real movement" mean? We have no way of knowing, because CUPW demands that we take their word for it. What we do know is that with less than 72 hours to go until we

were in a legal strike position, CUPW conveniently discovered Friday that "real movement" was taking place in talks, so they did not issue a 72-hour strike notice. After they sabotaged our fight against government interventions in support of the employer by Harper's Tories in 2011 and the Liberals in 2018, we think it's reasonable to assume that "real movement" is just another excuse to avoid a serious fight.

The CUPW bureaucracy repeatedly insists that what is required above all is "unity" with the negotiating team, and that any attempt by the rank and file to assert its own independent interests strengthens the employer's hand. The fact of the matter is that the CUPW apparatus has separated itself from the workers it claims to represent by developing corporatist ties with the government and corporate management over the past four decades. The social interests of the bureaucrats are at odds with the workers they claim to represent, which is why they have collaborated in the enforcement of one round of concessions after another. What is required is for workers to create new forms of organization to provide political leadership and coordinate a counter-offensive by the working class. This movement must be directed against capitalist austerity, rejecting the idea that Canada Post must be run as a profit-making enterprise. Above all, it must appeal for support from all workers to defend public services and secure decent-paying, secure jobs for all.

All postal workers who believe that the rank and file must take into our own hands the struggle against Canada Post and the Trudeau government should make plans to attend the PWRFC's online meeting this Sunday, Nov. 10, starting at 7 p.m. Eastern. If you have not already done so, register here to attend.



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