



National Association
of Letter Carriers

William H. Young, President
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VOTE!

NALC-USPS Reach New Agreement On Expedited Route Adjustments Contract Delivery Halted, New Work for City Carriers Moratorium on Contracting Out Extended 3 Years!

NALC President William H. Young announced that NALC and the Postal Service have signed two new Memoranda involving city carrier work. The first would implement an expedited process to adjust city carrier routes. The second would ban new Contract Delivery Service routes in offices where city carriers work alongside rural carriers for the remainder of the 2006-2011 National Agreement — extending the existing moratorium for another three years — and assign new deliveries to career letter carriers rather than to contractors.

The Memorandum of Understanding on an Interim Alternate Route Adjustment Process was developed over weeks of intense negotiations with the Postal Service led by President Young and Executive Vice President Fred Rolando. The agreement grew out of months of extended discussions and operational testing conducted by the National Task Force on an Alternative Route Evaluation Process created by the 2006-2011 National Agreement. It was also intended to help the Postal Service respond to the serious negative impact on USPS volumes caused by the global economic crisis now battering the U.S. economy.

The Memorandum of Understanding on the Assignment of City Delivery extends the moratorium on delivery outsourcing through November 20, 2011 and sets out new rules for assigning new deliveries in offices where city carriers work with Highway Contractors or Rural Letter Carriers.

- In offices with just city delivery and Highway Contract Routes (HCRs), all new delivery points will be assigned to city delivery, with the exception of in-growth on existing HCRs.
- In offices with both city and rural delivery, new delivery work will be assigned in accordance to boundaries developed by the NALC, the NRLCA and the Postal Service — where such boundaries exist. In the absence of such boundaries, new deliveries that are not associated with in-growth on existing rural routes or HCRs will be assigned to city carriers — though the USPS may sometimes assign it to other forms of delivery if assignment to city carriers “results in inefficiencies.” In those cases, NALC would have the right to challenge such decisions in a new national-level task force created to oversee the new interim process.

“At a time when the Postal Service and the country are facing an economic crisis of historical magnitude, I am encouraged that we have been able to work with postal management to find win-win solutions to our common problems,” Young said. **“I want to thank Fred Rolando and our team at NALC as well as Postmaster General Jack Potter and Doug Tulino (Vice President for Labor Relations) for all the hard work that went into these negotiations as well as for the constructive manner in which they were conducted.”**

New Joint Process

The new Interim Alternate Route Adjustment Process will involve joint labor-management teams at each of the Postal Service’s District Offices who will work with local managers and union representatives to adjust routes in the coming months using actual work hours of the regular carrier and volumes from May and September 2008. Although the parties remain committed to using data for longer periods of time (during times of stable or growing volume) when making adjustments in the future, the interim process calls for using just two months of data in recognition of the sharp decline in mail volume observed over the summer. Under the agreement, the Postal Service will be able to expedite the adjustment of routes to as near to eight hours as possible.

The new MOU on Interim Route Adjustments will expedite the route adjustment process — in fact, most routes will be adjusted by early January, 2009. Additionally, NALC will gain a formal role in the process and the USPS will discontinue all unilateral processes like the “routers-streeters” proposal raised by some high-level managers.

“A joint process for adjusting our routes has been the union’s goal since the Honolulu convention in 2004,” Rolando observed. **“The work of our National Task Force on an Alternate Route Adjustment Process will continue and we hope that our experience with this interim process will lead to a permanent system that is fair to all concerned.”**

Young emphasized that the new process provides a formal role for the union in the adjustment of routes. The memorandum also retains the rights of both sides under Section 271 of the M-39 to request special route evaluations, and provides for recourse for when mail volumes begin to grow again. He noted: **“When the economy improves and mail volume comes back, the same expedited process will be used to readjust the routes to ensure eight-hour assignments.”**

Share of Future Growth

In view of the dramatic fall in mail volume, many carriers will have territory added to their routes in the coming months. But the union expects that the agreement will significantly reduce the level of pivoting as well as the number of assignments being withheld by postal management. And by engaging with postal management in a serious way, the NALC has achieved two of its most important goals. First, we have put a complete stop to new delivery outsourcing in all offices that employ city letter carriers. Second, for the first time in more than 15 years, city carriers will gain a substantial share of new delivery work.

In 2006, NALC set out to confront the threat of Contract Delivery Service (CDS). We have now successfully done that. The Article 32 Committee established by the National Agreement will continue to work, focusing on a review of 700-800 routes in “protected offices” to determine which are CDS and which are HCRs. Those found to be CDS routes will be terminated.

In addition to stopping the expansion of CDS, we have secured significant new deliveries for city carriers.

Although the growth in the number of new deliveries has moderated in recent months due to the severity of the nation’s housing and mortgage crises, NALC members will finally win a significant share of new deliveries — deliveries that should have been incorporated into city delivery in the past. This will become an increasingly important source of jobs as the economy recovers.

“NALC is a union that does not believe in putting our collective heads in the sand,” Young stated. **“In the face of the economic challenges facing the Postal Service, we cannot afford to sit back and let fate take its course.”**

“We owe it to ourselves and our families to work with the Postal Service to preserve its viability and strength to serve the people and businesses of this great country,” Young added. **“I believe these new MOUs serve the best interests of both the Postal Service and our members.”**

Copies of the two new MOUs will be posted on the NALC’s web site (www.nalc.org) and published in the December issue of The Postal Record.

On Tuesday, November 4, Americans will go to the polls and vote for candidates in elections that will determine who will lead this country as President and Vice President for the next four years as well as the makeup of the 111th Congress. All 435 seats in the House of Representatives and 35 of the 100 seats in the Senate are up for election. There are also numerous gubernatorial races, state legislature contests and important ballot measures.

With the nation’s lingering economic crisis and war continuing in Iraq and Afghanistan, this is no time to take the day off and just let other people select who our leaders will be. It is time for letter carriers and their family members to stand up and be counted.

Make sure that you take the time to vote in this election, even if it is an inconvenience. Don’t take anything for granted. All the experts are saying that this election will turn on who gets the vote out and who stays home.

In many states there are early and absentee voting opportunities as well as casting votes by mail. Cast your ballot for the individuals of your choice — but be sure to vote.

The changing economy has been hard on the Postal Service — with escalating gasoline prices and a reduction in mail volume. That means the men and women who you vote for in House and Senate races, as well as for President, may very well determine the future of the Postal Service over the next decade and beyond. You need to make sure they have your interests at heart — regardless of whether they are Democrats, Republicans or Independents. (Additional information can be found in the October Postal Record and online at <http://nalc.org/news/precord/ArticlesPDF/1008-campaign.pdf>).

All letter carriers — active and retired — should make an extra effort to vote on November 4 and check with your family members and friends to get them out to vote also.

Hatch Act Reminder!

The Postal Service has asked the NALC to remind employees of restrictions under the Hatch Act for displaying political materials on U.S. Postal Service property, including any article of clothing that bears a political message or image of a candidate, or a derogatory photo or message of a candidate.

Violations of the Hatch Act are subject to disciplinary action before the Merit Systems Protection Board and could lead to suspension or removal from government service.

A copy of the full letter to NALC is available on the union’s website: www.nalc.org.

Retirees COLA: 5.8% and 4.8%; No Accumulation for Fourth COLA

Retirees under the Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS) will receive a cost-of-living adjustment of 5.8 percent in 2009 based on the September CPI-W, the final month of the year-long period reflecting the increase in the Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W) between the third quarter of 2007 and the third quarter of 2008.

Retirees under the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS) will receive a COLA of 4.8 percent, under rules that subtract 1 percent when the CPI-W is 3.0 or greater.

For the second consecutive month, there was no accumulation toward the fourth regular cost-of-living adjustment under the 2006-2011 National Agreement based on the CPI-W for September released October 16 by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

The September CPI-W at 640.226 was still **below** the base month level of 644.303 for July 2008. The Fourth COLA will be based on the difference in the CPI-W between July 2008 and January 2009.

The projected accumulation toward the 2009 Federal Employees’ Compensation Act (FECA) COLA dropped to 4.4 percent according to the latest data. The 2009 FECA COLA will be based on the increase in the CPI between December 2007 and December 2008 and will be effective on March 1, 2009. FECA COLAs are applicable only in cases where death or disability occurred more than one year prior to the adjustment’s effective date.

Young Encourages Letter Carriers to Donate To MDA and PERF Through CFC Campaign

NALC President William H. Young is urging NALC members to reach out and support their favorite charities through payroll deduction pledges during the Combined Federal Campaign currently underway in federal and postal workplaces throughout the nation.



Young called attention to two charities which are especially important to NALC members — the Muscular Dystrophy Association (MDA), CFC #10561 and the Postal Employees’ Relief Fund, CFC #10268.

“I urge you to support the 2008 Combined Federal Campaign, and to consider a contribution to the Muscular Dystrophy Association (MDA), our union’s official charity; the Postal Employees’ Relief Fund, which assists active and retired postal employees who are victims of natural disasters and fires; United Way campaigns, which allocate funds to worthy charities in your community; or to another charity of your choice,” Young said.

“America’s working families and the middle class are being squeezed harder than ever in today’s faltering economy,” Young said. **“As the NALC works to turn America around, we want to remember our neighbors in need, many for the first time ever.”**

Young Assails GOP Ad In Washington Race

President Young on October 16 assailed a television ad attacking Washington Gov. Chris Gregoire that suggests that U.S. Postal Service letter carriers are possible sexual predators endangering the lives of children on the street. He demanded the ad be removed from the airwaves.

The television ad, being run by the Republican Governors Association in support of GOP gubernatorial candidate Dino Rossi, shows a man walking a dog, and then a letter carrier (with satchel and mail), leering at young children near an ice cream truck, while in the audio background a woman depicting a mother warns that some convicted sex offenders have not properly registered with law enforcement agencies during the Gregoire administration.

“This television ad is beneath contempt,” said Young in a national press release. **“It is ludicrous and shameful that the Republican Governors Association would stoop so low as to portray America’s most trusted government agents in this manner just to pump up a specious political argument against the incumbent governor.”**

“I demand, on behalf of city letter carriers across the nation, that Republican Governors Association Chair Rick Perry (R-TX) immediately withdraw this ad from all television outlets and web sites and publicly apologize to all letter carriers for this damaging portrayal of their character,” Young added.