

Important update

Today, we will make an application to the High Court for an interim order to injunct CWU with respect to its recent postal ballot of Royal Mail employees for industrial action. We believe there are potential irregularities in the ballot, which would mean it was unlawful.

We are making this application because the integrity and legal soundness of any electoral process is vital. This is particularly the case due to potential industrial action around the General Election.

We are also making this application because of the damage industrial action would do to the Company and our customers in the run-up to Christmas.

Why we are taking action:

Specific legislation is in place which is designed to safeguard democratic integrity by ensuring union members can vote in the privacy of their own homes, rather than in any public process. We have supplied substantial evidence to the High Court from at least 72 of our UK sites – there may be substantially more – that demonstrates that CWU officials, including coordination and direction at a senior level, have planned and orchestrated breaches of their legal obligations. The evidence includes members:

- being asked to intercept and remove their ballot papers from mail coming into their delivery offices, before they were delivered to their homes;

- being instructed to vote “yes” and being encouraged to do so in groups, and;
- being encouraged to open their ballot papers on site, mark them as “yes”, with their colleagues present and filming or photographing them doing so, before posting their ballots together at their workplace postboxes.

We are seeking a High Court Order that the ballot was unlawful and, therefore, null and void. If this happens, CWU could not give notification of industrial action until it has completed a lawful ballot in favour of industrial action. We expect our application to be heard in the High Court next week.

What we have said to CWU

We provided CWU with the information on which this application is based.

The company wants to enter into a full negotiation with the CWU – and this remains the case. Given that we have found these breaches, we have asked the CWU to call off the industrial action but they have not offered to do so.

Mails integrity

- Under the postal regulatory framework, documented operating standards about mails integrity are in place.
- They make it clear that employees cannot open their mail at the delivery office without the prior authorisation of their manager.
- Alongside our application for an injunction, we will review whether any further action is required. We have also informed Ofcom.



This application does not apply to employees within Parcelforce Worldwide. They are the subject of separate ballot notices.