



# REGION 5 NBA REPORT

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National Business Agent's Report

NALC Region 5

I hope that the new year finds each of you healthy and happy. Hopefully 2022 is the year that will mark putting the Covid pandemic behind us.

Since this is my first article as National Business Agent I wanted to start out by thanking retiring NBA Mike Birkett for his friendship and years of service and dedication to the NALC and its members, especially the members of Region 5. We all wish you a long, healthy, happy retirement and will miss your experience and leadership.

I would also like to thank past NBA's Mike Birkett, Dan Pittman, Mike Weir, Art Buck, and Joe Miller for their leadership, dedication and all they have taught me over the years. I also need to thank the letter carriers at the James Crews station, members of my local branch and its officers, especially Melvin Moore and the four horseman, and the Missouri state association for your confidence, support and friendship. Last, but certainly not least, I need to thank my wife Kelly and my family for supporting me in my desire and passion in supporting letter carriers and their families over the past three decades.

I intend to make training, contractual enforcement and development of future branch and state and regional leaders top priorities in Region 5. Region 5 has a rich history of educating and training letter carriers. My goal is to build on those past successes of my predecessors where training is concerned and to expand into other areas such as, Branch President meetings, branch and state training, CCA training, and new steward training just to name a few.

As many of you may be aware Gary Mills has been publishing the NBA Article by e-mail for some time now. That service will no longer be provided and it will be necessary to migrate to another platform of some kind in order to get the report disseminated to the region. We are looking at several options, including a possible Region 5 website that will allow us to provide information to all of you. Decisions will be made in the near future and we will communicate those changes with the region.

**Covid-19-** Due to the Omicron variant Covid numbers continue to surge. As of this writing, daily positive cases have exceeded 700,000. It is very important to make sure that everyone is aware of their ability and right to file a COVID-19 claim. Since the ARPA was signed into law, it has made this process easier. ECOMP has a COVID specific CA-1 claim. It is very important that COP box is checked. There is still the 3 calendar day waiting period but COP should kick in right after that. If COP isn't immediately paid, a grievance should be filed. Also an OSHA whistleblower complaint and EEO based on disability discrimination. Please make sure everyone is aware of their rights as it is clear that management is not encouraging, assisting or advising them of their rights. Branch presidents have been sent documents that explain the CA-1 Covid filing process in a step by step format. Please utilize this prior to filing your CA-1 claim.

**2 in 1 Casing Test Update-** After the dust settled over the 2 in 1 casing initiative Kansas City, Kansas stations Wyandotte and Civic Center were pulled from the program leaving Sikeston, MO. the only installation in Region 5 still in the process. This initiative was designed so that the Postal service could capture floor space for the peak season to allow for parcel storage. The Sikeston Post Office gained only 350-400 square feet of additional space which still did not provide space for peak season parcels. The initiative is scheduled to end January 22, 2022. As a carrier that underwent several of these type of "tests" or initiatives I can attest to the frustration it brings to letter carriers on the workroom floor. Thanks to all the carriers at the Sikeston Post Office for hanging in there and hopefully we can get back to normal soon.

**Postal Reform-** An update on Postal Reform (HR 3076/S 1720), is the first major piece of legislation which involves postal reform, in 15 years. Postal Reform has been gaining bipartisan support in both the House and Senate side, since the bill's introduction. Just a reminder of what is in this Bill; first it would repeal the mandate that the Postal Service pre-fund decades' worth of health benefits for its future retirees, which was enacted through the Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act of 2006. Secondly, this legislation would reform the Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) Program to maximize participation in Medicare once most active postal employees (as of Jan. 1, 2024) retire and reach age 65. We expect the legislation may come to the floor for a vote in February so every Letter Carrier needs to continue making calls to their Senators and Representative in support of this crucial piece of

legislation. To find out if your members of Congress are cosponsors, visit NALC's Legislative Action Center on [nalc.org](http://nalc.org).

**Region 5 Rap Session**- Region 5 will hold our annual Rap Session virtually this year on February 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup>. We have a full agenda of training including an advanced OWCP breakout and we expect that a National Officer will speak as well. Information concerning registration and training materials will be coming soon.

**Covid-19 Test Kits**- The White House recently contracted the Postal Service to deliver 500 million Covid-19 home test kits to those who want them. A web site will soon be up and running and those interested can order them at no cost. Each kit will contain 4 home tests. The Postal Service will package, label and deliver these kits to households across America.

**Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive**- Registration for the NALC Food Drive to be held on May 14, 2022 is now open. Branch Presidents can register their respective branches in the "Members Only" portal on the NALC website. The NALC will continue to monitor the ongoing impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, and if necessary, modify or cancel the 2022 food drive.