



The National Rural Letter Carrier

The official monthly publication of the National Rural Letter Carriers' Association, established in 1903

NRLCA and USPS Reach Tentative Three-Year Agreement

IMPORTANT!

See inside this issue for:

- Tentative Contract Language and Explanations
 - Revised MOUs
- Dates and Times for Zoom Ratification Meetings

THE NATIONAL RURAL LETTER CARRIERS' ASSOCIATION

Established in 1903
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NRLCA Reaches Tentative Agreement with USPS for Three-Year Contract



**Don Maston,
National President**

On April 18, 2025, the NRLCA reached a tentative agreement on our successor National Agreement with the Postal Service. The details of that agreement are presented in this special edition of *The National Rural Letter Carrier*, and we will be holding ratification meetings around the country and via Zoom to present the terms of the National Agreement to the membership for consideration.

Our 2021-2024 contract expired on May 20, 2024. We engaged in three months of main table bargaining, meeting in person both at NRLCA and USPS headquarters. Dozens of proposals were exchanged by the parties. And while those bargaining sessions were productive, at the expiration of the contract, we still had not reached terms for an overall agreement. Undeterred, the parties agreed to continue talks and we had many more subcommittee meetings and other meetings with both PMG Louis DeJoy and Deputy PMG Doug Tulino, who took on additional responsibilities, including Acting Postmaster General, as our talks progressed.

As always, your National Board took into consideration the many resolutions that our delegates have passed at National Conventions over the past several years. The NRLCA proposals provided for appropriate and reasonable wage increases, continued cost-of-living adjustments, and the maintenance of many core benefits, including the no lay-off clause.

Your National Board believes that we have accomplished these goals in this National Agreement and have also achieved some work-rule changes that make sense for our craft.

I also want to remind everyone that every time we enter negotiations with the Postal Service,

the employer is looking to cut costs and gain advantages. We know that the Postal Service would love to eliminate our right to elect the high option. Keep in mind that a rural carrier's retirement is based on the high-3 average of our evaluated pay. Unlike the other crafts where retirement is based on 40 hours per week, rural carrier retirement is based on their route's evaluation, with overtime built into their high-3.

The Postal Service historically seeks to eliminate Christmas overtime and re-base COLA, effectively "skipping" one or more COLA adjustments and costing rural carriers money for years to come. We are pleased that we have maintained Christmas overtime and our COLA clause remains untouched. Our new contract will continue with automatic salary adjustments every six months based on increases to the Consumer Price Index in addition to General Wage Increases (GWIs). While the employer sought to gain concessions during this round of bargaining, your National Board stood firm: there are only gains in this tentative agreement.

For decades, the Postal Service has sought to ensure that GWIs for the four major unions remain consistent. Interest arbitrators have also ordered that wage patterns be followed. So when the Postal Service and National Association of Letter Carriers (NALC) brought their impasse to Arbitrator Dennis Nolan and he issued GWIs of 1.3%, 1.4%, and 1.5%, we knew it would be difficult to do better – without making significant compromises. We did negotiate enhanced wage increases for our relief carriers, including a first-ever \$1.00-an-hour wage increase for Table Four RCAs and ARCs with three years of service.

Your National Board is also very mindful of

the current economic climate, we are facing an unprecedented environment both in Washington and within USPS leadership. There's been a dramatic shift in the federal political landscape with the current administration. There is renewed talk of postal privatization and we have been monitoring this administration's approach to federal agencies and organized labor. At the Postal Service, we are in a period of significant transition, as the USPS is operating with many vacancies on the Board of Governors and an "Acting" Postmaster General. The times we live in are very uncertain.

Please closely review this special edition of *The National Rural Letter Carrier* and e-mail contract@nrlca.org with any questions that you may have. We will be answering questions on the NRLCA website (www.nrlca.org) on a regular basis. Please check the site frequently to see the answers to common questions, as this will help alleviate duplicate questions and expedite our ratification meetings.

As you read the proposed changes to our contract, I ask that you consider the changes as they affect all NRLCA members, not individually, but our craft as a whole.

Ratification Meetings to be Held in Person and Via Zoom in Every State

Dear NRLCA Active Craft Member:

The NRLCA and the USPS have reached a tentative agreement on a new collective bargaining agreement: the 2024-2027 National Agreement between the USPS and the NRLCA.

Pursuant to Article XI of the NRLCA Constitution, "National Agreements reached between the Association and the USPS shall be presented to Bargaining Unit Members in good standing via *The National Rural Letter Carrier* and in Ratification Meetings held nationwide. At least one Ratification Meeting shall be held within each state association, and at least one videoconferencing/virtual meeting for each state association."

Virtual Meetings on Zoom

Please refer to the list on the opposite page for your state's meeting date and time for the virtual Zoom meeting. We realize some states are located in more than one time zone so please be sure to reference the time zone associated with your state's ratification meeting.

To access the meeting, log into the NRLCA website at the specified time for your state's meeting. Members will see a link to access your state's ratification meeting via Zoom on your computer, tablet, or smartphone. The link will also provide call-in details for those members without access to the options listed above.

Please understand the Zoom platform has limitations, so please only access the meeting for your specific state. We realize there may be occasions where a member is not available for their state's meeting and it is acceptable to access a different meeting in very limited situations, as we want to provide access to every member to attend a ratification meeting.

Your cooperation following these directions is appreciated in advance so we can all have successful ratification meetings.

In-Person Meetings

A National Officer has also been assigned to your state to explain the provisions of this tentative agreement via an in-person meeting. **The meeting dates and times for the in-person meetings will be published on the NRLCA website as soon as available.**

NOTE: This is a CLOSED Association Meeting for NRLCA Members Only! Please bring this magazine or other form of proof of membership to present at the door to gain access to this meeting.

Your attendance is requested at this important meeting, online or in person.

Sincerely,

Your NRLCA National Board

State	Date Of Meeting	Local Time Of Meeting	Local Time Zone	For Zoom Meeting or Call In Information	Eastern Time Zone
May 2025 Ratification Meetings Information Week 1					
NH	Tuesday, 5/6/2025	6:00-7:00 pm	Eastern	visit www.nrlca.org	6:00-7:00 pm
FL	Tuesday, 5/6/2025	7:15-8:15 pm	Eastern	visit www.nrlca.org	7:15-8:15 pm
ME	Wednesday, 5/7/2025	6:00-7:00 pm	Eastern	visit www.nrlca.org	6:00-7:00 pm
LA	Wednesday, 5/7/2025	6:15-7:15 pm	Central	visit www.nrlca.org	7:15-8:15 pm
CT	Thursday, 5/8/2025	6:00-7:00 pm	Eastern	visit www.nrlca.org	6:00-7:00 pm
AL	Thursday, 5/8/2025	6:15-7:15 pm	Central	visit www.nrlca.org	7:15-8:15 pm
AR	Friday, 5/9/2025	6:00-7:00pm	Central	visit www.nrlca.org	7:00-8:00 pm
WY	Friday, 5/9/2025	6:15-7:15 pm	Mountain	visit www.nrlca.org	8:15-9:15 pm
GA	Saturday, 5/10/2025	6:00-7:00 pm	Eastern	visit www.nrlca.org	6:00-7:00 pm
WI	Saturday, 5/10/2025	6:15-7:15 pm	Central	visit www.nrlca.org	7:15-8:15 pm
AZ	Saturday, 5/10/2025	6:30-7:30 pm	Mountain	visit www.nrlca.org	8:30-9:30 pm
NY	Sunday, 5/11/2025	12:00-1:00 pm	Eastern	visit www.nrlca.org	12:00-1:00 pm
MI	Sunday, 5/11/2025	1:15-2:15 pm	Eastern	visit www.nrlca.org	1:15-2:15 pm
TX	Sunday, 5/11/2025	1:30-2:30 pm	Central	visit www.nrlca.org	2:30-3:30 pm
NM	Sunday, 5/11/2025	1:45-2:45 pm	Mountain	visit www.nrlca.org	3:45-4:45 pm
OR	Sunday, 5/11/2025	2:00-3:00 pm	Pacific	visit www.nrlca.org	5:00-6:00 pm
May 2025 Ratification Meetings Information Week 2					
OH	Tuesday, 5/13/2025	6:00-7:00 pm	Eastern	visit www.nrlca.org	6:00-7:00 pm
SD	Tuesday, 5/13/2025	6:15-7:15 pm	Central	visit www.nrlca.org	7:15-8:15 pm
VT	Wednesday, 5/14/2025	6:00-7:00 pm	Eastern	visit www.nrlca.org	6:00-7:00 pm
NE	Wednesday, 5/14/2025	6:15-7:15 pm	Central	visit www.nrlca.org	7:15-8:15 pm
MA	Thursday, 5/15/2025	6:00-7:00 pm	Eastern	visit www.nrlca.org	6:00-7:00 pm
KS	Thursday, 5/15/2025	6:15-7:15 pm	Central	visit www.nrlca.org	7:15-8:15 pm
MD	Friday, 5/16/2025	6:00-7:00 pm	Eastern	visit www.nrlca.org	6:00-7:00 pm
IA	Friday, 5/16/2025	6:15-7:15 pm	Central	visit www.nrlca.org	7:15-8:15 pm
NC	Saturday, 5/17/2025	6:00-7:00 pm	Eastern	visit www.nrlca.org	6:00-7:00 pm
TN	Saturday, 5/17/2025	6:15-7:15 pm	Central	visit www.nrlca.org	7:15-8:15 pm
ID	Saturday, 5/17/2025	6:30-7:30 pm	Mountain	visit www.nrlca.org	8:30-9:30 pm
PR	Sunday, 5/18/2025	1:00-2:00 pm	Atlantic	visit www.nrlca.org	12:00-1:00 pm
IN	Sunday, 5/18/2025	1:15-2:15 pm	Eastern	visit www.nrlca.org	1:15-2:15 pm
IL	Sunday, 5/18/2025	1:30-2:30 pm	Central	visit www.nrlca.org	2:30-3:30 pm
CO	Sunday, 5/18/2025	1:45-2:45 pm	Mountain	visit www.nrlca.org	3:45-4:45 pm
CA	Sunday, 5/18/2025	2:00-3:00 pm	Pacific	visit www.nrlca.org	5:00-6:00 pm
May 2025 Ratification Meetings Information Week 3					
WV	Tuesday, 5/20/2025	6:00-7:00 pm	Eastern	visit www.nrlca.org	6:00-7:00 pm
OK	Tuesday, 5/20/2025	6:15-7:15 pm	Central	visit www.nrlca.org	7:15-8:15 pm
DE	Wednesday, 5/21/2025	6:00-7:00 pm	Eastern	visit www.nrlca.org	6:00-7:00 pm
MN	Wednesday, 5/21/2025	6:15-7:15 pm	Central	visit www.nrlca.org	7:15-8:15 pm
RI	Thursday, 5/22/2025	6:00-7:00 pm	Eastern	visit www.nrlca.org	6:00-7:00 pm
ND	Thursday, 5/22/2025	6:15-7:15 pm	Central	visit www.nrlca.org	7:15-8:15 pm
SC	Friday, 5/23/2025	6:00-7:00 pm	Eastern	visit www.nrlca.org	6:00-7:00 pm
MO	Friday, 5/23/2025	6:15-7:15 pm	Central	visit www.nrlca.org	7:15-8:15 pm
PA	Saturday, 5/24/2025	6:00-7:00 pm	Eastern	visit www.nrlca.org	6:00-7:00 pm
MS	Saturday, 5/24/2025	6:15-7:15 pm	Central	visit www.nrlca.org	7:15-8:15 pm
MT	Saturday, 5/24/2025	6:30-7:30 pm	Mountain	visit www.nrlca.org	8:30-9:30 pm
VA	Sunday, 5/25/2025	12:00-1:00 pm	Eastern	visit www.nrlca.org	12:00-1:00 pm
NJ	Sunday, 5/25/2025	1:15-2:15 pm	Eastern	visit www.nrlca.org	1:15-2:15 pm
KY	Sunday, 5/25/2025	1:30-2:30 pm	Central	visit www.nrlca.org	2:30-3:30 pm
UT	Sunday, 5/25/2025	1:45-2:45 pm	Mountain	visit www.nrlca.org	3:45-4:45 pm
WA	Sunday, 5/25/2025	2:00-3:00 pm	Pacific	visit www.nrlca.org	5:00-6:00 pm
NV	Sunday, 5/25/2025	3:15-4:15 pm	Pacific	visit www.nrlca.org	6:15-7:15 pm

Tentative Contract Language & Explanations

Note: Changes are indicated in bold, underlined text. Ellipses indicate the remaining language has not changed. Explanations are in red.

DURATION

Three-year agreement
Expiration date: **May 20, 2027.**

ARTICLE 9 COMPENSATION, SALARIES, AND WAGES

Section 1. Salaries and Wages

A. Basic Annual Salary

The basic annual salary schedule (Tables One and Two) in effect on May 20, **2024** with proportional application to hourly rate employees, for those employees covered under the terms and conditions of this Agreement, shall be increased as follows:

1. Effective November **16, 2024**

The basic annual salary for each step shall be increased by an amount equal to 1.3% of the appropriate **March 09, 2024,** salary schedule.

2. Effective November **15, 2025**

The basic annual salary for each step shall be increased by an amount equal to 1.**4**% of the appropriate **March 09, 2024,** salary schedule.

3. Effective November **14, 2026**

The basic annual salary for each step shall be increased by an amount equal to 1.**5**% of the appropriate **March 09, 2024,** salary schedule.

This article provides a general wage increase for each year of the Agreement: 1.3% in 2024, 1.4% in 2025, and 1.5% in 2026.

The increases above do not reflect additional COLA adjustments, which are retained in this agreement.

The general wage increase applies to all craft employees (Regular, Substitutes, PTFs, RCAs, and ARCs).

The November 16, 2024, General Wage Increase will be paid retroactively to all craft employees. Regular carriers who have retired since this date will be compensated for the retroactive amount.

Example based on a 40-hour route at Step 7 of Table One:

1. Effective November 16, 2024-General Wage Increase of \$917 annually.
2. Effective November 15, 2025-General Wage Increase of \$988 annually.
3. Effective November 14, 2026-General Wage Increase of \$1,058 annually.

****These amounts will vary depending on the Table, Step, and evaluated hours of the individual carrier and route.**

* * * * *

D. Granting Step Increases

2. The step progression for career rural carriers in Steps 1 through 15 of Table Two shall be **50** weeks for each step.

This language reduces the time between steps from 52 weeks to 50 weeks for Table Two employees. This shortens the time to get to the annual salaries for Table Two. In total, this change

reduces the time to get to the top step on Table Two from 728 total weeks to 700 weeks. Through compounding, the reduction of two weeks for each step leads to increased earnings as employees move through the Table Two progression.

Numbers will vary based upon your current step and evaluation. This example is based off a new career carrier with a 40-hour evaluation utilizing the March 9, 2024 Table Two chart.

For example*, a newly converted Regular Carrier at Step 1 would have an annual salary of \$50,295 for a 40-hour route. Moving to the next step two weeks earlier would result in an annual salary of \$51,676, an increase of \$1,381.00. This results in an additional \$53.12 gained for those two weeks.

Based upon this pattern, the carrier would get to Step 3 four weeks earlier, resulting in an additional \$106.23 gained for those four weeks. Each step increase compounds to gain additional time towards the highest step. In this example, that

would provide an additional \$7,230 in total earnings for a newly converted regular carrier as they progress through the steps.

This reduction in time between steps would also apply to Part-Time Flexible employees compensated under Table Two.

Upon ratification, this change will take effect no later than the first full pay period 180 days after contract ratification. Any employee compensated under Table Two that has at least 50 weeks in time in step credit will advance to the next step and will have their time in step credit reset. All other career employees compensated under Table Two will remain at their current step (retaining any gained time) until 50 total weeks are collected.

Newly Converted Regular Carrier at 40-Hour Route for Table Two							
**Example based on March 9, 2024 Salary Schedule							
Step		Annual Salary		Per Step +/-		Per PP +/-	Total Gained Per step
1		\$50,295.00					
2		\$51,676.00		\$1,381.00		\$53.12	\$53.12
3		\$53,057.00		\$1,381.00		\$53.12	\$106.23
4		\$54,439.00		\$1,382.00		\$53.15	\$159.46
5		\$55,820.00		\$1,381.00		\$53.12	\$212.46
6		\$57,200.00		\$1,380.00		\$53.08	\$265.38
7		\$58,582.00		\$1,382.00		\$53.15	\$318.92
8		\$59,964.00		\$1,382.00		\$53.15	\$372.08
9		\$61,346.00		\$1,382.00		\$53.15	\$425.23
10		\$62,727.00		\$1,381.00		\$53.12	\$478.04
11		\$64,110.00		\$1,383.00		\$53.19	\$531.92
12		\$65,490.00		\$1,380.00		\$53.08	\$583.85
13		\$66,871.00		\$1,381.00		\$53.12	\$637.38
14		\$69,845.00		\$2,974.00		\$114.38	\$1,487.00
15		\$72,815.00		\$2,970.00		\$114.23	\$1,599.23
							\$7,230.31
							Total gained

E. Cost-of-Living Adjustment

1. Definitions

- a. "Consumer Price Index" refers to the "National Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers", published by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, United States Department of Labor (1967=100), and referred to herein as the "Index."
- b. "Consumer Price Index Base" refers to the Consumer Price Index for the month of January 2024 and is referred to herein as the "Base Index."

2. Each eligible employee covered by this Agreement shall receive cost-of-living adjustments, upward, in accordance with the formula in E.3. below, effective on the following dates:

- The second full pay period after the release of the July 2024 Index.
- The second full pay period after the release of the January 2025 Index.
- The second full pay period after the release of the July 2025 Index.
- The second full pay period after the release of the January 2026 Index.
- The second full pay period after the release of the July 2026 Index.
- The second full pay period after the release of the January 2027 Index.

Cost-of-Living Adjustments (COLA) will remain the same, with adjustments in salary made every six months based on the current Consumer Price Index.

The July 2024 COLA will be paid retroactively. This COLA will be approximately \$978 annually for Table One and Step 15 of Table Two. The amount will be applied proportionally to Steps 1-14 in Table Two.

The January 2025 COLA would also apply retroactively. This COLA will be approximately \$416 annually for Table One and Step 15 of Table Two. The amount will be applied proportionally to Steps 1-14 in Table Two.

The July 2025 COLA will be paid retroactively. As of April 1, 2025, this COLA stands at \$312 annually. This number may fluctuate up or down depending on the CPI movement before July 31, 2025.

With the November 2024 General Wage Increase, the July 2024, January 2025, and the July 2025 COLAs thus far, regular rural carriers and PTFs will receive an initial salary increase of approximately 3.7%, based on the timing of the signing of this National Agreement.

3. Method of Determination

- a. The basic salary schedules provided for in Table One and Step 15 of Table Two of this Agreement shall be increased 1 cent per hour for each full 0.4 of a point increase in the applicable Index above the Base Index. For example, if the increase in the Index from January 2024 to July 2024 is 1.2 points, all pay scales for rural carrier employees in Table One and Step 15 of Table Two of this Agreement will be increased by 3 cents per hour multiplied by 2,080 to determine the annual base rate, with proportional application to the evaluated base rates. In no event will a decline in the Index below the Base Index result in a decrease in the pay scale provided for in this Agreement.
- b. Steps 1 through 14 in the basic salary schedules provided for in Table Two of the Agreement shall receive COLAs calculated using the formula in paragraph 3.a. adjusted proportionally to each step's percentage of Step 15.

This change only reflects a change to the dates used in the example to reflect an update to the “Base Index” for calculating the COLA. There was no “Rebase” imposed to the COLA formula.

* * * * *

H. Rural Carrier Associates and Assistant Rural Carriers

RCA's hired from August 24, 1991, through August 10, 2012, will be paid the basic hourly rate in Table Three. RCA's hired on or after August 11, 2012, and assistant rural carriers will be paid the basic hourly rate in Table Four. The hourly rate shall be adjusted by the general increases provided for in Article 9.1.A. In addition, RCA's and ARC's in Tables Three and Four will receive the following wage adjustments:

1. Effective November **16, 2024**, the hourly rate (Tables Three and Four) shall be increased by 1.0%.
2. Effective November **15, 2025**, the hourly rate (Tables Three and Four) shall be increased by 1.0%.
3. Effective November **14, 2026**, the hourly rate (Tables Three and Four) shall be increased by 1.0%.

4. All percentage increases are applied to the Tables Three and Four wage rate in place on May 20, 2024.

All leave replacement employees will receive an additional 1% salary adjustment annually in lieu of COLA adjustments each year during the three years of this agreement. The November 16, 2024, salary adjustment will be paid retroactively to all leave replacement employees.

New language to be inserted.

New Language:

5. Effective no later than the first full pay period 180 days after contract ratification, RCA's and ARC's in Table Four will receive a flat \$0.55 increase to basic pay.

6. Effective no later than the first full pay period 180 days after contract ratification, a new step will be created for RCA's and ARC's in Table Four. RCA's and ARC's in Table Four will reach this new step after a 156-week waiting period. This new step will be \$1.00 higher than the entry step. This step will remain \$1.00 more than the entry step for RCA's and ARC's in Table Four in perpetuity; there will be no separate calculation.

RURAL CARRIER ASSOCIATE PROJECTED PAY INCREASES FOR LIFE OF 2024-2027 NATIONAL AGREEMENT-HOURLY RATE OF PAY *Updated 4/21/2025					
	CURRENT	11/16/24	180 days after ratification	11/15/25	11/14/26
		2.3% INCREASE	PLUS .55 FOR TBL 4	2.4% INCREASE	2.5% INCREASE
TABLE THREE SCHED 1*	25.62	26.20		26.81	27.45
TABLE THREE SCHED 2**	29.95	31.35		32.07	32.82
TABLE FOUR***	20.38	20.84	21.39	21.88	22.39
TABLE FOUR (3 YEARS SERVICE)	20.38	20.84	22.39	22.88	23.39
*RCA's hired between August 25, 1991 and August 10, 2012					
**RCA's on the rolls prior to August 24, 1991					
***RCA's and ARC's hired on or after August 11, 2012					
Increases reflect GWI applicable to all and additional one percent increases for RCA's and ARC's					

Once ratified, these changes will take effect no later than the first full pay period 180 days after contract ratification. Any RCAs and ARCs hired after August 11, 2012, shall receive an increase of 55 cents per hour. In addition, all RCAs and ARCs hired after August 11, 2012, shall receive an additional \$1.00 per hour increase upon completion of 156 weeks of continuous service.

* * * * *

Section 2. Compensation, Allowance, and Fees

* * * * *

C. Evaluated Compensation

* * * * *

10. Service Changes

When service changes occur, the Employer shall promptly adjust the route evaluation as determined by the formula below, and the compensation will be adjusted, as appropriate. Such interim adjustments shall be made by application of a formula based upon (1) the appropriate box factor for the route, added to the volume factor for the route, multiplied by the boxes added to or subtracted from the route since the last evaluation, and (2) the change in miles, utilizing the appropriate factors of the drive speed matrix, to determine the time to be added or subtracted from the route evaluation.

Changes were made to this article to allow for new growth realization timely under the RRECS environment and eliminates the base hour change concept.

New language eliminates the 60-minute threshold for a route adjustment on routes with growth or reduction in boxes delivered and other route elements.

Changes in evaluation will occur as boxes are added or subtracted from the route and any salary increase or decreases will be processed in the appropriate timeframe.

New boxes will be added as they begin delivery and are added to the edit book. Boxes shall be removed only after 90 days vacant.

All additions or deletions of boxes are directly controlled by the carriers' input on their edit sheet.

The formula uses the volume factor for the route, box service times, drive times and specific allowances for collection boxes, unit time, dismounts, etc. to calculate the increase or decrease in evaluation.

This interim adjustment is temporary until the next periodic RRECS evaluation.

* * * * *

ARTICLE 10
LEAVE

* * * * *

Section 2. Annual Leave

D. Annual Leave Exchange Option (new language)
Career employees will be allowed to sell back a maximum of forty (40) hours of annual leave prior to the beginning of the leave year provided the following two (2) criteria are met:
1. The employee is at the maximum leave carryover ceiling at the start of the leave year.
2. The employee must have used fewer than seventy-two (72) sick leave hours in the leave year immediately preceding the year for which the leave is being exchanged.

This new language gives career employees the option to “cash in” part of their accrued annual leave when they meet the criteria above. For eligible employees, this will give them an alternative to losing up to 40 hours of leave.

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ARTICLE 12
PRINCIPLES OF SENIORITY, POSTING, AND
REASSIGNMENT

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Section 2. Rural Carrier Seniority

A. Accruing Seniority

2. The Employer shall be responsible for the administration of seniority. A current seniority list shall be posted on the official bulletin board and a copy of the seniority list shall be furnished to the NRLCA District Representative. Thereafter, changes to the seniority list shall be made only when they occur and a copy of such changes will be provided to the District Representative.

This change specifically details that management will be required to provide the NRLCA District Representative with a current seniority list for all offices within the district. As changes occur in this seniority list, management will be required to provide an updated copy to the District Representative.

Section 3. Rural Carrier Posting

B. Local Posting and Bidding of Regular Rural Routes

- 1. Post the vacancy at the vacancy post of- fice, including stations and branches, for all regular rural carriers, substitute rural carriers, and rural carrier associates

(RCAs) with one (1) year of continuous ser- vice as an RCA. The notice shall be posted for seven (7) calendar days.

This language changes the length of time for a local posting of a regular route from ten (10) to seven (7) calendar days. This change aligns with our goal of shortening time to move employees into career positions. We no longer use paper bid cards and interoffice envelopes to process bids.

D. District Posting and Awarding

- 1. If the vacancy still exists, post the vacancy within ten (10) days for all rural carriers (regular carriers, part-time flexible rural carriers, substitutes, and RCAs with ser- vice in excess of one (1) year as an RCA) within the district. The notice shall be posted for ten (10) days at each office within the district. The posted notice shall clearly state the method(s) to be used for eligible rural carriers to submit bids. Bids may only be withdrawn during the 10-day posting period.

This language changes the length of a district- wide posting of a regular rural route from 15 to 10 calendar days. This change aligns with our goal of shortening time to move employees into career positions. We no longer use paper bid cards and interoffice envelopes to process bids.

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ARTICLE 24
EMPLOYEES ON LEAVE WITH
REGARD TO UNION BUSINESS

Section 2. Leave for Union Conventions

Employees will be granted annual leave or leave without pay at the election of the employee to at- tend National, State and Area Union Conventions and/or Conferences provided that a request for leave has been submitted by the employee to the installation head as soon as practicable and pro-

vided that approval of such leave does not seriously adversely affect the service needs of the installation.

This section now specifically includes leave for Area Conferences. Presently, this includes the South Atlantic Conference (SAC), Southwest Area Conference (SWAC), Eastern States Conference (ESC), Western States Conference (WSC), and Mid-States Conference (MSC). The parties agree this section applies only to the five (5) Area Conferences listed above.

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**ARTICLE 30
WORKING RULES FOR RURAL CARRIERS**

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Section 2. Special Provisions for Part-Time Flexible Rural Carriers, Substitutes, Rural Carrier Associates, and Rural Carrier Relief Employees

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A. Appointment

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3. The establishment of a part-time flexible rural carrier assignment is at the discretion of the Employer. However, the Employer is required to establish such assignments equal to ten percent (10%) of the number of K routes in the office, when the relief day of one or more regular routes is changed in accordance with Article 9.2.C.5. Additionally, a part-time flexible assignment will be established when hiring efforts have been unsuccessful following the regular rural carrier's request for assignment of a leave replacement,

provided the part-time flexible rural carrier will be assigned two (2) K routes.

Once a part-time flexible rural carrier assignment is established, it shall be posted at the post office, including station and branches, for all substitute rural carriers and **non-probationary** RCAs. The posted notice shall clearly state the method(s) to be used for eligible rural carriers to submit bids using their Employee Identification Number and the bidding method stated on the posting. The notice shall state that a part-time flexible rural carrier cannot decline conversion to regular status. The notice shall be posted for **seven (7)** calendar days. Bids may only be withdrawn during the **7-day** posting period.

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- b. If the vacant part-time flexible rural carrier assignment still exists, it shall be awarded to the **non-probationary** RCA who has accrued the longest period of continuous service as an RCA in that office, unless another RCA is deemed to be substantially better qualified.

Changes to this section indicate that non-probationary RCAs may bid on PTF positions and the change in local posting time from ten (10) to seven (7) calendar days.

This change eliminates the requirement to be an RCA for a year prior to converting to PTF. Subsequently, if a regular carrier vacancy occurs, a PTF may convert to a regular carrier prior to one year. An RCA is still required to have one (1) year of continuous service prior to converting to regular carrier as it applies to Article 12.3.C and 12.3.D.

An RCA must only be non-probationary to bid in accordance with Article 12.3.E.2. This change aligns with our goal of shortening time to move employees into career positions.

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e. If the vacant part-time flexible assignment still exists, post the vacancy, using the posting criteria outlined in item 3, within ten (10) days for all part-time rural carriers, substitutes, and **non-probationary** RCAs within the district. The notice shall be posted for **ten (10)** days at each office within the district. Bids may only be withdrawn during the **10-day** posting period.

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f. The order of consideration shall be part-time flexible rural carriers based on the longest period of continuous service as a part-time flexible rural carrier; substitute rural carriers based on the longest period of continuous service as a substitute rural carrier and auxiliary rural carrier; and **non-probationary** RCAs based on the longest period of continuous service as an RCA. Awarding the assignment shall be the same as stated in subsections c. and d.

Changes to this section indicate that non-probationary RCAs may bid on District PTF positions the same as mentioned above. It also changes the district posting time from 15 to 10 calendar days. This change aligns with our goal of shortening time to move employees into career positions.

B. Probationary Period

1. The probationary period for a rural carrier associate shall be 90 days actually worked or **180 calendar days**, whichever comes first. All other applicable provisions of Article 12.1 shall apply.
2. **The probationary period for an assistant rural carrier shall be 90 days actually worked or one calendar year, whichever comes first. All other applicable provisions of Article 12.1 shall apply.**

This significant change reduces the maximum probationary period for an RCA to 180 calendar days instead of one year and establishes a separate probationary period for assistant rural carriers.

It may allow RCAs to convert to PTF in conjunction with the above changes. This change aligns with our goal of shortening time to move employees into career positions.

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**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
BETWEEN THE
UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE
AND THE
NATIONAL RURAL LETTER CARRIERS' ASSOCIATION**

Re: Bereavement Leave

NRLCA-represented employees may use a total of up to three workdays of annual leave, sick leave or leave without pay, to make arrangements necessitated by the death of a family member or attend the funeral of a family member. Authorization of leave beyond three workdays is subject to the conditions and requirements of Article 10 of the National Agreement and Subsection 510 of the *Employee and Labor Relations Manual*.

Definition of Family Member. "Family member" is defined as a:

- a. Son or daughter – a biological or adopted child, step-child, daughter-in-law or son-in-law;
- b. Spouse;
- c. Parent, mother-in-law or father-in-law;
- d. Sibling – brother, sister, brother-in-law or sister-in-law;
- e. Grandparent; or
- f. Grandchild.**

Use of Sick Leave. For employees opting to use available sick leave, the leave will be charged to sick leave for dependent care, if eligible.

Documentation. Documentation evidencing the death of the employee's family member is required only when the supervisor deems documentation desirable for the protection of the interest of the Postal Service.

The change now includes Grandchild as a defined family member for Bereavement Leave.

**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
BETWEEN THE
UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE
AND THE
NATIONAL RURAL LETTER CARRIERS' ASSOCIATION**

Right-Hand Drive Vehicles

1. Right-Hand Drive Vehicles Manufactured

The parties recognize the value of rural carriers operating right-hand drive vehicles on rural routes and, therefore, agree that during the term of the **2024** National Agreement, a regular rural carrier, part-time flexible rural carrier, substitute, rural carrier relief, or rural carrier associate employee who has completed his or her probationary period and who purchases a manufactured right-hand drive vehicle will receive a one-time payment of **\$3,000** for purchasing and utilizing the right-hand drive vehicle for the purpose of providing service on his or her assigned route(s).

A vehicle will be considered a manufactured right-hand drive vehicle provided it falls into one of the two categories that follow:

A. Factory Right-Hand Drive Vehicle

1. The right-hand drive vehicle purchased must be a new current model year vehicle or prior model year vehicle that has not previously been titled; and
2. The manufacturer such as Chrysler or Subaru produces the vehicle as a right-hand drive vehicle; or

B. Re-Engineered Right-Hand Drive Vehicle

1. The vehicle must be five years or less in age at the time the rural carrier has the vehicle re-engineered;
2. The vehicle has been re-engineered to right-hand drive specifications as determined or approved by the parties;
3. The steering wheel is affixed on the right-hand side of the front passenger compartment and is the only steering column of the vehicle;
4. The brake and gas pedals are fixed and mounted on the right-hand side of the front passenger compartment and are the only brake and gas pedals for the vehicle;
5. The vehicle is equipped with an automatic transmission; and
6. The horn, turn signals, and warning lights are easily accessible to the driver.

In order to receive the incentive, no rural carrier may have previously received an incentive payment for the vehicle. A right-hand drive modification kit or surplus USPS vehicle is not considered a valid purchase for the manufactured vehicle incentive payment. Additionally, the carrier must commit to use the purchased right-hand drive vehicle to serve the route for a period of three (3) years.

2. Right-Hand Drive Vehicle Conversions

In further recognition of the value of rural carriers operating right-hand drive vehicles on rural routes, the parties agree that during the term of the **2024** National Agreement, rural carriers who convert a vehicle to a right-hand drive configuration, will receive a one-time incentive payment of

\$1,500 for utilizing the vehicle in an acceptable right-hand drive configuration for the purpose of providing service on his or her assigned route(s).

A. In order for a rural carrier to be eligible for the **\$1,500** conversion incentive payment, the vehicle converted to a right-hand drive configuration must be five years or less in age at the time of conversion. The right-hand drive conversion is considered acceptable if:

1. The right-hand drive steering wheel operates the vehicle turning mechanism via a pulley or chain system attached to the primary steering column or the right-hand drive steering column is fixed directly into the gearbox of the vehicle;
2. The brake and gas pedals are fixed and mounted on the right-hand side of the front passenger compartment. The brake and gas pedals may operate the primary vehicle pedals via a metal bar or other device;
3. The vehicle is equipped with an automatic transmission;
4. The horn, turn signals, and warning lights are reasonably accessible to the driver from the right-hand side sitting position;
5. The vehicle must be able to pass state vehicle inspection in the state the vehicle is registered and the state in which it is operated; and
6. The conversion does not interfere with vehicle standard safety equipment such as airbags, and does not cause Department of Transportation issues.

B. Converted vehicles not meeting these requirements are considered unacceptable right-hand drive conversions and no incentive will be paid. Also, a vehicle could be unacceptable if there is any other reason to believe the conversion mechanism is unsafe. Passengers cannot be carried in the left-hand front seat of a pulley- or chain-operated system while the carrier is using the vehicle to perform his or her official duties associated with route delivery. Additionally, the carrier must commit to use the converted right-hand drive vehicle to serve the assigned route(s) for a period of three (3) years.

3. Right-Hand Drive Vehicles – Used

During the term of the 2024 National Agreement, rural carriers who purchase used right-hand drive vehicles, manufactured or converted, meeting the restrictions as found in 1. or 2. above, on which a **\$3,000 or \$1,500** incentive payment has not been previously paid, will be eligible for a **\$1,500** incentive payment provided that the vehicle is five years or less in age at the time of purchase and the carrier commits to use the right-hand drive vehicle to serve the assigned route(s) for a period of three (3) years.

4. Assignment

The Postal Service also agrees that any regular carrier who is eligible to receive an incentive payment under this MOU will not be assigned a postal-owned or postal-leased vehicle for a three-year period from the date of purchase of or conversion to a right-hand drive vehicle. This three-year period will remain in effect as long as the carrier remains on a route on which no postal vehicle is provided and continues to utilize the right-hand drive vehicle to effect delivery. Discontinued use of the right-hand drive vehicle will void the three-year waiver and could result in full or partial recovery of any incentive payment.

In order to be eligible for the three-year waiver, a regular rural carrier must advise the postmaster/manager, in writing, that he or she intends to purchase a right-hand drive vehicle or convert a vehicle to a right-hand drive configuration for use on the route(s) and that the purchase or conversion will be completed within sixty (60) calendar days. The postmaster/manager must advise the carrier, in writing, within ten (10) working days as to whether or not the Postal Service intends to provide a vehicle for the route. In these instances the Postal Service will provide a vehicle for the route within 90 days of the carrier's written notification of intent.

The Postal Service may advise the carrier anytime during the three-year waiver period of its intent to provide a vehicle at the end of the period. The applicable provisions of the March 7, 1988, Memorandum of Understanding concerning Employer-provided vehicles to rural routes would go into effect at that time.

The incentive payment and three-year waiver do not apply when a carrier purchases, re-engineers, or converts a vehicle to a right-hand drive vehicle after being notified by the Postal Service of its intent to provide a postal-owned or postal-leased vehicle for the route, or when a carrier is assigned to or bids on a route which already has a postal-owned or postal-leased vehicle assigned to the route.

5. Incentive Payment

Rural carrier eligibility for an incentive payment and three-year waiver will be in effect over the term of this Agreement. In order to receive the manufactured vehicle **\$3,000** incentive payment, the rural carrier must submit a copy of the vehicle sales receipt or a receipt for the re-engineering dated within the term of the **2024** Agreement, the vehicle identification number and postmaster/manager certification. In order to receive the used right-hand drive vehicle or vehicle conversion **\$1,500** incentive payment, the rural carrier must submit a copy of the vehicle or conversion kit sales receipt dated within the term of the **2024** Agreement, the vehicle identification number and postmaster/manager certification that the carrier has purchased or converted a right-hand drive vehicle for use on the route.

Any previously owned manufactured or converted right-hand drive vehicle on which an incentive payment has been previously paid will not qualify for a second **\$3,000 or \$1,500** incentive payment. No rural carrier may receive an incentive payment more than once every three years. Incentive payment requests will be submitted based on instructions issued by appropriate district personnel.

These changes significantly increase the incentives paid to rural carriers who properly purchase a qualified Factory Right-Hand Drive or Re-engineered Right-Hand Drive vehicle. This language would change this incentive from \$1,000 to \$3,000.

Carriers who convert a vehicle to Right-Hand Drive will, in accordance with this MOU, be entitled to a \$1,500 incentive rather than the previous amount of \$500.

All vehicles must qualify for the incentive as outlined in MOU 8 and incentives will not be issued if they are not properly requested and approved in advance.

Important:

See inside this issue for Zoom ratification meeting information for every state!

DO YOU HAVE QUESTIONS ON THE TENTATIVE AGREEMENT?

We have set up a dedicated email address for questions that members may have on the Tentative Agreement.

Please email your questions about the terms or conditions of the agreement to: **contract@nrlca.org**

Your National Board will be monitoring this inbox daily. While emails will not be responded to directly, your questions will be answered in a timely manner. The questions and answers will be posted at an easy-to-locate link located on the NRLCA homepage, **www.nrlca.org**.