

Fighting To Save Our Post Offices



Debby Szeredy, Executive Vice President's Office



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USPS Universal Obligation

§101. Postal policy

(a) The United States Postal Service shall be operated as a basic and fundamental service provided to the people by the Government of the United States, authorized by the Constitution, created by Act of Congress, and supported by the people. The Postal Service shall have as its basic function the obligation to provide postal services to bind the Nation together through the personal, educational, literary, and business correspondence of the people. It shall provide **prompt, reliable, and efficient** services to patrons in **all areas** and shall render postal services to **all communities**. The costs of establishing and maintaining the Postal Service shall not be apportioned to impair the overall value of such service to the people.

(b) The Postal Service shall maintain an integrated network for the delivery of market-dominant and competitive products (as defined in chapter 36 of this title). **Delivery shall occur at least six days a week**, except during weeks that include a Federal holiday, in emergency situations, such as natural disasters, or in geographic areas where the Postal Service has established a policy of delivering mail fewer than six days a week as of the date of enactment of the Postal Service Reform Act of 2022. **The Postal Service shall provide a maximum degree of effective and regular postal services to rural areas, communities, and small towns where post offices are not self-sustaining. No small post office shall be closed solely for operating at a deficit, it being the specific intent of the Congress that effective postal services be insured to residents of both urban and rural communities.**

DON'T LET THIS HAPPEN
TO POST OFFICES IN
YOUR COMMUNITIES!





Suspensions/Discontinuances History

In 1901 the Postal Service had 70,000 Post Offices, by 1960 it dropped to 35,000, in 2025 the OIG says there are 31,063 (post offices, stations, branches, APOs, RMPOs, PTPOs). Now, **over 430 post offices are suspended since 2017 thru 2026.**

- **In May 2012**, the Postal Service came out with an alternative plan called Post Plan. The Service would save 13,000 small rural post offices by reducing their daily hours of operation to six, four, and two. Postmasters were given incentives to retire, and others relocated or became bargaining unit employees. The Postal Service has continued to suspend post offices stopping services and then down the road placing a notice in the Postal Bulletin that the Post Office has been discontinued, instead of following the required procedure and law. **The stakeholders and community should be given the right to comment, hold public meetings on the needs of the community before a decision is made, and the right to appeal a USPS decision to the Postal Regulatory Commission.**
- Suspensions continued and began to accumulate out of control, with no regard to the discontinuance procedure.
- Reasons for Emergency suspensions occur if there is **a problem renewing the lease, or caused by safety issues, or problems with staffing the office (lack of qualified personnel), if there was damage to the building that needed to be repaired due to natural disasters, or other similar serious situations.**
- When a post office is closed for an emergency suspension the USPS is supposed to be **correcting the problem to reopen the post office.** If it looks like management **can't reopen, then the discontinuance process is to take place.** What has happened many times is communities are left in limbo for several years while still stuck in the suspension process, suspended clerks are moved to usually a mobile unit, or nearby post office temporarily, that begins to feel permanent. Management fails to follow the discontinuance process denying both the union and the community stakeholders the right under the law to comment, hold public meetings to assist in the decision making, and appeal to the Postal Regulatory Commission under both the law and⁴ the PO-101 Handbook (October 2012) when the final decision is to discontinue the facility.

Take Action Against Privatization of the Post Office that is under Suspension within your Local/State Jurisdiction

- The USPS has over 400 Post Offices that have been suspended from 2017 through to 2026. The suspension process should have been resolved within 180 days. There should be a feasibility study requested and if approved there should be communications to the employees, customers, and other stakeholders as to what the study will include, where temporary services can be found, repairs or new lease and a search for an alternative post office to be found within the community.
- Our job is to build solidarity with over 400 communities that have lost the use of their post office because of a temporary suspension. We need to investigate the USPS actions. The people of the town/city, the organizations, small and large businesses and the political leaders that represent the community including postal workers should mobilize together to “Save Our Post Office”. Closure of Post Offices is not the only fight we will have against privatizing the Postal Service. But it can be a great win when we build the political pressure that can stop Post Office Closures. It is important to remember that post office closures is a loss of living wage jobs and services that belong to the community. We need to start now, to built community strength. Our future privatization battles depend on it.

Identify Your Objective, Your Plan, and Your Budget to build a “Save Our Post Office” Fightback for Suspended Post Offices in Your Local/State

Conduct a Meeting with your Officers and Stewards and put together a Team Select a Coordinator to build and Monitor the Campaign with the National Liaison

**Grievances are Not Enough
Action Enhances the Work
It helps Inspire Workers to Participate
More People will Develop More Skills to
Defend Our Jobs & Community Services
Helping to Educate Each Other
With an Action Plan that your
Local/State Members can be proud of.**

Build A Team Strategy At this Meeting

- ✓ **Identify who will be assigned to the grievance, and RFI activity (see slide 10)**
- ✓ Outline the steps to be taken to accomplish your objective to “Save Our Post Office”, obtain and consider feedback and best educational strategy platforms
- ✓ Outline the key person(s) tasked with the steps (see Action Planning page 8)
- ✓ Develop concise fact sheets, talking points and materials needed based on the investigation of the facts for your specific post office (see list slide 45-47)
- ✓ Develop walking and talking points (e.g., flyers, notices, petitions, etc.) to be distributed, check out APWU communications and resources
- ✓ Build a contact list of activist members, community contacts, congressional contacts, union contacts, bulk mailers/business contacts etc.
- ✓ Build media contacts of radio, TV, cable, PBS, newspapers, bulletins
- ✓ Develop a social media platform or other electronic means of communication
- ✓ Consider a mailing, or door to door direct as a communication tactic
- ✓ Role of the Local/State in Public Input Community Boards, Meetings and Mailer Councils, Postal Customer Council, Seniors, Veterans, Young Members
- ✓ Establish a communication line with the National Union, the Communications Department communications@apwu.org, our other Union partners, and your Coordinator will connect with the Executive Vice President as your liaison.
- ✓ Determine what, when and how you will communicate with the members to step up and get involved in your pursuit to save suspended post offices.

Locals and States that have Suspended Post Offices within their Jurisdiction, need to assign a Strategic Coordinator to work for the **“Save the Post Office”** Campaign.

The **Coordinator** will work with the Executive Vice President for the next several months to Build the Fight to Save Our Suspended Post Offices, with ongoing communication.

There will be Coordinator Training to help keep the Campaign on the right track, help plan the actions and activities that will help unite our members, the key stakeholders, and active community members to take actions to:

“Keep Our Public Community Post Offices in the Community”.

“Save Our Post Offices” Campaign

APWU Coordinator: _____
APWU Local/State: _____
Cell Phone: _____
Email Address: _____
Address: _____
Work Hrs/Days Off _____
Work Address: _____
Work Phone: _____

Coordinator will work with the National Executive Vice President, the Local/State Steward, while mobilizing a campaign committee of volunteers: to oversee activities, educate, plan strategies to build the campaign power, provide support, communicate and request resources, report campaign progress and results to the VP.

Submit ASAP To:

Debby Szeredy

APWU Executive Vice President

202-285-2730

dszeredy@apwu.org



Print this slide for an overview of Your Campaign

Print this slide for each Task to be completed

ACTION PLANNING

For each goal that your organization sets, it is important to create an action plan that will enable your members to accomplish the goal in a timely and efficient way. There are a number of questions your members will need to answer in order to fill in the action plan for each goal:

1. What is the goal your organization is trying to achieve?
2. Why are you trying to achieve it? (How is it meaningful and relevant to your mission? How does it challenge your members and allow them to grow? How does it benefit your constituencies?)
3. What are the tasks that need to be accomplished in order to achieve your goal?
4. Who is responsible for completing each task?
5. When will each task be completed?
6. What are the resources (people, money, materials, etc.) you will need in order to accomplish your tasks?
7. What are potential barriers or obstacles?
8. How will you know when your goal is accomplished? (How will you gauge the impact of your actions on your constituencies?)

1 = What? (Goal)	2 = Why? (Purpose)	3 = Tasks	4 = Delegation	5 = Timeline	6 = Resources	7 = Obstacles	8 = Reflection

The Power of Investigation



Union Investigation on the Post Office Under Suspension Checklist

Review and investigate the List of offices that fall within your jurisdiction (APWU will provide a link on apwu website)

Assign a union representative to investigate each office suspended under your jurisdiction

Who owns the building and who worked there, where are they working now? get contact information? You will need to complete a Union Request for Information (RFI) so you have the documentation for the grievance file (See sample slide 11)

What caused the building to be suspended? Who made the decision? Is there safety violations, dangers?

Can it be fixed? Who is responsible to fix problem, help look for an alternative place in the community, get help through a town hall meeting, contact a legislative representative for help

How many jobs are there, copy of the lease? What is the annual revenue? Do they have bulk mail accounts, contact info, copy of the lease, is there a list of business patrons, PO boxes?

Do not depend only on management's story, interview everyone involved, employees, postmaster, landlord, and find out if the mayor, city council, county supervisor, House Representative or Senators were they notified and how can they help in keeping a centrally located post office in the community (congressional hearing, public meeting, etc.)

Document what was posted if anything, copy of USPS letter sent and how many went out to patrons, what mailing list did they use, what businesses what organizations? Was there a public meeting? Did the Union receive any of the USPS public notices and why not?

The APWU is a stakeholder and Article 1/CBA gives the union exclusive bargaining responsibilities of the postal employees in the office over wages and working conditions. Why was the Union not consulted nor did they receive any official notice?

Has a feasibility study been requested on the suspension or a feasibility study for a discontinuance (closure) and request a copy of it and if and when it will be completed? Why has there not been a feasibility study keep interview notes for the grievance file

Is the Postmaster planning on following the required Discontinuance Process checklist according to the PO-101 and other federal laws (See Slide 13 sample)

Submit a Request for Information in writing of all documents you have not received that you will need to justify that the suspension and discontinuance process was not adhered to in your Class Action grievance (Article 1,5,15,19) and after seven days request a second request (RFI) no response again after seven days, file an NLRB charge for failure to bargain in good faith



Class Action/(name) Post Office (address)

NATURE OF ALLEGATION

Suspension/Discontinuance

DATE OF REQUEST (RFI)

TO: TITLE: Postmaster of Post Office / District Manager

FROM: Union Steward

SUBJECT: Request For Information and Documentation Relative to Processing a Grievance

We request that the following documents and/or witnesses be made available to us in order to properly identify whether or not a grievance does exist and, if so, their relevancy to the grievance:

Information provided ? YES NO

- # 1. See attached Discontinuance Process Checklist attached request to review USPS responses to Checklist and copy of completed checklist by the USPS () ()
- # 2. Review, proof of copy of notifications to APWU Local President regarding suspension/closing operations and reassignment of any employees at (names) Post Office () ()
- # 3. Names of all members of the Suspension Review Team and Coordinator () ()
- # 4. Review and Copy of the feasibility studies showing any and all steps taken () ()
- # 5. Provide any and all documents regarding USPS efforts to find alternate quarters () ()
- # 6. Provide a copy of any and all lease agreements, proposals, offers, counter offers, notices from the landlord () ()
- # 7. Provide all USPS minutes from suspension/closure meetings including any and all emails regarding suspension/closure and PO-101 rules followed () ()
- # 8. Provide the reason why the (name) Post Office was suspended and what rules regulations were followed by the USPS Official requesting the Suspension/Closure () ()
- # 9. Provide date and documentation mailed out to the public regarding the suspension/closure of the (name) post office and a copy of the original request to Suspend, when the Public Meeting was scheduled by the USPS and if there was no meeting what was given to the patrons of the post office, provide a review and copy of the list of community members and other stakeholders that were contacted by mail or other method and when by the USPS () ()

Information provided ? YES NO

- #10. Copy of communications and questions sent out and received by the community and its stakeholders or given at any public meeting held, regarding the Suspension/Closure () ()
- #11. List all alternative locations and addresses that the USPS considered for the Post Office within the community and were mobile units provided at any time in the community () ()
- #12. If there was a Safety Issue, all documentation collected by USPS regarding suspending the Post Office and any actions taken to abate the safety issues () ()
- #13. Documentation to prove that the USPS had discussion with the employees and union at (name) Post Office concerning the Suspension/Closure and the determination of employees' work hours, benefits, and working conditions during Suspension/Closure () ()
- #14. Provide the date the on-site visit was conducted by the suspension team and copy of the report and results () ()
- #15. Provide a copy of all stand-up talks given to clerks at the (name) Post Office regarding the suspension/closure () ()
- #16. Provide a copy of the original email or letter required to be sent by the District Manager to the HQ Review Team regarding plans and actions and all documents related to the plans () ()

Article 17, Section 3 requires the Employer to provide for review all documents, files, and other records necessary in processing a grievance. Article 31, Section 3, requires that the Employer make available for inspection by the Unions all relevant information necessary for collective bargaining or the enforcement, administration or interpretation of this Agreement. Under 8 a (5) of the National Labor Relations Act it is an Unfair Labor Practice for the Employer to fail to supply relevant information for the purpose of collective bargaining. Grievance processing is an extension of the collective bargaining process.

REQUEST APPROVED REQUEST DENIED

SIGNED _____

DATE: _____

INVESTIGATE:

- ✓ Checklist of documents, interviews, and time line of mgt. actions, interview employees, lessor, postmaster, District Mgr. POOM, Copies of Notices provided to patrons/customers, posting at the post office, any contacts with other stakeholders, request any extensive email communication between the parties on the subject, Senators involvement, PO-101 important sections 212.2, 223, 251.2, 321.3, 642.5, 642.6, 711, Article 1 (Union Recognition), Article 5 (Unilateral Action), no advance notice, detrimental impact on the community (witness statements) population of community members that utilize the Post Office, how many PO Boxes, bulk mail customers, revenue the post office brought in, percentage of poor, seniors, veterans, minorities, that utilize and depend on the post office location, no community or town hall public meeting, no contact with many stakeholders, never looked for an alternative location nearby, see: OIG report(**SM-AR-18-007 9-24-2018, 21-239-R23 5-17-2023**)on the USPS abuse of Suspensions and closures of post offices, failure to provide the public their right to appeal to the PRC, no independent review, required approvals were not obtained, marginalizing a predominantly senior citizen community, left customers with no residential home delivery of mail and failure to provide mail service as per the Universal Service Obligation.
- ✓ Investigate the Denial and Unreasonable Delay in providing requested information (utilize the NLRB)
- ✓ Violation of Failure to notify the Union and to Bargain in Good Faith about employee(s) effecting bargaining unit positions, Interview District level, they should have been involved in making the decision to suspend or close a post office, Failed to provide any documents from the suspension review team, or documents showing how they searched for alternate post office sites within the community, soliciting employees to sign 1723 forms, failed to provide notice to residents, and elimination of a clerk bid assignment that would be relevant to APWU's right to bargain, and right to abide by the law with regard to a public meeting/comments/notices
- ✓ Review Slide 13 the USPS Checklist as per the PO-101. Check each action that the USPS followed.

USPS Discontinuance Process (Checklist)

1. Request/approval to study for discontinuance
2. Notice (if appropriate) to Headquarters of Suspension organizations notify
3. Notice (if appropriate) to customers/district personnel of supervision
4. Highway map with community highlighted
5. Inspection Service/local law enforcement vandalism reports
6. Form 4920, Post Office Fact Sheet (Discontinuance Feasibility Study Survey)
7. NEPA Worksheet (National Environmental Policy Act)
8. Financial workbook
9. Recommendation and Service Replacement type,
10. Postmaster Cover Letter, questionnaire and enclosures
11. Community Meeting Roster
12. Community Meeting letter provides questionnaire/report/results (5-7days before meeting)
13. Proposal Checklist (necessary investigations, documentation, certified by coordinator)
14. District Notification to Government affairs and Area Public Affairs before posting
15. Instructions to postmaster/OIC to post proposal to close invitation for comments
16. Invitation for comments exhibit (60 day Posting prominently at affected post offices)
17. Proposal to Close exhibit (District Manager review analyze all details customers and senior mgt)
18. Comment Form exhibit (Forms must be available for customers during 60-day period)
19. Instructions for postmaster/OIC to remove proposal
20. Postal Service Response Letters to returned customers questionnaire part of record
21. Analysis of questionnaires discontinuance coordinator prepares, tracks, and lists concerns
22. Community meeting analysis categorized as postal and non-postal,
23. Send responses to questions
24. Round-date stamped proposals and invitations for comments from affected offices
25. Notification of taking proposal and comments under internal consideration (posted at post office)
26. Postal Service Response Letters to returned Proposal comments
27. Proposal Analysis of comments
28. **Petition** and Postal Service response letter (if received on proposal to close, must respond)
29. **Congressional Inquiry** and Postal Service response letter (if appropriate)
30. Log of Post Office discontinuance actions (must certify and enter into record)
31. Final determination from Headquarters (HQ Review Coordinator makes the Final determination either Proposal to close warranted, Proposal to close not warranted, or return for further action or information) Check if there is an appeal to the Postal Regulatory Commission filed on Discontinuance/Closure within the 30 day period, if no appeal after the 60 days the final determination was posted then send to Address Management unit to update AMS database and announcing closure or consolidation in the Postal Bulletin

The Postal Service by law is required to notify the public and all patrons of the Post Office where there is a proposal to close, suspend, or relocate the facility.

You will find those laws in various places such as Title 39, United States Code 404(b) which prohibits the USPS from permanently closing a small post office just to save dollars, it must be based on certain criteria and requires the Postal Service to provide a notice posted in the Post Office as well as a form letter to all customers within 60 days before a final decision can be made to allow customers to evaluate the proposal and offer comments, and a final decision letter with notice of community appeal rights to PRC.

PO-101(251-254) includes scheduling a meeting and allowing for written comments to be submitted, the Postal Reorganization Act (PRA) which calls for providing a maximum degree of effective and regular service to rural areas, communities and small towns where post offices are not financially self-sustaining, 39 U.S.C. 101 language that clearly establishes that no small post office shall be closed solely for operating at a deficit, 201, and 403, 404 (a), 39 CFR Section 241 provides the community with appeal rights to the PRC within 30 days after the written final determination is made available to the public. PO-101 *Postal Handbook Post Office Discontinuance Guide*(2012) the Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act, 39 U.S.C. 3661 (b) requires the USPS to submit its request when making a change that affect service on a nationwide basis or substantially nationwide basis for an advisory opinion from the PRC. Section 106 of the Historic Preservation USPS Compliance Act governs policies in order to dispose of historical properties including maintenance, repair, new construction, and demolition and includes postal properties. There are requirements that the USPS must follow with regard to murals and artwork including protecting and saving items considered historic from the Roosevelt (New Deal) period.

Most Communities don't know they have the right to appeal to the PRC. Part of our Campaign has to be to help the Community to submit an Appeal with all the documentation to show proof that the USPS violated the people's rights to a proper feasibility study, right to be notified, a public meeting, and provide comments, updates, and be given appeal rights to stop the loss of their full-service Post Office, within the community.

The PO-101 Handbook (October 2012) (Article 19) is the USPS handbook that clearly states that the USPS is required to have a Public Meeting and provides the procedures that should take place, contacting Stakeholders and the timelines that should be followed with regard to a Suspension and/or Discontinuance of a Post Office, Station, Branch, Annex, RMPO.

CFR 241.3(d) (3)

SUMMARY:

This revised regulations concerning public notification and solicitation of comments regarding the relocation, discontinuance of retail service facilities establishes written notice for notifying the public of plans to add relocate or discontinue a retail service facility. Under Public Final Determination (d) Notice of public comment, and record under step 3. *Other Steps*. A community meeting must be held to provide outreach and gain public input after the proposal is posted, unless instructed by the responsible Headquarters Vice President to forgo a community meeting this should be issued only where exceptional circumstances make a community meeting infeasible, such as where the community no longer exists because of a natural disaster or because residents have moved elsewhere. Any oral contact with views should be submitted in writing to preserve them for the record. (The District Manager may not rely on communications unless submitted in writing for the record).

DATES:

Effective date: Title 39 Part 241.1 thru 241.4, up to date as of 1-21-2026

Guidelines in the PO-101

Discontinuance of a Post Office Chapter 1

1. Replace a Postal Service Operated retail facility with a contractor-operated facility
2. Combine one or more Postal Service –operated retail facilities
3. Close a Postal Service –operated retail facility without providing a replacement facility

Requirements. Under 39 CFR Part 241 A District Manager or the responsible Headquarters Vice President, or a designee of either, may initiate a feasibility study of a USPS-operated facility for possible discontinuance. Any decision to close or consolidate a USPS-operated retail facility may be affected only upon the consideration of certain factors. These include the effect on the community served; the effect on employees of the USPS-operated retail facility; compliance with government policy established by law that the Postal Service must provide a maximum degree of effective and regular postal services to rural areas, communities, and small towns where Post Offices are not self-sustaining; the economic savings to the Postal Service; and any other factors the Postal service determines necessary.

Reasons for a Suspension PO-101 section 611

- a. Natural disaster
- b. Termination of a lease or rental agreement
- c. Lack of qualified personnel
- d. Irreparable damage, no alternate
- e. Severe damage, or destruction
- f. Challenge to sanctity of the mail
- g. Lack of adequate measures to safeguard the office or its revenues

Remember the USPS is required to restore service, and secure suitable alternative quarters within the Community. When severe damage or destruction is irreparable, temporarily a mobile unit could be utilized, until alternative quarters are found within the community.

Information about the USPS Survey for **Post Plan Offices**:

The USPS will be sending a survey to a randomly selected group of community members as it is a legal requirement to get public input on changes to RMPO post office. You may or may not be one of the people who receive the USPS survey. The USPS survey is full of technical jargon and misleading language that can be difficult to understand. If you receive the USPS survey, the options offered take away the right to full services. Below is what each proposed option means and what the impact would be on our post office:

If You Want Your Post Office to Remain Open with Full Services Do Not Choose Option 1, 2, 3, or 4:

Option 1: Cutting window service hours will eliminate the Postmaster position in your community, reduce use of the post office, and can lead to eventual closure. Imagine what happens if they cannot find someone to fill an extremely part-time position with a smaller salary and fewer benefits.

Option 2: Conduct a discontinuance study; means close your post office. Your rural letter carrier will not have the time, the training, or the material to provide full postal services and you will have to catch them as they drive past your rural mailbox. “Alternate access points” means the post office in the nearest town.

Option 3: “A contractor office” will not weigh parcels, register, certify, or ensure mail, sell passports or money orders, handle express, COD, return receipts, international or any number of postal services. A “contractor” is not a trained, sworn postal employee and may go out of business at any time.

Option 4: “Relocate” means close your post office.

DO WRITE IN: Keep full-service hours in our community **DO WRITE IN:** My preference for window service hours each weekday would be full service 8am – 5pm (or whatever full service means for your community)

DO WRITE IN: “ADDITIONAL COMMENTS” (reason why your town needs **full service, full-time**)

Coordinator's Activities:

1. Start with sending in Contact information (slide 7) connecting your Coordinator with the Executive Vice President Debby Szeredy. Every two weeks, Szeredy will contact the Coordinator to help stay on track and provide resources needed and help monitor program
2. Keep updated with the union steward(s) for the Suspended Post Offices and possible grievances that may be filed by the Local/State. The investigation will provide much needed information to plan your strategy and tactics, how to protect the workers from reassignment issues and important tactics to help our political enemies stall on taking any discontinuance/closure actions.
3. Assist the Union steward in contacting key community representatives and locating support from within the community, including postal workers and other groups, and unions that would greatly help document the need for the specific post office(s) under your jurisdiction.
4. With the help of the Local/State President, put together an **APWU committee** to help with the tasks at hand and with planning: reasons, tasks needed, delegation, time-line, resources, obstacles, costs (budget) **for the campaign**, (see slide 8 to help define the goals and how to accomplish them, you can also utilize it for each task, and how many activities can be planned per calendar month) pros and cons
5. Review the cost an impact to our workers and our community, especially among those adversely affected (see slide 19 and talking points 43-47) **Visit the post office** for your **own investigation** of the workers and get the community map including location of businesses and groups. Start an excel Coalition Contact List, Members Contact List, Business/Bulk Mail List
6. Plan how you want to **educate and inspire volunteers from our workforce and from our community** with what kind of materials, trainings and ongoing communications, media social and news contact list that's available for reaching out by your volunteers and activists.
7. Who are the key mover and shakers in the Local/National government, legislative and political representatives in the area, large businesses dependent on the USPS. Who are the key USPS management you can work with, who will cause (good or bad) trouble
8. The power of **planning a public meeting** whether the USPS agrees to have one or if not, the community can have one with their representatives and invite the USPS and all the organizations you've contacted to start a coalition and public meeting(slide 24-47) and how to utilize the media, and other tactics to strengthen the campaign (at least a two-month planning is necessary).
9. Review the things we've learned with past public meetings (slide 30), keep a journal on events and lessons and projects handled.
10. Review (slide 19 thru 42) on how to plan a successful town hall/public meeting and the beginning of a great campaign including **Talking Points** for the community and Questions they should ask at the town hall/public meeting and how to delegate that, press speakers, panel etc.
11. Help the community prepare an appeal to the Postal Regulatory Commission, OIG, House Appropriations, Government Oversight, Attorney General, Safety and Health issues, any other strategy to stop the loss of our public post office.
12. Reward program for those that step up and make a difference. Share journal after campaign with other Local/States still in the fight.
13. Attend monthly zoom meetings from around the country, share coordinator contacts, and inspiration, and tactics that worked.
14. Continue to keep coalition updated and Coordinators around the country meet one morning for coffee/continental get together at National Convention, and make sure to provide local/state membership awards for Good Trouble while Fighting Postal Privatization.

THE COST AND IMPACT ON COMMUNITIES

Economic Policy Institute (EPI) studies conclude the impact will be borne by the community. The impact to communities far outweigh any potential savings or efficiencies for the USPS when our post offices are discontinued or consolidated with another town or city.

- ✓ **Slower Mail Service for the communities**
- ✓ **Direct loss of community jobs**
- ✓ **Labor income**
- ✓ **Sales and property taxes**
- ✓ **Banking**
- ✓ **Utilities,**
- ✓ **Legal services**
- ✓ **Trucking**
- ✓ **Health care**
- ✓ **Restaurants**
- ✓ **Economic city and town losses, less businesses**



Educate & Mobilize Members

- How best to reach out to members (mailings, meetings, one-on-one, breakroom/swing room visits raps) special town hall meetings just for members
- Decide what is to be communicated
- Leafleting Members and community
- Recruiting volunteer Leaders to organize activities
- Recruiting volunteers to attend Town Hall Meetings, and coordinating tactics
- Recruiting volunteers to contact local, state and federal representatives, plan special public meeting



Resources to Reach APWU Members:

Conversations at Stand-Up Talks	Union Newsletter and Alerts, Flyers in the breakrooms	Bulletin Boards
Handout flyers at drive through gates end of shifts	Podcasts	Union Rights Talks in the Breakroom
Breakfast meetings before work for plants and POs'	Emails or texts to members	Invite Guests to Union Meetings
Special invitations to the Union Meeting	Advertise Union work/committee assignments	Have a townhall for your Union Members
Advertise for Legislative Director	Advertise for a Media Contactor	Advertise audio Visual Assistance
Livestream and zoom for events	Find a union member Videographer	

- Artists for Posters
- Advertise and assist with food/Refreshments at meetings and events
- Ask for help with Child-care at meetings and events
- Advertise for a Social Activity Planner
- Advertise a mentoring program
- Advertise educational events
- Find leaders in work sections to get members active
- Stewards Get together, appreciation nights,
- Provide activities for special Charity events
- Have union picnics and other social events
- Provide training on job rights, and copy of contract
- Ask members to volunteer for committees
- Mentor new members during probation to become active in APWU after probation.
- Find out what members really care about and love through a local/state union workplace survey

Engaging Local & State Leadership

- Remember Your Federal Senators have more power on Postal Issues
- Develop contact lists of city, state and federal officials representing the impacted city, state and district.
- What do we want them to know and do?
- Set up appointments to speak to the civic leaders one on one or with a group
- Solicit volunteers to visit with and speak to civil leaders
- Organize phone calls to civic leaders
- Attend and speak at city council and community board meetings
- Organize a letter writing campaign

Target Key Community Local, State & Government Representatives



- ❑ Local: Mayor, City Council, church leaders, local organization leaders, union leaders, business leaders, mailers, veterans, seniors, NAACP, Chamber of Commerce,
- ❑ State: Assembly, Senate, State House Representatives, Attorney General, County Supervisors, Secretary of State, Election Board
- ❑ Government: Senate Leaders, House of Representatives, Government Oversight Committee, Board of Governors, Postal Regulatory Commission, PMG, OIG, Postal Customer Council (PCC), Department of Labor, US Senators

The Power and the Educational Value of a Public/Town Hall

To build your Local or State Union Power, We need to educate Our community, Our legislative, city, and county representatives. We need to educate Our Customer base, Our Mailers, Our Members, and Our Family and Friends.

- You can best get to know people and stay in contact, through a town hall meeting, and more importantly, get the people to understand how you need their active support. A public/town hall meeting is a great place to start. You can call it a town hall, a public meeting, a legislative breakfast, and then build a coalition.
- You need an army to make some changes, and right now with the “Delivery For America Plan” it has become necessary to build an army that can fight the “Delaying For America Plan”.
- We serve the “People” and we need to get their help to save the good services we have been known to give before the consolidations. The degrading of service began when they started consolidating key plants to get rid of overnight delivery within the cities and towns. We need the people to help us expand and get back to providing the prompt, affordable, reliable, efficient Services that we’ve been proud of in the past.
- As our customer base becomes more disgruntled with the dismantling of our service, people and businesses will start walking away. We need to educate the people on how to build their people power to force a turn around, ending degraded services. Postmasters use to be required to do this work but now it is up to our Unions to Save our Postal Services. We can’t do it alone. Utilizing public meetings is another way to build our fight and to educate and communicate what the problems are and what we can do together to make our postal service great again.

A Model to Build From: A Community Public Meeting

Schedule the meeting at a time that's best for the community. Once you find a location that will be big enough make sure that it is available at a time in the early evening where the public would have a better chance of showing up. Consider the need to look at the time you will need to educate the community and give them ample notification to arrange to be at the meeting. You should also plan a time where people can show up an hour before the scheduled meeting to organize speakers and points of view and to plan your strategy. Invite elected officials, mayors, lawyers, and business owners to speak as well as labor and community members.

Consider offering an incentive to show up. Example: raffle a \$50 gas card or gift card (make sure it is donated, not union funds).

A sign-in sheet should also be provided so that everyone can stay in contact. Have a petition available for the community members to sign that requests the USPS to stop actions to close or reduce hours of the post office operation.

Convene an hour before the meeting to get speakers ready. Have a facilitator assigned to make sure all community members are heard (like a retired state trooper or police officer). Have the town retain an attorney or legal aide to represent the town if the board or council agrees. Address all issues relating to the importance of keeping the Post Office open and with full-service hours, by having all talking points and questions brought up at the public meeting through assigned community members. Make sure the USPS representatives have given you their contact information, before the meeting starts. Make sure your APWU Coordinator has been with you through the planning stages and at the event helping to keep the Campaign on track.

What Steps Should We Take for Rescheduling or Requesting a Public Meeting by the USPS?

The first step to take is to request USPS to schedule or reschedule the community meeting. If the USPS failed to have a public action meeting per the PO-101, file a grievance and contact your US Senator. Get your mayor or city council to request in writing a good location date and time, so the majority of the community can attend. A letter must be drafted to the USPS putting them on notice that the community wants a meeting or a rescheduled meeting to **update** them as to the steps the USPS is at regarding the suspension, relocation, new building for the community, or on restoring the lease or doing repairs to get the office reopened.

A letter from a legislative official, the Mayor or other elected officials may pull more weight requesting to have a public meeting or reschedule the public meeting. (If the USPS refuses to have a public meeting, then ask the local/state elected representatives to plan a community meeting and require the USPS to come and give a report.

(If the Postal Service refuses to have a Public Meeting get a US Senator to hold the meeting and require the USPS to show up.)

Sample letter requesting a new re-scheduled date and place to have a Community Meeting

*USPS District Office
For the _____ Post Office*

As per Title 39, United States Code 404(b)(d)(1) the community of _____ Post Office requests to reschedule the Community Meeting to the _____ Community Center on July 8, 2026 at 6pm, allowing all patrons to have the opportunity to speak on the issue of the proposal to discontinuance/close/relocate or reduce the hours of the _____ Post Office. We will provide a facilitator to provide a fair opportunity for all to be heard.

*Sincerely, Mayor _____
Town of _____*

Community Reach



- Community Coalitions
- AFGE/AFSCME
- Veterans Groups
- Salon Service Industry
- Contact Postal Unions
- C LUW
- Working America
- Rural Groups
- Pride at Work/ All Genders
- Climate Change Groups
- University Community Work
- University Professors
- Student Activist Clubs
- Celebrities, Popular Figures
- Native Americans, Asians, Hispanic, Latino support groups
- Faith Based Groups
- Teachers

Why should you plan a Public/Town Hall Meeting?

You want to have a place to bring your members and the community together to discuss the issues and actions that need to be taken to protect the community's treasure, the United States Postal Service. This is a great way to get your message out not only to the community but to legislative members and the media as well. A Public/Town Hall Meeting can jump start your activities to stop consolidations, privatization, stop cuts in service, and stop your facility or post office from closing. Even fight mail in ballots and voter rights. This meeting will help you to identify people and organizations who want to participate in your campaign and a way to keep their connection strong. With your sign-in sheets you will have many good contacts to add to your email contact list for more events and updates on the suspension/disclosure of our post office.

How to have a Successful Public/Town Hall Meeting

You want to make sure you invite community organizations and partners that will make a difference in your campaign. You want to have key political figures, businesses, mailers, customers that can increase the chance of success as you build a power base. You want to provide an action activity at every meeting while you have an interested audience. Examples would be petitions, resolutions, initiatives, strategy planning, educational leaflets, and provide a list of the next schedule of events and actions. The attendance sign-up sheet will help to collect contacts, name, email, phone, address, so that you are able to communicate easily. Make sure you have a photographer and videographer for the event.

Planning For Public Information Meetings

- Join the District Postal Customer Council (PCC)
- Meet and get support from small and large businesses
- Develop contacts with community boards
- Do a Direct Mail Flyer on taking action now
- Attend Township Meetings (get on their agenda)
- Neighborhood leafleting actions
- Walk the Mall leafleting actions
- Business visits & distribute info/posters to display
- Press Releases, newspaper ads, radio, TV, social media
- Church, Senior, and Community bulletin articles, ads, yard signs, post cards, petitions, resolutions
- Public Town Hall and Community Meetings



Things we've learned to add to the USPS Public Meetings:

Manchester, New Hampshire (2025)



- Have a political figure and union, request reschedule for not providing ample opportunity for the public to attend (**file grievances when it is denied**)
- Videotape and Livestream the meeting
- Have one of the speakers request a show of hands during the meeting, of those who do not want the facility consolidated (for the public record summary). Most attendees voted no consolidation.
- Have many political representatives and staff speak out and provide letters, resolutions, and bills etc.
- Have Businesses speak telling the story that this move will destroy their business
- Speakers about economic losses to the community
- Workers describing how the mail will be delayed and loss of jobs for the community
- Advertise and campaign with rallies, public announcements, radio, TV interviews, newspapers, press conference, press advisory release
- Bring petitions, letters, postcards against consolidation and submit them in front of the public.
- Have talks with employees who don't understand what is happening, help people to feel comfortable to show up and take part by speaking out about the working conditions they are already under (short staffing and hostile work environment).
- Make sure you have contact info. From the many organizations that support no consolidation
- Rallies and media events prior to the Public Meeting and after the Public Meeting

Preparing for Your Public/Town Hall Meeting

Step 1. Form a Campaign Planning Committee

Pocatello, Idaho Community “Save the Plant”
Coalition 2017



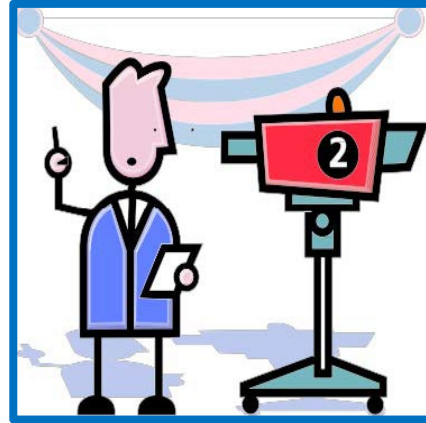
- **Recruit early, find support with some union members but also representatives that work for the community. Look at union partners, businesses, and mailers, customers that you want at your Public/Town Hall. Especially a representative from those organizations and businesses who depend on the services the Postal Service provides. Make sure those organizations are diversely represented on the committee and are publicly recognized, in your promotional materials and during the program. Everyone will play a part in planning, managing and promoting the event.**

Step 2. Select a Location and Date

- Consider a location that is well known and has easy access with plenty of parking, wheelchair accessible, public transportation nearby, room with chairs, tables, and ability to have audio-visual equipment, Virtual/Zoom capability. Don't forget to provide certified interpreters for our Deaf/Hard of Hearing.
- Remember that it can be at a community center, civic plaza, auditorium, city hall, public library, senior center, union hall, place of worship, community college, office of a public official, local school. Ask your legislative leaders to help attain a site for free or at a very low cost.
- Schedule the event at a time most convenient for the greatest amount of people. Consider the business hours and schedules of your audience. A weekday early evening is often the best time to get turnout and media. Remember not to schedule the event on a date that there is other sports and/or community events that you would end up competing with, for media and air-time. Book a venue that allows flexibility in numbers.



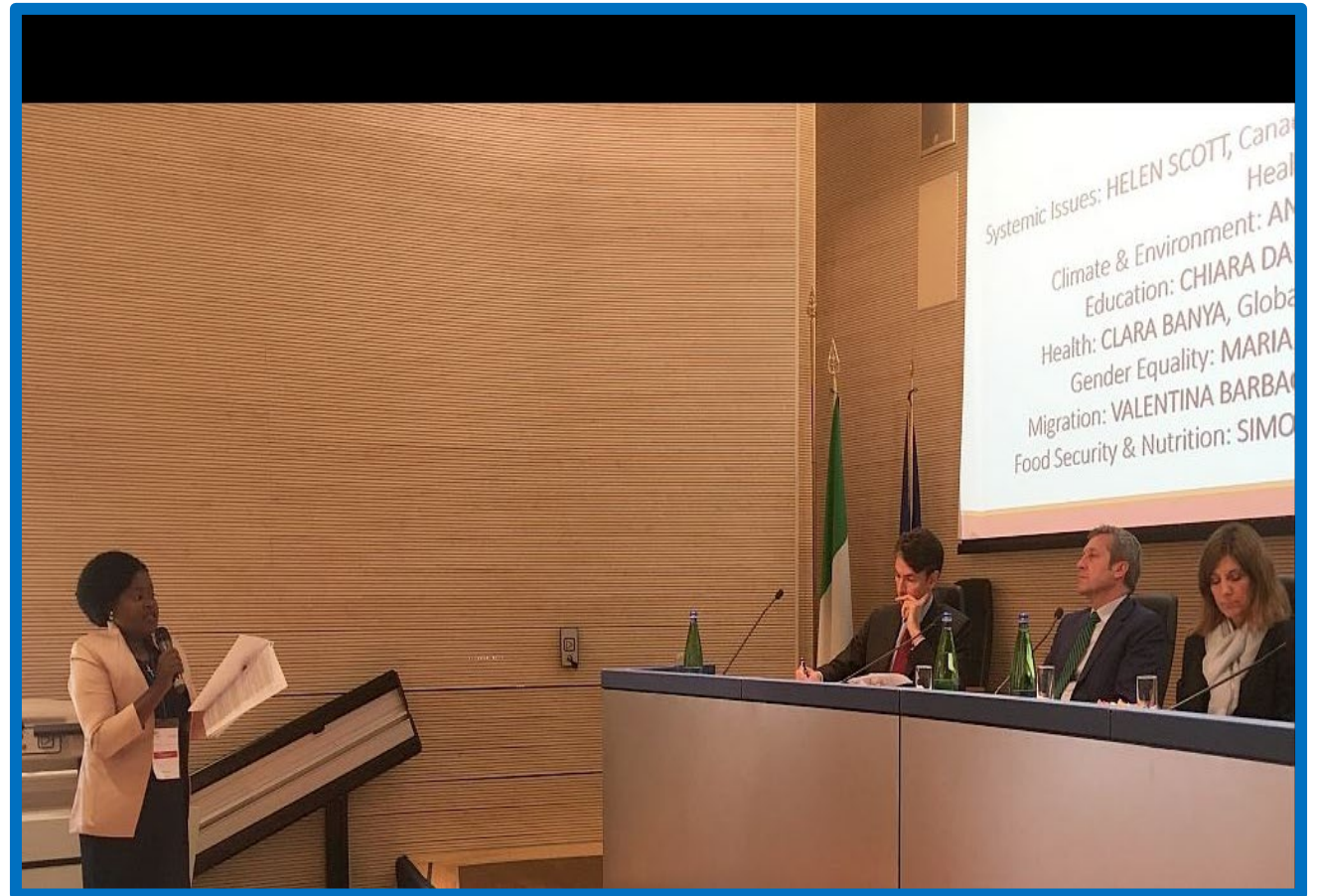
Schedule a Time Line



- Follow a time-line sending invitations/flyers to the speakers and/or your panel at least 3 weeks before the event, **keep an updated calendar and reminder notices of event and needed rsvp,**
- media advisory 5 days before event,
- phone calls 36 hours before event,
- call associated press daybook(that is the schedule reporters use to decide what to cover) between 8am and 8:30am on the day of the event,
- call tv and radio remind them the morning of the event to make announcement,
- do a public radio interview, submit story pitch and press release, remind all media contacts and assign people to help make those contacts.
- You can also utilize help from APWU asking for help getting media releases out communications@apwu.org .

• Step 3. Determining your Format and Agenda

- One of the most common formats is an educational meeting on the community campaign issue along with speakers and/or a panel discussion with a moderator, community discussion, question and answer period and then an action exercise. The town hall should not last longer than an hour to an hour in a half, with Question and Comment Period.
- You should have a strategic agenda with time allotted for each segment for the moderator. (See Sample Town Hall Agenda on page 19 of Toolkit, Guide to Planning Public Meetings).
- Type and provide a copy of a simple agenda for the audience that provides the problem, solution, and action plan.



Step 4. Identify and Invite Speakers and/or Panelists

Select trusted well respected speakers that have a great connection with the community and are important to inspire your audience. Your speakers or panelists should be diverse including an economist, local elected officials, community and faith-based leaders, union leaders etc. Remember ethnic diversity with regard to your speakers examples of different: races, seniors, disabled, low-income advocates, city council, pastor, mayor, state legislators, and youth organizers. Find a valued celebrity to help bring on a great crowd.

- Prepare in advance who will be assigned and ready to give on the spot interview with the press. They should be prepared with press packets to give to media groups. This person should be someone who can stay on target with the campaign issues, a “media spokesperson” (could be someone from your local or a community member).

• Step 5. Select a Moderator or Facilitator

- This person will be responsible for keeping the program on track. The moderator should be able to keep the conversations on topic and be a good timekeeper so that there is time to complete the agenda.
- This person should be able to keep the audience encouraged and the meeting exciting.



Step 6. How to Promote Your Event

Enlist support from your members, retirees, auxiliary, legislative director, and other organizations you work with, even if they are not a part of your committee. Have a video recorder, live stream operator, if it is a hybrid meeting someone in charge of the zoom. Advertise the meeting at least 1 month in advance, arrive 2 hours early for set up. You want to increase publicity. Check regularly to get an idea of how many people your volunteers have recruited to attend.

Step 7. Invitations to the event

The public leaders that are important to helping your campaign should be given a special invitation. Invite them all: members of congress, city council, mayors, school board, judges, law enforcement, labor relations office, public services leadership, the Governor, ACLU, Civil lawyers, airport authority, mailers, businesses etc. Give them a special invitation and an RSVP. Contact them to confirm and remind them 1-2 weeks before the event and the day before the event.

Step 8. Assign Volunteers for the Town Hall

Have a written list identifying those who have volunteered to help out the day of the event as well as preparations made prior to the event. Assign someone to handle media, to greet and seat members of the audience, to distribute materials, to manage equipment, set-up and break-down to include the sound system, banners, signs, photographer or videographer, set-up of stage props, table near entrance to have people sign petitions, resolutions, contact info or sign-in sheets, fact sheets etc. Keep a checklist for media and assigned volunteers. Keep in touch before the event to make sure they will attend (APWU Toolkit Guide for Planning a Public Meeting found in resources)

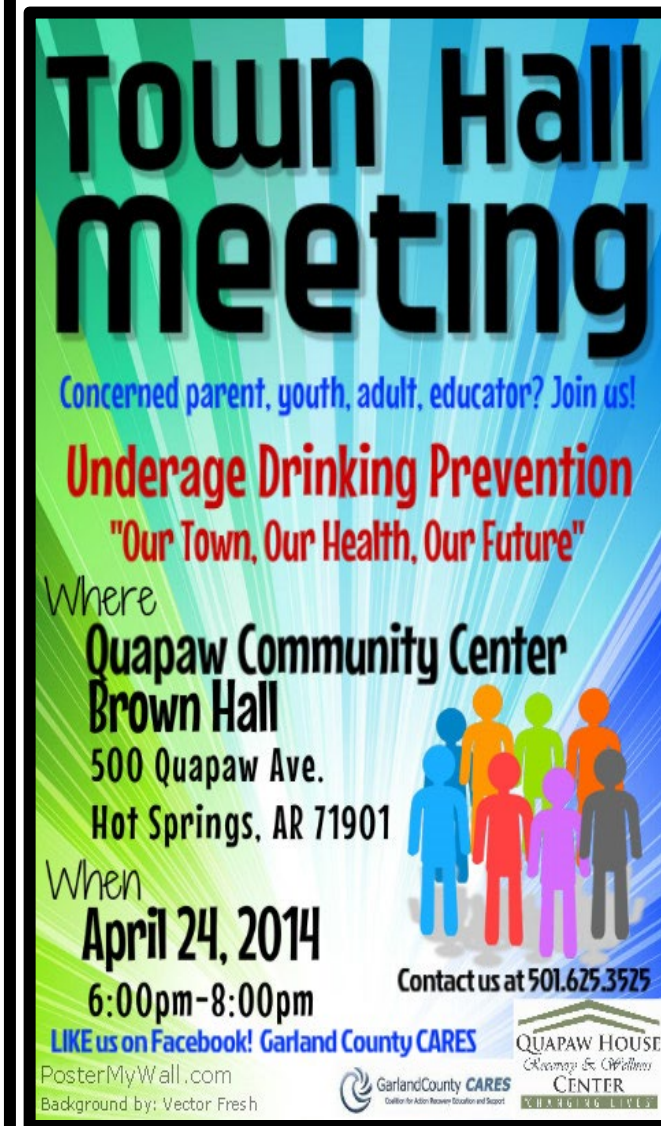


How will we advertise to the community the importance of the public meeting to save our Post Office. Look at ways to reach the most people in the shortest time.

- ❖ Circulate a petition to show that your entire community is on record of wanting to keep the Post Office intact, with no changes, or closure. Ask businesses to collect signatures. Have town hall meetings prior to the USPS meeting. Request city or county officials, the Mayor and City Council, and include all elected officials in town to sign a proclamation to keep the Post Office fully functional. Put petitions in the library, the country store, churches, etc. Provide copies for the Legislative Representatives and provide copies to the USPS at the community meeting. Have a Rally in front of the Post Office. Plan activities and events at the workplace in the breakroom when volunteers are on break, or before or after work at a near by diner or union or community space where you have greater participation.
- ❖ Make signs that can be attached to stakes that can be installed on both sides of the public street where the post office is located saying “Save Our Post Office” and include a community leader’s phone number to call and the date, time, and place of the community meeting. Rent an electronic sign or billboard flashing the same message. Do not place any signs in the post office or on its premises outside. Signs can be very effective in drawing media and TV attention. Write letters to the Editor of all the local newspapers and internet blogs, Facebook and other social media. Get leaders to show up on cable television asking the community to show up at the community meeting to save their post office. Notify your congressional member’s office, judges and ministers, and your radio stations of the time and place of the community meeting ask them to spread the information through their contacts with the community and get their commitment to attend, it’s a public service notice. Contact our APWU Communications Department for media contact and ideas. communications@apwu.org



Check with the city clerk as to what is scheduled so as not to compete with other events and add your townhall event to the clerk's schedule. Select a date when there is a congressional recess. Advertise with newspapers, church letters, community bulletin boards, Billboards, posting flyers, posters or banners that are visible at popular places such as schools, community centers, coffee shops, grocery stores, public libraries, hospitals, businesses. Keep flooding your town with posters and flyers. Advertise Gift Card (if donated) Raffle during the Meeting of those in attendance. Create a list of events where people can make announcements about your Town Hall, before the event, like a local business or organization meeting. Don't forget to utilize the AFL-CIO, central labor council and federation meetings, and have them e-mail all the union affiliates. You can create a Facebook page for your event where you can post updates on the event. Facebook can also help you to get people to RSVP if they are attending. Send e-mails and social media reminders. Utilize radio and community cable networks to share information about your public service event. Utilize every door direct mailing. Contact APWU Communications Department.



Prepare Media Spokespersons

Meet with your designated spokespersons. Remind them that they will greet the reporters, ask for their business card, giving them information (press kits) press release and a fact sheet. Make sure spokespersons know the subject matter and if they can't answer a question point to the person who would know. Make sure the reporter has the correct information including names and titles of those involved in the campaign and the panelists (Contact communications@apwu.org for a toolkit on best practices utilizing news and social media)

Tip: Make sure that those reporters who don't show up get sent the press release, media kit and pictures of the event immediately after the public meeting.

Use of Social Media and Live Tweeting

Assign someone in charge of handling social media and live stream for the event. Assign someone to do live tweet from the Town Hall Meeting and hashtag the campaign, as well as tagging members of congress or relevant organizations. Be sure to take pictures and share with our Communications Director: communications@apwu.org, Facebook, Instagram and twitter. During the meeting encourage everyone with a smartphone to share news of the event through social media and through coalition members. Utilize a QR code for survey, petition, or on flyers and hand them out.

Clean-up and Break Down

Be mindful to leave the meeting location as you found it and assign volunteers, to make sure to take down posters and banners and not to lose them in the cleaning process for your next event. Make sure you pick up the sign-in sheets and posters that can be utilized at another event.

The Day of Your Town Hall

Have materials (press kits) ready to hand out to reporters. Have sign-in sheets. Make sure speakers and panelists and local officials have packets. Include press release, fact sheet, pledge cards and your campaign information, utilize your volunteers to help by assigning them tasks at the event.

Refreshments/Coffee , Water & Food Set up a table for light refreshments and water. Be sure they are set for individuals to grab and go, without making too much noise or effort. Add upbeat music to a colorful visual slideshow with a video of the people of the post office, the work they do and the importance to the community, as people arrive.

Preparing Panelists, Moderator, and Timekeeper Meet with individuals prior to the event and include the panelists, moderator and timekeeper. Go over the agenda, how questions will be handled, if people are asking questions from zoom, how audio-visual and computer equipment will be used. List the time scheduled including question and answers and respond to any questions they may have. Timekeeper should have stop cards for 5 minute and 1 minute made, that will be a visual cue for the panelists and moderator to respect everyone's time.

Tip: Have bottles of water available for the panelists

Tip: Have a Coordinator who will take care of problems as they arise like helping with volunteer needs, fixing sound system, grabbing more chairs, needing more sign-in sheets, checking in with the media and providing packets, etc.

Local Data and Impact Questions:

- What is the logistics problem and what about other alternative locations in town?
- Demographics for seniors, the disabled, travel issues
- Connectivity rely on mail to communicate, not internet
- Businesses need Saturday delivery and lunch hours available
- Security needs with a post office & delivery no lockboxes
- What profit do you need, to keep post office full-service?

The community will be financially impacted. Be visible in the meeting consider making signs, stickers, or buttons. Post your signs around the room, have folks hold signs in prominent parts of the room, or even out front as people enter the meeting.

Assign someone to take detailed notes of postal responses to questions and their reason for proposal as well as the testimony given by the Community and video tape the meeting. **Ask who is against closure, show of hands, ask that those results be counted and included in the community meeting summary.**

Invite all the Local Media! Invite Legislators, Stakeholders, Businesses, Organizations, and Members. Save Everything Published, to document your Postal Regulatory Commission Appeal file and grievance file.

Keep the USPS Managers there until, everyone has had the opportunity to speak, collect surveys and petitions and copy and send them to the USPS and have a set for your grievance and your appeal to the Postal Regulatory Commission.

Build Relationships at the Town Hall/Public Meeting

I hope you take advantage of Public/Town Hall Meetings, In-Person and Hybrid (in person, zoom, livestream), making sure you develop that relationship with your Customers, Community, Members and your Legislative base. It Works! Start mentoring your new Members during their probationary period and after probation so they can become activists to help in the fight. Training and education is a must to have Solidarity with our Workers and our Community.

Through Public Meetings:

You can reach more People to stand with us and to save our “Peoples Postal Service”.

If you don't have your community contacts and your members email and cell phone contacts it is time to assign someone to work on that for the Local/State. A Powerful Local/State has those contacts at their fingertips for Mobilizing and Organizing for Our Fights ahead.

Questions for Customers to Ask at the Community Meeting

1. I rely on money orders to pay my bills as I am unbanked, how can I receive this service when I cannot travel to another town, nor keep up with the rural carrier's schedule to be at my house?
2. Our Post Office is a meeting place for our community and also provides bulletin board space for us to post notices of community activities, provides a safe school bus stop, and serves many other functions. When the post office closes the town dies. Clearly the post office serves as a vital communication center and can provide guidance and information for America's rural population during a national emergency. How can we be protected?
3. The federal government is spending an enormous amount of taxpayer money trying to create jobs. Why is the Postal Service trying to cut back and/or eliminate such an important business/service and jobs for our community members and family?
4. I understand the facility specifications for a contract office, are not as stringent as a real post office building operated by real postal employees. The security of the mail, safety and health issues should be the same, for all customers no matter where you live. How are you going to protect my rights to a full-service secure post office?
5. We are concerned about losing our community identity if our post office closes and we will lose our many businesses and a chance for growth. Aren't you obligated to protect our identity?

Questions for Customers to Ask at the Community Meeting (continued)

6. I no longer drive nor do I have anyone to drive me to other towns for service. I will be denied the right to receive important mail like my medicines and important bills and other needed supplies how will I get service?
7. Why are you proposing to move our post office boxes to a private business? Will you eventually close our post office? How will a contract worker give me the same service, urgency and security as my real post office? How much revenue are you looking for to keep our post office open?
8. How can I be certain that a contract worker will charge me the right fees for packages and other type of mail? Isn't it true that contract workers are not given the same training as postal employees, and are not required to take an oath to protect the mail as postal employees do?
9. How will I be able to send mail and packages to my son who is overseas in the military and get help with odd shaped boxes?
10. What can we do to keep our full-service post office?
11. Is this discontinuance because you have an issue with the lease, and if so, what is that problem? Is the Leaser at this meeting? Let the leaser speak.
12. If this office was suspended due to a safety and health issue, what is that issue, and why can't it be fixed?

Sample Talking Points all Your Events, Flyers, Signs, Direct Mailings, Interviews, Newspaper Articles

Examples:

- Community health getting medicines & educational materials
- Lack of access to internet services
- Impact to local businesses
- Weather impact during storms & winter months
- Actual mileage involved to alternative sites
- Hours not open after or before work for community members
- Community center for patrons
- Bulletin Board notices
- Money order needs
- Immigrant services to ship packages to family outside USA
- Political mailings and local election ballots
- Voter registration
- Connection to government agencies
- Need effective and regular services to rural areas
- Gas costs including lost work hours
- Community living under poverty level
- Depend on post office to pay bills on time and receive goods and needs to our rural area
- Utilize the Post Office for all communications
- Businesses need to mail packages and need Saturday delivery

Sample Talking Points all Your Events, Flyers, Signs, Direct Mailings, Interviews, Newspaper Articles

Examples:

- Need access to the post office during lunch hours
- Misquoted lease amount or misquoted cost savings projected
- 70% of post offices don't make profit. Rules say profit should not be a consideration to shut a post office down
- Compare alternative surveys done by the community
- Failed to reach all the patrons with USPS survey
- Announcing hours to be reduced within 30 days, not weighing input of the community
- A real post office provides over 37 services where alternate services provide 2-3 services
- The number of businesses within the community will be hurt and could close and leave the community, devastating the town
- A post office provides affordable postage fees
- A post office provides universal reliable mail service
- The post office provides a non-threatening place for unbanked to conduct financial transactions such as purchasing money orders
- The community will be adversely affected financially
- Business growth will end for retail stores, gas stations, eating establishments
- Loss of employment in the community
- Cost of attempting electronic mail

Sample Talking Points all Your Events, Flyers, Signs, Direct Mailings, Interviews, Newspaper Articles

Examples:

- Mail delays
- Loss in revenue to businesses in the community
- Increased vehicle emissions
- Loss in sales tax and property tax
- Loss in attracting new business
- Not adequate for the elderly and the disabled
- Denied access to voter registration, absentee ballots and passport applications
- Denied a positive image of the community
- Decrease in lease revenues when post office is vacated
- Increased driving, more accidents, wear & tear on the rural roads
- Economic issues of the community
- ❖ It will be important to make as many arguments as possible that involve the effects on your community post office. Make them to the USPS Representative at the meeting as well as in your appeal to the Postal Regulatory Commission.
- ❖ Give the USPS Representative a list of written questions the Community wants a response to within 15 days of the community meeting. **Ask attendees to raise their hand if they did not receive any USPS notices.**
- ❖ The Postal Service's presentation usually last about 20 minutes. The fact sheet they provide does not address the individual office and why it must close or reduce hours, it's based on a national funding crisis. If a survey was conducted, raise questions: who was surveyed and why the survey did not allow keeping full services intact, and what the USPS plans to do with the testimony from the Community Meeting?

Community Appeal to the Postal Regulatory Commission

When Do We File Our Appeal to the Postal Regulatory Commission?

- The public must be given a 60-day notice of a proposed action to enable the persons served by a post office to evaluate the proposal and provide comments.
- The final determination to close or consolidate a post office must be made in writing and must include the findings covering all the required considerations after the public comments are received and taken into account.
- Written determination must be made available to the customers served by the office at least 60 days before discontinuance takes effect.
- Any customer served by the affected post office may appeal the decision to the Postal Regulatory Commission (PRC) within 30 days after the written determination is made available. The PRC serves as the consumer advocate for customers. Make sure the PRC receives the appeal in Washington DC early enough within the 30 days. The PRC may either **affirm the determination of the Postal Service** or **return the matter for further consideration**, but may not modify the determination.
- **The PRC will render an opinion within 120 days after receiving the timely appeal.**

The rules provide opportunity for affected customers to express their views and concerns in writing. Customers should receive a reply in writing. All the USPS documents generated during the process become public information. You should request to review and copy, and a small postal fee may be charged. Each closing must be considered on its own merit. You can also obtain the information through the Freedom of Information Act. In your appeal, provide documentation/notes that your community collected during and after the public meeting that will help support your appeal. Sample Appeal Letter template can be found at VP Szeredy's APWU webpage.

Grievances, and Helping with the Community PRC Appeal

Remember to provide copies of your appeal to all your legislative and political representatives that can provide resolutions and other supporting documents to your appeal in support of keeping the post office opened and with full-services. Attach all related evidence and documentation to your grievances that you file concerning pressure from all agencies and community. Request your representatives to put pressure on the Board of Governors and the Postal Regulatory Commission to keep the post office open for the community needs. We need to keep the community engaged and contacting their political representatives, Board of Governors, and the Postal Regulatory Commission.

This is why it is so important to build your Local and also a strong community coalition through townhalls, public meetings, legislative breakfast meetings, and connecting with the AFL-CIO and Central Labor Councils, local businesses and community organizations that depend on the Postal Service. If you don't build these relationships the work becomes so much harder.

Resources:

Town Halls Vanderbilt Peabody College TN Mental Health Services/Recovery Advocacy Toolkit

Town Hall Guide Indivisible.org

How to Host Engaging and Impactful Town Hall Meetings, Blog/Polly

Guidelines for Virtual Meetings & Teleconferences, Michigan State University Extension

Is a Better Community Meeting Possible? The Century Foundation The Ultimate Guide to Better Virtual Town Hall Meetings in 2024, Cassy Aite
hoppier.com

Public Participation Guide, Public Meetings, www.epa.gov

A Guide to Effective Public Meetings, Navy and Marine Corps Public Health Center

6 Tips for Inclusive Public Meetings, American Planning Association Tele-Town Hall Events, Tele-TownHall.com

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**We Can Win When
When We Mobilize
And Fight Back to Save
Our Post Offices
Have Faith In Each
Other! Our Community
wants to keep their
Post Offices. They will
Step Up with Us, We
are Not Alone in this
Fight!**