

# Swan Island UPS hub set to close July 1 as industry-wide closures and layoffs continue

Joshua Rodriguez  
13 February 2025

UPS has notified their employees at the Swan Island UPS hub in Portland, Oregon that the temporary closure of the facility, announced earlier this year, will begin effective July 1, 2025, affecting the 600 or so workers currently employed there.

This follows the discontinuation of the day sort shift in mid-April of last year when over 300 UPS part-timers were laid off by the company, citing a decline in package volume as the main excuse.

Carol Tome, CEO of UPS, has constantly reassured investors that the planned layoffs, a key aspect of their “Network of the Future” restructuring plan, had saved UPS more than \$1 billion dollars in 2024 alone.

So far, Teamsters Local 162, which represents the UPS workers affected by the closure, has said nothing in response to this.

However, Teamsters International Vice President John Palmer stated the obvious.

“Some of those (jobs) will come back when the building opens up again, but it will be a small percentage,” Palmer said. “Leadership, having seen this coming, should have had a strategy.”

In reality, the Teamsters union’s strategy from the start has been to help UPS carry out the layoffs. They have been made possible by a new contract pushed through in 2023 under false pretenses, which the bureaucrats hailed as an historic victory after months of insincerely claiming it was prepared to call a nationwide strike.

UPS management plans to close or automate up to 200 facilities nationwide as part of its “Network of the Future” program, which executives have said hinges on the “labor certainty” provided by the contract.

Teamsters Local 162 has simply encouraged their members to relocate to another UPS hub in Hillsboro, Oregon, about 25 miles away.

This repeats the same response that Teamsters Local 396 gave workers when the Grande Vista hub in Vernon, California “temporarily” closed down in mid-January this year in order to retrofit the hub for automation.

Grande Vista UPS workers were relocated up to 80 miles away to the Inland Empire, (Riverside and San Bernardino Counties) effectively forcing many of the 1,100 members affected by the closure to quit their jobs.

Elsewhere, UPS has also announced it is cutting the twilight sorting shifts at the Bedford Park, Franklin Park and Northbrook hubs in Illinois. There, management and the Teamsters have followed the same playbook, with many UPSers losing work hours and increased wages under Market Rate Adjustments (MRA) as a result of their relocation.

As UPS workers continue to lose their jobs left and right, workers in other industries have faced the same issues of mass layoffs by corporate automation and the inability and refusal of the trade unions to come to their defense.

These include 18,000 Costco workers, who are also part of the Teamsters union, that had their strike canceled at the last minute with an announcement of a sellout deal.

Much like their working class brothers and sisters at UPS, they have been intentionally left in the dark in order to ram through this sellout contract as quickly and quietly as possible.

Healthcare workers at Providence Healthcare & Services have been on strike at eight hospitals and several clinics across Oregon since January 10 of this year to fight back against low pay and unsafe patient to staffing ratios.

So far their union, the Oregon Nurses Association

(ONA), have resorted to political stunts at the Oregon state legislature, orienting themselves to the Democrats while doing nothing to rally workers in other industries to their defense.

City letter carriers, represented by a consortium of pro-corporate union bureaucrats, just rejected a poverty contract brought forward by their own union at the end of January of this year.

The contract was rejected because it did nothing to remedy the cost of living and inflation or to stop the pro-business “Delivering for America” wrecking operation spearheaded by Postmaster General Louis DeJoy.

Lastly, Amazon’s Jeff Bezos, the third richest person in the world, has closed down all warehouses in Quebec, Canada in response to unsuccessful efforts by Amazon to block unionization efforts from workers.

The Confederation of National Trade Unions (CNTU), who organized the unionization effort, has responded to the mass firings of over 4,500 workers by filing toothless appeals to the courts and local government officials knowing very well that this will lead to nothing.

At a time where Gestapo-like ICE raids are taking place in the US—with the support of Teamsters General President Sean O’Brien and other top officials—threaten the democratic rights of workers regardless of their residency status, it is urgent now more than ever for workers to unify across industries and national borders through a rebellion against the corrupt union apparatus.

The bankrupt orientation of the official trade unions, with the noose of fascism hanging overhead, will lead to catastrophic defeats in the working class eclipsing that of the second world war.

The UPS Workers Rank-and-File Committee, built to fight against the sellout contract in 2023, must be built as part of the International Workers Alliance of Rank and File Committees.

These international workplace committees will fight to wrest control of the union out of the hands of the complacent and bankrupt union bureaucracy and place it back into the hands of the rank and file membership on the shop floor.



To contact the WSWS and the  
Socialist Equality Party visit: