



USPS and OPM updates

NALC has been notified by USPS of the plan to test a voice recognition casing system this year. According to Labor Relations, the “Universal Smart Case” consists of a voice recognition system added to current casing equipment. Its purpose is to facilitate casing and distribution activities. When used at a case, the user speaks the address line information into a wireless headset and the system will light the appropriate address point on the carrier or distribution case.

When used for parcel distribution, the system provides the employee with an audible route number to the headset. The system will allow non-scheme qualified clerks to complete scheme distribution and will assist letter carriers who are not familiar with a route.

Here’s the schedule:

Pretest Site:

- Manhattan, KS (66502 & 66503)—Parcel System

Pilot Test Sites:

Southeast Area

- Marietta Mt. Bethel (33067, 30329 & PO Box 30333)—Parcel Sort Site
- North Atlanta Station (30319, 30068)—F4 Site
- Atlanta Ralph McGill (30306 & 30307)—F2 Site

Southwest Area

- Norman Main Office, Norman, OK (73069, 73071, 73072, 73026, 73019, 73070 Box)—F2, F4 & Parcel Sort Site
- Northeast Station, Tulsa, OK (74112, 74115, 74116)—F2 & F4 Site
- Donaldson Station, Tulsa, OK (74114, 74104)—F2 & F4 Site
- North Sheppard Station, Houston, TX (77037, 77038, 77076, 77086, 77091)—F2 & F4 Site
- TW House Station, Houston TX (77007, 77008)—F2 & F4 Site
- Del City Station, Oklahoma City (73115, 73135, 73155 box)—Parcel Sort Site

The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) has published regulations that allow same-sex domestic partners to apply for coverage under the Federal Long Term Care Insurance Program (FLTCIP). Long-term care insurance

is a way to protect income and assets and remain financially independent should the need arise for long-term care services at home, in a nursing home or at another long-term facility. Most health insurance programs, including the Federal Employees Health Benefit Program, provide little or no coverage for long-term care.

The final regulation was published June 1, expanding the definition of “qualified relative” to include same-sex domestic partners of eligible federal and USPS employees and annuitants. As “qualified relatives,” same-sex domestic partners will be subject to full underwriting. To apply for FLTCIP coverage, a same-sex domestic partner must indicate on the FLTCIP application that the Domestic Partnership form has been submitted to the Human Resources Shared Service Center (HRSSC).

Here are the procedures for same-sex domestic partners to apply for long-term care insurance:

- Eligible individuals must provide documentation that they meet the definition of “domestic partnership.”
- This documentation is a Declaration of Domestic Partnership form. No documentation other than this form is required.
- An employee and his/her same-sex domestic partner must file this declaration form with the HRSSC (or to the appropriate retirement system for annuitants).
- The HRSSC will provide a receipted copy to the employee for his/her records and file the form in the employee’s electronic official personnel file.
- Agencies do not have to ask for proof of the partnership.
- Applicants should not send the declaration form to the FLTCIP insurer or administrator.
- On the application for FLTCIP coverage, the eligible individual will attest that he or she has submitted (either directly or through his or her partner) a form affirming the domestic partnership to the HRSSC or retirement system.

Other qualified relatives include:

- Spouses of employees
- Spouses of annuitants
- Parents, parents-in-law and step parents of living employees.
- Adult children (at least 18 years old, including adopted or step children) of living employees or annuitants ☒