

Voluntary Early Retirement

Reminder: Employees Seeking 'Early Outs' Asked To Provide Information

In order to ensure an accurate count of eligible employees *who would have exercised the option to retire early* but were denied the opportunity to do so, the APWU is reminding employees who fall in this category to complete the form below and return it to APWU headquarters no later than Nov. 24, 2003.

"It is important that the APWU have as accurate a count as possible of employees who would have taken the early out had they *not* been denied the opportunity" said Greg Bell, director of Industrial Relations.

Only those employees who are eligible and would have exercised the option to retire early should complete the form. In addition, only employees who have not already returned a completed form need do so. Employees who have already completed and returned the form should not do so again.

"We're obtaining the identification of all APWU-represented employees who would have opted for Voluntary Early Retirement," Bell said. "This includes anyone who received and completed a VER 'Statement of Interest' letter."

The APWU wants to hear from those who submitted the statement of interest, but then were denied the offer. The union also would like to know what reason, if any, was given for the disapproval, and other relevant information.

The information the union is seeking from employees will help us identify those eligible employees *who would have exercised the option to retire early*.

The form shown below is also available through your local president and through APWU's Web site, www.apwu.org.

Name _____
(print)
Job Title _____ Craft _____ Level _____
Work Location _____
(Name of installation or facility) (address)

- I have not received a VER "Statement of Interest" letter from the Postal Service. I meet the service requirements of 25 or more years (any age), or 20 or more years of service and age 50 as of Nov. 1, 2003, Feb. 1, 2004, or March 1, 2004 (please circle one). I would have retired early had I been granted the opportunity to do so.
- I have received and submitted a VER "Statement of Interest" letter to the Postal Service but have not received a response. I would have retired early had I been granted the opportunity to do so.
- I have received and submitted a VER "Statement of Interest" letter to the Postal Service but have been denied the offer for voluntary early retirement. I would have retired early had I been granted the opportunity to do so. (Please attach disapproval letter, if available.)

Complete by Nov. 24 and return to:
Industrial Relations, Attn: APWU VER-Form
American Postal Workers Union
1300 L St. NW, Washington, DC 20005

Union Members' Participation Sought In Upcoming 'Human Rights Day'

Tens of thousands of workers, community activists, religious leaders, and elected officials will mobilize across the county on Dec. 10 to send the message that "workers' rights are human rights."

International Human Rights Day commemorates the anniversary of the ratification of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948. The declaration includes the guarantee of the right of people in every nation to join unions and bargain collectively.

However, "In many areas of U.S. labor law and practice, loophole-ridden laws, paralyzing delays, and feeble enforcement have led to a culture of impunity," said Kenneth Roth, director of Human Rights Watch, the international organization of academics, lawyers, and journalists. "Legal obstacles tilt the playing field so steeply against workers that the U.S. is in violation of the basic human rights standards" established in the 55-year-old declaration.

The AFL-CIO is coordinating hundreds of rallies, marches, public hearings, candlelight vigils and other

events to mark the beginning of a campaign to educate the public about employer abuses, and to mobilize union members to challenge weak labor laws.

The campaign will focus on the passage of the Employee Free Choice Act, introduced Nov. 13 by Sen. Ted Kennedy (D-MA), to ensure that when a majority of employees in a workplace decide to form a union, they can do so without having to overcome so many obstacles that now block their free choice. Among other things, the bill would establish stronger penalties for violation of employee rights during union organizing drives and "first contract" negotiations.

The National Labor Relations Act of 1935 supposedly guarantees that workers are to be free of employer interference when they try to form labor organizations. But in reality, millions of working Americans who seek to bargain collectively are harassed, intimidated, and even fired when they try to form unions.

To learn more about how you can participate in a Dec. 10 event near you, visit www.aflcio.org.