

## SERVICE SECTOR

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11 September 2019

### To Unite members of the Royal Mail Group

Colleagues

#### Industrial Action by the CWU

Unite recognises and supports the right of the CWU to take official industrial action in pursuit of their differences with the employer.

And for this reason we have sought updated legal advice based on current employment law and the contract of employment for our Unite members.

We are advised that you are only required to do work that is your contractual obligation. Your employer cannot insist upon you carrying out work that is outside of your contractual obligations.

Whether any request by the employer is lawful or not will depend upon the nature of the individual request and the terms in your own contract.

Members are not required to assist Royal Mail in completing the skills matrix that they have produced as we are not required to assist them in their preparations to limit the strike.

Members are however required to respond professionally to a reasonable request from their line manager who may want to clarify elements of their role with them. If you have any doubts around this then either refer your manager to a senior union rep or offer to respond once you have yourself sought clarity. Members are asked to retain their professionalism during this time and to conduct themselves accordingly.

Unite will take every step necessary to support any member who finds themselves in a difficult position and who has acted, in our opinion, reasonably.

We are aware of the briefings you are being invited to and are we are also alert to the content of the 36 slide pack. Your senior area reps have already engaged with SDDs and in parts of the country have already confirmed that during any possible industrial action no manager will be

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coerced or threatened into doing frontline work. We are aware that the business will seek volunteers and will have to 'risk assess' any task put to any of those volunteers. We are also aware of a somewhat inflammatory style being adopted in certain other areas and this has been immediately flagged to the business at national level.

We now expect Royal Mail to ensure that Unite members who are not in dispute with the company are protected in the workplace and not subjected to unfair treatment or put at risk in any way.

We also expect Royal Mail to be reasonable in its approach and that anything that is asked of an individual is something for which they are capable, trained, have the necessary safety equipment and is a contractual requirement. We will also be writing to Royal Mail to clarify our position.

As the dates for any action are yet to be fixed we will contact you again nearer the time but if you have any questions or points of clarity please come back to Unite via your senior reps.

Regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jase Bull".

**National Officer**

Service Sector