



National Postal Mail Handlers Union

THE BREAKDOWN

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STRENGTH & HONOR
A DIVISION OF THE LABORERS' INTERNATIONAL UNION OF NORTH AMERICA, AFL-CIO #308

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Vol. IV
2008



Tom O'Keefe, a manager of OPM, has established a program aimed at modernizing both the Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS) and the Federal Employee's Retirement System. (FERS) Retirement System Modernization (RSM) is an OPM initiative designed to improve the quality and timeliness of all aspects of the retirement process following an employee's separation from Federal Service. It will also serve to automate retirement claims transactions and provide retirement modeling capability for employees using electronic data. If you haven't checked your OPF personnel file in some time I would do so soon. Make sure all data is correct and times served are noted right. This new system is going online and data needs to be accurate and clean. OPM will be processing all active Federal employees by this system beginning February 2008. The first agency to be processed is the GSA. The Postal Service will be the next wave the OPM will take into the system. Under this new system, there will be NO Intern Pay. Postal employees will be able to retire on any day (if qualified) and get their first full check (5) days later. OPM presented a very promising picture.

Shift work doesn't have to make workers sick. Here are some tips to give them to make their lives easier and a program to improve the health of all your employees. Some 20 percent of employees work the night shift. While that makes it possible for organizations to run at all hours, it can be awfully hard on the workers themselves. "The human body was made to sleep at night and stay awake in the daytime," explains safety expert Barbara Manning Grimm. And that leads to difficulties from digestive upset to a lack of alertness that can be disastrous around machinery or behind the wheel of a car or truck. What can workers do for themselves?

- Cook several large dishes at the beginning of the week. Then simply reheat as needed.
- Send a copy of your schedule to family and friends, so you can plan time together.
- Have breakfast or lunch with loved ones (even if they are your lunch and dinner!)
- Because your loved ones are asleep while you work, use e-mails or notes to keep in touch.
- Don't bother with little chores during the workweek. Save them for your days off.
- Focus on what you can get out of shift work, including the extra pay and the sunny days you can spend with the kids.
- Let your family know how important it is to get sleep during the day. Rest in a darkened room with the phone turned off. And post a note on the door to wake you at a set time. (Add that you should be wakened immediately in an emergency.)
- Eat nutritiously. Shift work stresses the body enough. And sweet snacks can make you drowsy on the job.