

## How TEs take the exam

In 2007, NALC and USPS agreed on the Memorandum of Understanding Re: Transitional Employee Employment Opportunities (M-01659). This MOU gave NALC transitional employees (TEs) the right to take the entrance exam for a career city letter carrier position after being on the job for 180 days. The exam scores would then be placed on the appropriate hiring register.

M-01659 gave NALC TEs an advantage over the general public. Our TEs had the right to take the exam after 180 days on the job. They were given this special opportunity to take the exam regardless of when it was made available to the public.

In the years that followed, the Postal Service transitioned to eCareer, a web-based system used to perform the functions of the application and hiring process both internally and for new hires from outside the Postal Service. One fundamental change brought on by eCareer was a change in the way the entrance exam was given.

In the past, the Postal Service would periodically give the exam and keep a hiring register of scores. Those taking the exam could put their score on the registers of three different postal installations and it would remain there for a few years. M-01659 gave NALC TEs the opportunity to take the exam regardless of when the exam was offered to the public and to apply their scores as discussed above.

The eCareer process gives applicants (including NALC TEs) the opportunity to take the exam when the Postal Service has posted a position on eCareer. For example, if the Postal Service plans to hire a career letter carrier in your town, it will advertise on eCareer that it is hiring a letter carrier in that post office. All applicants will then have the opportunity to take the entrance exam for that position or apply a previous score from their candidate profile to the position.

**This change obviously affected the MOU M-01659.** A national-level interpretive dispute resulted from the change (case number Q06N-4Q-C-09038589). The issue was the impact eCareer had on the parties' Memorandum of Understanding Re: Transitional Employee Employment Opportunities (M-01659).

The dispute was resolved in an interpretive step settlement for case number Q06N-4Q-C-09038589 (M-01714). The parties agreed that question number 24 in the *March*

26, 2009 *Questions and Answers* (42), NALC TEs (M-01701) resolved the dispute as follows:

### **24. Has the conversion to eCareer impacted transitional employee requests to take the entrance examination pursuant to the memorandum of Understanding, Re: Transitional Employee Employment Opportunities?**

Yes, using eCareer all applicants, including transitional employees, can take the entrance examination whenever a position is posted. The applicant will then be given the opportunity to take the exam as part of the application process. The applicant chooses the exam date and location to fit their personal schedule. Once the applicant takes the exam, the exam score is automatically uploaded into their candidate profile and remains there for any future vacancy opportunities. There is no need to retest until the standard time period associated with the exam expires. (Currently 6 years for the 473 Examination.) An applicant may retest after four months of the initial test when applying for a posting. To assist transitional employees locate available opportunities, notice of all city carrier vacancies advertised in eCareer within a district will be posted on official bulletin boards in offices that employ transitional employees within the district of the vacancy.

**For a TE to be in the best position to take the Postal Service entrance exam, he/she should:**

1. Go to the eCareer website at <http://about.usps.com/careers>. Look on the right side of the webpage under the "Search Jobs & Apply Online" heading and click "Start your eCareer profile." Follow the instructions to create your candidate profile.

2. Search for job openings on the eCareer website. Look on the right side of the webpage under the "Search Jobs & Apply Online" heading and click "Search our latest job openings." Follow the instructions to search for job openings and to apply. Also, look for positions posted on official bulletin boards in offices that employ TEs.

3. Once a city carrier vacancy is posted, request to take the exam on eCareer as described above. You will be able to select the date, location and time that best fits your schedule.

The advice above applies to the process USPS currently uses to hire employees. In the future, it is possible that eCareer could be changed. If a change were to occur, we will update you in this Contract Talk column. ☒