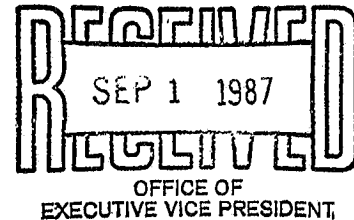




UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE
Labor Relations Department
475 L'Enfant Plaza, SW
Washington, DC 20260-4100

August 31, 1987



Mr. William Burrus
Executive Vice President
American Postal Workers
Union, AFL-CIO
1300 L Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20005-4107

Dear Mr. Burrus:

This is in response to your August 6 letter regarding the Postal Service policy on hiring individuals confirmed as having Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS), the retention of current employees infected since their employment, and the interaction of such employees with noninfected employees.

As you know, the Postal Service guidelines on AIDS follows the recommendations of the Center for Disease Control (CDC). These guidelines were published April 17, 1986, in Postal Bulletin 21562.

With respect to hiring, individuals with AIDS will be treated in the same manner as any other applicant. Specifically, the hiring decision is made by management based on the medical assessment (PS Form 2485, Medical Examination and Assessment) of the applicant's ability to perform the core functions of the position applied for. Testing for AIDS is not done in preemployment examinations.

With respect to current employees, an employee believed to be at risk or unable to perform the job satisfactorily may be given a fitness-for-duty examination which will medically evaluate the employee's ability to perform the core functions of his/her position. As with any other chronic illness, a risk assessment is made based on the results of the medical examination.

With respect to the interaction of AIDS infected employees with noninfected employees, the CDC continues to indicate that transmission of the disease does not result from casual

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contact between people. It is known that the transmission of the disease does occur through the exchange of body fluids, i.e., blood, semen, the use of contaminated needles by chronic drug abusers, injection of contaminated blood or blood products, and by transmission of the infection to a baby through the mother's milk, or placental blood. The person-to-person contact that occurs within the workplace does not pose a risk of transmission. Shaking hands, hugging, coughing, sneezing, sharing toilet facilities, or being in the same room has not been identified by the CDC as a means of transmitting the disease.

As was indicated in the previously mentioned Postal Bulletin, all postal employees should educate themselves regarding the known facts about AIDS. Professional postal medical staff are available to managers and employees for consultation and assistance.

Should there be any questions regarding the foregoing, please contact Harvey White at 268-3831.

Sincerely,

The signature is written in black ink and is highly stylized, appearing to read 'William Downer'.

Thomas J. Fritsch
Assistant Postmaster General