



## **VOLUNTARY EMPLOYEES' BENEFICIARY ASSOCIATION**

### **NOTICE OF A RULE CHANGE PERTAINING TO SICK PAY CLAIMS**

As a result of the surge of absences due to COVID-19 infections and the changes in the Postal Services' leave policies, the Trustees of the National Postal Mail Handlers Union Local 305 Voluntary Employees' Beneficiary Association ("VEBA") have determined that it is necessary to modify the rules for receipt of benefits under the VEBA's Sick Pay Plan to preserve the assets of the VEBA, when alternative benefits are available. Specifically, to be entitled to benefits, if the illness preventing you from working is related to COVID-19, you must first apply for benefits with the Office of Workers' Compensation Programs (OWCP). Accordingly, the rules for receipt of Sick Pay benefits are as follows:

- **If you are applying for Sick Pay benefits, you must timely submit a completed claim form to the VEBA with all requested documentation.**
- **You are not entitled to Sick Pay benefits if you have not exhausted your leave with the Postal Service or if your absence is related to a compensable on-the-job injury.**
- **If your illness is related to COVID-19, you must first apply for benefits with OWCP. Your application will be rejected by the VEBA if you have not first applied for benefits with OWCP.**
- **If benefits are granted through OWCP, you are not entitled to benefits from the VEBA during the same weeks covered by the OWCP benefits.**
- **If you are denied benefits through OWCP, you may apply for benefits with the VEBA and your application will be considered. You must submit a copy of the OWCP denial with your claim form.**

These rules are effective January 1, 2022, for benefits payable on and after this date. These rules will remain in place unless and until modified by the Trustees. Due to the evolving nature of the pandemic and the changes to leave available to employees affected by pandemic-related illnesses, the Trustees reserve the right to modify these rules when circumstances warrant to protect the VEBA so that its assets are not depleted and to ensure that the VEBA is able to continue to provide benefits well into the future.