



Reciprocal Agreement and other reminders

The Reciprocal Agreement between the four USPS unions provides for the cancellation of dues to the “losing” craft union when a member transfers to another craft and joins the union representing that craft. Since the Agreement supercedes the Form 1188, the employee does not have to complete Form 1188 or wait until his/her anniversary date to withdraw from one union to join the union representing his/her new craft. The Agreement was made to avoid payment of double dues.

Due to the increase of clerks being excessed into the city letter carrier craft, all union representatives should be aware of the procedures in invoking the Reciprocal Agreement, which are outlined in the booklet sent to all branches a few years ago. (The booklet is on the NALC website and can be ordered through the NALC Supply Department.)

Here is an example of the simplest method of invoking the Agreement: When signing up a former clerk who belongs to the APWU, write “Transferring from APWU” on the blue copy only of the Form 1187. The NALC Membership Department will then notify the APWU that the person now belongs to the NALC and APWU dues should be canceled. Normally this takes two to four pay periods. The above also applies to members of the NPMHU and the NRLCA.

Important: Please ask the person signing the 1187 if he belongs to another union and, if so, if he wants his dues to the other union to be canceled. Also, be advised the Reciprocal Agreement applies only if a craft member wishes to transfer union membership. It does not apply to members who are not joining the gaining craft’s union—they must still follow the procedures as outlined in the *Employee Labor Relations Manual*.

Open Season for the NALC Health Benefit Plan (HBP) is November 8-December 14 and I strongly encourage all members to consider enrolling in NALC’s own union-run health plan. All members should look carefully at the information provided in this magazine, compare other health plans and then choose.

Reminder to NALC representatives who are encouraging enrollment in the HBP: All postal employees, not just those in the letter carrier craft, must pay full NALC dues when enrolled in the NALC Health Benefit Plan. Only non-postal federal employees may be HBP members as defined under Article 22 of the *NALC Constitution* and

pay a yearly associate member fee of \$36. Craft or management USPS employees who are not already members of our union will be sent a Form 1187 in early 2011 should they enroll in the NALC HBP, and they must execute the form to maintain enrollment in the Plan.

Many of our branches have not updated their officer information list with the Membership Department. If you have not done so, please request a form or simply mail a letter, signed by the branch secretary, informing Headquarters of your present officers’ names, addresses and telephone numbers, particularly those of the branch president and secretary. This is important so that we may reach the appropriate officers when the need arises. The Membership Department will be enclosing the “Branch Information Record” card in branch rosters at least quarterly. However, do not wait—if you have changed officers, please notify Membership immediately.

The yearly national biweekly dues change will take place in Pay Period 1 of 2011 (December 18-31, 2010) and dues will be deducted beginning with the January 7 paycheck. The dues increase will be reflected in the branch reimbursement checks dated January 28. Article 7, Section 2 (a) of the *NALC Constitution* sets the monthly minimum dues structure at two hours’ pay at Grade 1, Step D. Thus, the new minimum dues per pay period will be \$22.82, an increase of \$0.41. Headquarters holds one-third of this amount and remits the other two-thirds to local branches (with some being held for state association dues, which are reimbursed monthly).

Some branches may have set dues higher than the minimum dues structure and may increase local dues during the year, as may some state associations. Secretaries are reminded that any increase in dues above either the branch’s share of the 2010 minimum dues or above any existing additional branch dues cannot be processed before Pay Period 4, beginning January 29. All changes must be made in writing, stating the amount of the change, regardless of whether the changes are considered to be “automatic” under the state’s or branch’s bylaws.

Veterans Day is November 11, marking the 92nd anniversary of the first Armistice Day, when the guns of World War I fell silent across Europe. This year, let all of us give thanks to the men and women of the Armed Forces and the National Guard, as well as their families, for the great sacrifices they have made. ☒