



Trenton Metropolitan Area Local

Affiliated with

American Postal Workers Union AFL-CIO

P.O. Box 8011, Trenton, New Jersey 08650 • (609) 631-7745 • FAX (609) 631-7747

To: All Motor Vehicle Service (MVS) Drivers
From: John Minor, APWU, Vice President
Date: January 24, 2026

This letter is being issued to clarify the important distinction between being designated as “essential personnel” and the legal and contractual safety obligations that apply to all Motor Vehicle Service (MVS) drivers, particularly in light of the forecasted winter storm on January 25, 2026, which is expected to produce 8 to 12 inches of snow and icy road conditions.

1. Essential Personnel Status

The designation of postal employees as *essential personnel* means that the Postal Service expects continued operations during emergencies. However, this designation does not override federal safety laws, USPS safety policies, or contractual protections. Essential status does not require an employee to report to work or operate a vehicle under conditions that are unsafe or unlawful.

2. DOT Regulation - 49 CFR § 392.14 (Hazardous Conditions)

Under 49 CFR § 392.14, commercial motor vehicle drivers must exercise extreme caution when hazardous conditions such as snow, ice, sleet, fog, or other adverse weather affect visibility or traction.

The regulation is explicit:

- Drivers must reduce speed when hazardous conditions exist.
- Drivers must discontinue operation if conditions become sufficiently dangerous.
- No employer may require or coerce a driver to operate a commercial vehicle in violation of this regulation.

Failure to comply with DOT regulations exposes drivers to personal liability, regardless of any internal instructions to continue operations.

3. USPS Safety Policies (ELM & Handbook EL-801)

USPS safety policy is clear and binding under Article 14 of the National Agreement and Article 19, which incorporates the Employee and Labor Relations Manual (ELM) and Handbook EL-801:

- The Postal Service's policy is to provide a safe and healthful workplace.
- Employees are not required to place themselves in unsafe situations, including unsafe travel to and from work or unsafe operation of postal vehicles.
- Management may not intimidate, threaten, or pressure employees into disregarding safety concerns.

Safety is a shared responsibility, and no employee should be disciplined for exercising good judgment in hazardous conditions.

4. Reporting to Work vs. Safe Operation

While employees are expected to make a reasonable effort to report to work, no driver is required to risk their safety, violate DOT regulations, or operate a vehicle when road conditions are unsafe-either while commuting in a personal vehicle or operating a postal vehicle.

Each driver must make a good-faith, individual safety assessment based on:

- Road conditions
- Visibility
- Ice accumulation
- Vehicle handling and braking ability

5. Union Position

The Union fully supports MVS drivers who:

- Comply with DOT regulations
- Follow USPS safety policies
- Make safety-based decisions during severe weather events

Any attempt to discipline, intimidate, or retaliate against a driver for adhering to safety laws and policies will be vigorously challenged through the grievance procedure and all appropriate legal forums.

6. Final Reminder

No mail, schedule, or operational directive is more important than human life and safety. Drivers are encouraged to document hazardous conditions and communicate with management when safety concerns arise.

Please remain safe, use sound judgment, and know that the Union stands behind you.

Respectfully,



John Minor

APWU, TMAL 1020

Vice President

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To: All Clerks, Maintenance, and VMF Employees

From: APWU Local Union

Date: January 25, 2026

Subject: Safety Guidance for January 25, 2026 Snowstorm (8-12 Inches Expected)

Brothers and Sisters,

This notice is being issued in response to the winter storm forecasted for Sunday, January 25, 2026, which is expected to bring 8 to 12 inches of snow, ice accumulation, reduced visibility, and hazardous travel conditions throughout the area.

While postal operations may continue during severe weather, employee safety remains a contractual and policy-mandated priority under Article 14 of the National Agreement, which requires the Postal Service to provide safe and healthful working conditions for all employees, including Clerks, Maintenance, and VMF personnel.

Storm-Related Safety Risks

This storm is expected to create significant safety hazards, including but not limited to:

- Dangerous road conditions while commuting to and from work
- Snow- and ice-covered parking lots, sidewalks, docks, and entrances
- Slippery work surfaces inside and outside postal facilities
- Reduced visibility and increased risk of slips, falls, and vehicle accidents
- Additional risks for VMF employees, including fueling operations, vehicle movement, outdoor inspections, and emergency repairs in snow and ice

USPS safety policy requires management to identify, assess, and mitigate weather-related hazards before exposing employees to unsafe conditions.

Safety Responsibilities During the Snowstorm

During the January 25, 2026 storm:

- Employees should use sound judgment when weather conditions present legitimate safety risks.
- Unsafe conditions at or around postal facilities must be reported immediately.
- Employees may document hazardous conditions using PS Form 1767 when appropriate.
- No employee - including VMF employees performing outdoor or vehicle-related duties - should be pressured, intimidated, or threatened into ignoring storm-related safety concerns.
- Management remains responsible for ensuring parking lots, walkways, docks, work areas, and VMF operational spaces are reasonably safe before directing employees to perform work.

USPS safety guidance makes clear that accidents and injuries during severe weather are preventable and that operational demands do not eliminate management's obligation to protect employee safety.

Union Position on the January 25 Storm

The Union recognizes the mission of the Postal Service; however, no mission requirement supersedes employee safety. Employees must not be placed in situations where snow and ice conditions create an unreasonable risk of injury, accident, or harm, whether commuting to work or performing assigned duties.

The Union will closely monitor management's handling of storm-related safety conditions and will take appropriate action to enforce Article 14 and USPS safety policies where violations occur.

Please prioritize your safety, remain alert to changing weather conditions, and report any unsafe situations immediately.

In Solidarity,



John Minor

APWU, TMAL 1020

Vice President