

Filling vacancies

When filling vacancies, there are many pieces to the puzzle. Listed below are all of the pieces that must fit together.

The obligation to fill vacant full-time regular city letter carrier assignments can be found in Article 7.3.A, which states:

7.3.A. The Employer will staff at least one full-time regular city letter carrier per one full-time regular city letter carrier route, as defined in Article 4.1.1.A.1, plus each Carrier Technician position; however, the Employer's obligation shall not exceed a ratio of 1.18 full-time regular city letter carriers per full-time city letter carrier routes. As long as part-time flexible employees remain on the rolls, the Employer shall staff all postal installations which have 200 or more workyears of employment in the regular work force as of the date of this Agreement with 88% fulltime employees in the letter carrier craft.

The Postal Service has filed an interpretive dispute regarding its obligation under Article 7.3.A above. In the case, the Service framed the issue as follows:

[W]hether the Postal Service is required, notwithstanding the conversion ratio under Article 7.3.A, to convert a City Carrier Assistant (CCA) to full-time career status under the following circumstances: A residual vacancy exists in an installation that is not under Article 12 withholding, there are no available part-time flexible, full-time unassigned regular, or full-time flexible city letter carriers in the installation, and the installation employees CCAs.

The Das interest arbitration award contained the Memorandum of Understanding Re: Part-Time Flexible Conversions. Under this MOU, the parties are directed to find ways to convert PTFs to FTR:

It is anticipated that during the term of the 2011 National Agreement, sufficient full-time duty assignments will become available through attrition to accommodate the conversion of part-time flexible employees currently on the rolls to full-time status. The parties recognize that there may be certain circumstances where conversion opportunities are not available for individual part time flexible employees. The parties will explore ways to provide full-time conversion opportunities to such employees.

The Das award also included the following question and answer regarding PTF versus CCA conversions:

Q. When there is an opportunity for conversion to career status in an installation and that installation has both part-time flexible and CCA employees available for conversion, who is converted?

A: The part-time flexible employees would be converted to full-time regular prior to conversion of the CCAs.

The obligation to accepted transfers to vacant assignments can be found in the Transfer Memo incorporated into the National Agreement. It is in Article 12.6, Transfer Memo, 1.B, which states in relevant part:

1.B. Installation heads will afford full consideration to all reassignment requests from employees in other geographical areas within the Postal Service. The requests will be considered in the order received consistent with the vacancies being filled and type of positions requested. Such requests from qualified employees, consistent with the provisions of this memorandum, will not be unreasonably denied. Local economic and unemployment conditions, as well as EEO factors, are valid concerns. When hiring from entrance registers is justified based on these local conditions, an attempt should be made to fill vacancies from both sources. Except in the most unusual of circumstances, if there are sufficient qualified applicants for reassignment at least one out of every four vacancies will be filled by granting requests for reassignment in all offices of 100 or more man-years if sufficient requests from qualified applicants have been received. In offices of less than 100 man-years a cumulative ratio of 1 out of 6 for the duration of the National Agreement will apply.

The Postal Service has the obligation to keep dislocation and inconvenience to a minimum when reassigning excess employees, as provided for in Article 12.4.A, which states:

12.4.A. A primary principle in effecting reassignments will be that dislocation and inconvenience to employees in the regular work force shall be kept to a minimum, consistent with the needs of the service. Reassignments will be made in accordance with this Section and the provisions of Section 5 below.

The obligation to withhold vacant positions for excess employees can be found in Article 12.5.B.2, which states:

12.5.B.2. The Vice Presidents Area Operations shall give full consideration to withholding sufficient full-time and part-time flexible positions within the area for full-time and part-time flexible employees who may be involuntarily reassigned. When positions are withheld, management will periodically review the continuing need for withholding such positions and discuss with the NBA the results of such review.