

Postal Service Reform Act passes in House and Senate, awaits president's signature

On March 8, in a 79-19 vote, the Senate passed the Postal Service Reform Act of 2022 (H.R. 3076). Following House passage on Feb. 8, the bill will now be sent to President Biden for his signature to become law.

"This is a monumental victory for letter carriers and all Americans who depend on the Postal Service for affordable and high-quality universal service," NALC President Fredric Rolando said. "I want to congratulate and thank all the NALC members who lobbied their members of Congress to win passage in the Senate and the House. Thanks to your support, dedication and action, bipartisan postal reform—that was 12 years in the making—has finally passed in both chambers."

Key provisions of this bipartisan legislation repeal the mandate to pre-fund retiree health care benefits decades in advance, and codify a minimum of six-day delivery of mail and packages into federal law. This will eliminate the need to renew the six-day requirement every year through the congressional appropriations process. The bill also maximizes the integration of future postal annuitants into Medicare.

The legislation was drafted by Committee on Oversight and Reform (COR) Chairwoman Carolyn Maloney (D-NY), Ranking Member James Comer (R-KY), COR subcommittee Chairman Gerry Connolly (D-VA) and Committee on Education and Labor Ranking Member and COR member Virginia Foxx (R-NC). The legislation was led in the Senate by Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee Chairman Gary Peters (D-MI) and Ranking Member Rob Portman (R-OH). It reflects a broad bipartisan consensus that is supported by the four postal unions, the mailing industry and Postal Service management.

"NALC commends Chairwoman Maloney, Ranking Member Comer, subcommittee Chairman Connolly and member Foxx in the House and Chairman Peters and Ranking Member Portman in the Senate for their bipartisan leadership to get this critical bill passed in Congress," President Rolando said. "We also appreciate every representative and senator who voted 'yes' on this bill."

New COVID-19 guide available

NALC strives to keep letter carriers informed and as safe as possible. To help letter carriers navigate the COVID-19 pandemic, a new COVID-19 guide that includes current tools and procedures is now available on the NALC website. This guide is designed to keep letter carriers safe in the workplace. It is a compilation of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommendations and Postal Service policies, which USPS states are based on CDC guidance. Recommendations and policies are subject to change as the pandemic evolves. The guide will be updated online as necessary. It is available at nalc.org/news/covid-19/guide.

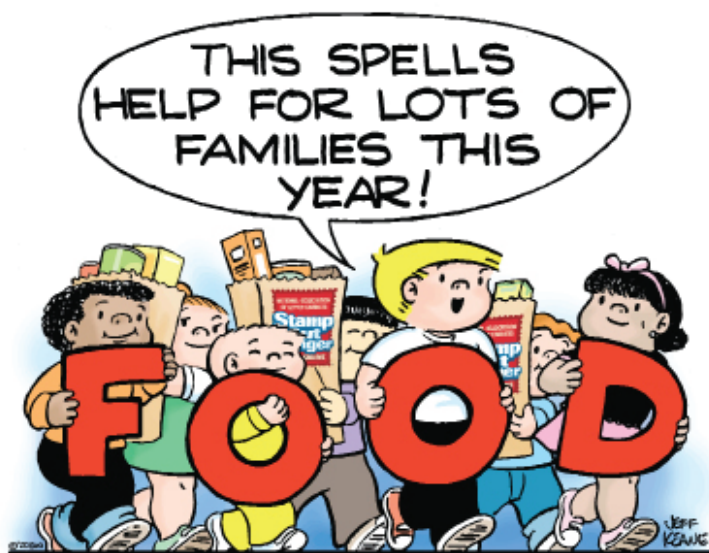
27 pay periods in 2022 leave year and its effect on annual leave earning

Each year, the leave year begins with the first day of the first complete pay period in a calendar year and ends on the day before the first day of the first complete pay period in the following calendar year. For 2022, the leave year began Jan. 1, 2022 (Pay Period 02-22), and ends Jan. 13, 2023 (Pay Period 02-23), for a total of 27 pay periods.

Therefore, employees may earn one additional pay period's worth of annual leave during the 2022 leave year as compared to the typical 26 pay period leave year. For a full-time employee, the extra pay period amount will be four, six or eight hours, depending on the employee's leave earning category. Part-time letter carriers earn leave based on the number of work hours during the pay period up to the same amount of leave earned by full-time employees. CCAs are credited with one hour of annual leave for each 20 hours spent in a pay status during each biweekly pay period.

Although employees may earn one additional pay period's worth of annual leave during leave year 2022, the annual leave carryover maximums will not increase because of it. Employees must use any annual leave in excess of the carryover limit that applies to them by the end of leave year 2022 (Jan. 13, 2023), or they will forfeit the hours of annual leave that are in excess of their carryover limit. Any additional leave earned by CCAs will be paid out when they take their mandatory break in service between appointments.

Register for the 30th Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive



Registration for the 2022 Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive is now open. Branch presidents can register their branch via the Members Only portal on nalc.org. Please note that the 2022 Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive is subject to change or cancellation if necessary to protect the safety and health of those involved in the food drive. The traditional date of the food drive has been the second Saturday in May for a one-day in-person drive; however, even if it is unsafe to meet in person on that date, the food drive will continue virtually.

LETTER CARRIERS' FOOD DRIVE

March MDA Branch Challenge

The 2022 NALC/MDA registration website can be found at mda.donordrive.com/event/nalc2022. MDA has registered all branches; please check to see if your branch has been registered. If you are participating in the March Branch Challenge, please make sure your branch is registered; if it is not, please contact Dana Nolan of MDA at 312-392-1100 or at nalc@mdausa.org.

Below are the websites for the 2022 NALC/MDA national campaigns:

- mda.donordrive.com/participant/ToughMudder
- mda.donordrive.com/participant/NALCMDAGiftbags
- mda.donordrive.com/participant/pokerchips

If you join, donate or buy, the money amount is credited to your branch for your yearly numbers. A reminder: If you want any of your branch events to be shared, please send them to mda@nalc.org or cdavidson@nalc.org to be posted on social media.

Fifth contract COLA set at \$1,331

The fifth regular cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) for career letter carriers under the 2019-2023 National Agreement is \$1,331 annually, following the release of the January consumer price index. This increase will be added to every step in Table 1 and Step O in Table 2, and then applied proportionately to Steps A through N in Table 2. The increase became effective on Feb. 26. See pay chart below.

Interpretive dispute filed over PTF Step AA

NALC has filed an interpretive dispute over the Postal Service's method of calculating overtime pay, Sunday premium pay, general wage increases and cost-of-living adjustments (COLAs) for part-time flexible employees in Step AA. This dispute centers around Article 9, Section 8 and Article 11, Section 7 of the 2019 National Agreement and how they interact with each other.

Article 9, Section 8 states, "[t]he Step AA Hourly Basic Rate will be equal to Step A of the Full-Time/Part-Time Regular Employees Hourly Basic Rate in Table Two." Although at the start of the term of the current collective-bargaining agreement, the Postal Service paid this amount to Step AA PTFs for straight time, NALC discovered that it used a lower hourly rate to calculate overtime and Sunday premiums.

NALC's position is that their overtime and Sunday premium pay should be the same as FTR/PTR Step A. When PTF Step AA went into effect, the hourly basic rate was \$19.88. However, the Postal Service manufactured a new lower annual rate that generated a lower hourly rate of \$19.12 as a base for calculating the overtime and Sunday premium for carriers in PTF Step AA. This resulted in PTFs in Step AA to be underpaid by \$1.15 for each hour of regular overtime and \$0.19 for each straight time hour worked on a Sunday. This error has been compounded over time and now sits at \$1.21 for regular overtime and \$0.20 for Sunday premium after the release of the January COLA effective Feb. 26.

Additionally, the Postal Service is calculating general wage increases and COLAs for PTFs in Step AA using its manufactured lower annual rate. This includes falsely creating and using a lower proportion of COLA. This has resulted in an hourly rate for PTF Step AA that no longer equals FTR/PTR Step A. This deviation will continue to compound over time as more general wage increases and COLAs are received.

Furthermore, with the addition of the Juneteenth National Independence Day holiday, the Postal Service's misapplication of Article 11.7 is creating an even larger straight-time hourly rate deviation between PTF Step AA and FTR/PTR Step A.

The grievance is currently scheduled for national arbitration before Arbitrator Dennis Nolan on April 21.

Letter Carrier Pay Schedule City Carrier Wage Schedule: Effective Feb. 26, 2022

The following salary and rate schedule is for all NALC-represented employees.

Career city letter carrier increases			City carrier assistant increases		
Effective Date	Type of Increase	Amount	Date	Type of Increase	Amount
Nov. 23, 2019	General wage increase	1.1%	Nov. 23, 2019	General wage increase	2.1%
Feb. 29, 2020	January COLA	\$166	Nov. 21, 2020	General wage increase	2.1%
Aug. 29, 2020	July COLA	\$188	Nov. 20, 2021	General wage increase	2.3%
Nov. 21, 2020	General wage increase	1.1%	Nov. 19, 2022	General wage increase	2.3%
Feb. 27, 2021	January COLA	\$416			
Aug. 28, 2021*	July COLA	\$1,934			
Nov. 20, 2021	General wage increase	1.3%			
Feb. 26, 2022*	January COLA	\$1,331			
TBA*	July COLA	TBD			
Nov. 19, 2022	General wage increase	1.3%			
TBA*	January COLA	TBD			

NOTE: Upon conversion to Full-Time, Part-Time Flexible employees in Table Two will be slotted into the Full-Time Step commensurate with their number of weeks as a PTF, and retain their time credit toward the next step.

NOTE: Effective Nov. 19, 2022, Table One and Table Two will be modified to include an additional Step P that is \$444 more than Step O of the basic salary schedule in Tables One and Two.

NOTE: Carrier Technicians receive additional compensation equivalent to 2.1% of the employee's applicable hourly rate for all paid hours.

NOTE: The full COLAs will be added to the salaries of all steps in Table 1 and Step O of Table 2, with proportionate application of the COLA to Steps A-N of Table 2.

* NOTE: In accordance with Article 9.3.B, COLAs become effective the second full pay period after the release of the January and July Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers.

Table 1: City Carrier Schedule															RSC Q (NALC)	
This schedule applies to all carriers with a career appointment date prior to Jan. 12, 2013.															Most PREV. STEP	
Basic Annual Salaries																
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	
City Carrier (Grade 2)	58,728	63,112	63,213	66,350	66,805	67,263	67,714	68,165	68,623	69,066	69,526	69,983	70,433	70,897	71,347	458
Carrier Technician**	59,961	64,437	64,540	67,743	68,208	68,676	69,136	69,596	70,064	70,516	70,986	71,453	71,912	72,386	72,845	468
Part-Time Flexible Employees - Hourly Basic Rates****																
City Carrier (Grade 2)	29.48	31.68	31.73	33.31	33.54	33.77	33.99	34.22	34.45	34.67	34.90	35.13	35.36	35.59	35.82	
Carrier Technician**	30.10	32.35	32.40	34.01	34.24	34.48	34.71	34.94	35.17	35.40	35.64	35.87	36.10	36.34	36.57	
Full-Time/Part-Time Regular Employees - Hourly Basic Rates																
City Carrier (Grade 2)	28.23	30.34	30.39	31.90	32.12	32.34	32.55	32.77	32.99	33.20	33.43	33.65	33.86	34.09	34.30	
Carrier Technician**	28.83	30.98	31.03	32.57	32.79	33.02	33.24	33.46	33.68	33.90	34.13	34.35	34.57	34.80	35.02	
Step Increase Waiting Periods (In Weeks)															YRS.	
Steps (From-To)	A-B	B-C	C-D	D-E	E-F	F-G	G-H	H-I	I-J	J-K	K-L	L-M	M-N	N-O		12.4
	96	96	44	44	44	44	44	44	44	44	34	26	26	24		12.4

** Carrier Technicians receive an additional 2.1% ****See "PTF hourly rates to be implemented by March 26, 2022"

Table 2: City Carrier Schedule															RSC Q7 (NALC)		
This schedule applies to all carriers with a career appointment date on or after Jan. 12, 2013.															Most PREV. STEP		
Basic Annual Salaries																	
	AA	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	
City Carrier (Grade 2)	43,881	45,841	47,803	49,765	51,728	53,688	55,652	57,616	59,576	61,538	63,501	65,461	67,426	69,386	71,347	1,960	
Carrier Technician**	44,803	46,804	48,807	50,810	52,814	54,815	56,821	58,826	60,827	62,830	64,835	66,836	68,842	70,843	72,845	2,001	
Part-Time Flexible Employees - Hourly Basic Rates****																	
City Carrier (Grade 2)	21.19**	22.03	23.01	24.00	24.98	25.97	26.95	27.94	28.92	29.91	30.89	31.88	32.86	33.85	34.83	35.82	
Carrier Technician**	21.63**	22.49	23.50	24.50	25.51	26.51	27.52	28.52	29.53	30.54	31.54	32.55	33.55	34.56	35.56	36.57	
Full-Time/Part-Time Regular Employees - Hourly Basic Rates																	
City Carrier (Grade 2)	21.10	22.04	22.98	23.93	24.87	25.81	26.76	27.70	28.64	29.59	30.53	31.47	32.42	33.36	34.30		
Carrier Technician**	21.54	22.50	23.46	24.43	25.39	26.35	27.32	28.28	29.24	30.21	31.17	32.13	33.10	34.06	35.02		
Percent Step O																	
	61.50%	64.25%	67.00%	69.75%	72.50%	75.25%	78.00%	80.75%	83.50%	86.25%	89.00%	91.75%	94.50%	97.25%	100.00%		
Step Increase Waiting Periods (In Weeks)															YRS.		
Steps (From-To)	AA-A	A-B	B-C	C-D	D-E	E-F	F-G	G-H	H-I	I-J	J-K	K-L	L-M	M-N	N-O		12.4
	46	46	46	46	46	46	46	46	46	46	46	46	46	46	46		12.4

** Carrier Technicians receive an additional 2.1% ****See "Interpretive dispute filed over PTF Step AA" ****See "PTF hourly rates to be implemented by March 26, 2022"

Table 3: City Carrier Assistant Schedule					Hourly Rates		RSC Q4 (NALC)	
This schedule applies to CCA Hires with no previous TE service.					BB	AA	This schedule applies to CCA Hires with previous TE service after Sept. 29, 2007, who were on the rolls as of Jan. 10, 2013.	
					BB	AA	BB	AA
City Carrier (Grade 2)					18.92	19.42	20.44	20.94
Carrier Technician (add 2.1%)					19.32	19.83	20.87	21.38
Steps (From BB to AA) in weeks					52		52	

NOTE: Effective June 19, 2021, the Step CC pay rate in Table Three was eliminated. All CCAs at step CC as of that date were moved into step BB, receiving a 50 cent per hour raise. Step BB and its pay rate are the new entry step for new CCA hires. The new waiting period from Step BB to Step AA is 52 weeks. CCAs who were in step CC on June 19, 2021, will maintain their time-in-step credit toward step AA and will receive their next step increase to step AA after 52 weeks of service. CCAs that were in step BB as of June 19 will have 12 weeks added to their current time-in-step credit toward step AA. This will ensure all CCAs will reach step AA after 52 weeks of service.

PTF hourly rates to be implemented in the City Carrier Wage Schedule (effective Feb. 26) by March 26

The Postal Service has advised NALC that the PTF hourly rates in the new City Carrier Wage Schedule, effective Feb. 26, 2022, are not expected to be fully implemented until March 26, 2022 (Pay Period 8).

The Postal Service has also advised NALC that any back pay due to the delay in implementing the additional hourly holiday pay for eligible part-time flexible city letter carriers will be paid retroactive to Jan. 1, 2022.

National Association of Letter Carriers

100 Indiana Ave. NW
 Washington, DC 20001-2144
 202-393-4695 | www.nalc.org

Fredric V. Rolando, President

EDITORIAL STAFF:
 Philip Dine, Director of Communications
 and Media Relations
 Mike Shea, Designer/Web Editor
 Rick Hodges, Writer/Editor
 Jenessa Wagner, Writer/Editor
 Clare Foley, Editorial Assistant

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