# APWU Enters Mediation

*April 9, 2019* — 04/09/2019 – In our continuing efforts to get the contract the members deserve, the APWU invoked mediation on April 3, 2019 – sending a letter to the Acting Director of the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service and to the Postal Service. The Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service (FMCS) is a federal agency that provides public and private-sector labor-management mediation, and by law it is responsible for facilitating the APWU’s demand for mediation with the Postal Service.

In mediation a neutral expert with the experience and training to develop information about the parties, their industry, and their issues will help them look for common ground towards reaching agreement.  A mediator may offer suggestions and recommendations to either or both sides, but does not have the authority to impose a settlement, set contract terms, or require that the parties end mediation with any kind of agreement. The process is expected to take approximately forty-five (45) days.

Even when mediation fails to get a total resolution, this step may help narrow and focus disputes.  Such narrowing of some disputes could make interest arbitration more successful for the members.

As the mediation process moves forward, the APWU national officers, members from the field, legal counsel, and staff members are working daily in preparation for interest arbitration. Internal meetings are occurring and will continue on a regularly scheduled basis. Craft officers, the core committee, the Industrial Relations Department, and the President are developing persuasive evidence and arguments, concerning your work and the appropriate compensation for your service, to present to the Postal Service and to an arbitrator.

“Mediation is just another one of the APWU’s efforts to ensure that no stone is left unturned in our continuing battle to get the members what they deserve in their next contract,” said Industrial Relations Director Vance Zimmerman.

“Management’s recent final proposal showed their disrespect for the hard work of the postal workers by demanding a new 4th tier of employees with lower pay, fewer benefits, less leave, no cost-of-living increases, limited lump sum pay increases for current employees, and the threat of layoffs,” President Mark Dimondstein said. “This next step in the process is one more tool we can utilize to help get the workers of today—and tomorrow—the wages, benefits, and work environment they deserve. We truly are fighting today for a better tomorrow.”