

OWCP departees: Collection of dues and the per capita tax roster



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Branch secretaries often contact the NALC Membership Department with questions regarding the dues payments of members who remain on the USPS' rolls but are not receiving a paycheck, or members who have been separated from the USPS and are receiving a payment through the Office of Workers' Compensation (OWCP) and may, or may not, have retired from the USPS.

Active members on OWCP who remain on the branch's roster in a no dues deduction (NO-DED) status because they have not been separated from the USPS—National Headquarters deducts the national per capita and state dues from the branch's reimbursement check for NO-DED mem-

bers—we do not deduct local dues. (So long as we deduct national and state dues from the branch reimbursement check, our records will continue to list the member as being in good standing until the branch notifies my office otherwise.)

The branch may seek full dues payment (national, state and local dues) from such members, or it may choose to seek repayment from the member for only the national and state portion of the dues. Some branches choose to forgive the *entire* dues amount and the branch absorbs the cost of the national and state per capita. Once the branch selects a policy, all members, under the same circumstances, must be treated equally.

Members on OWCP who are eventually separated from the USPS—Such members will show up on the branch's bi-weekly roster as "SEP" (separated from USPS employment.) Members that were listed as SEP, and are being paid through OWCP, have the option of retaining their membership in the NALC. These members will fall into one of two categories:

1. **If they have not yet retired, they must pay active letter carrier dues until they seek and obtain retirement status from the USPS.** The branch should notify the Membership Department that the member intends to continue membership in the NALC. After notification, the Membership Department will list the member on the semi-annual per capita tax call, which bills branches semi-annually (in advance) for national and state dues. It is the branch's responsibility to collect the dues: national per capita, state and local (unless the branch has determined that any portion will be paid by the branch). Regardless of the branch's policy, to keep the member in good standing, the branch must remit the national and state portion to NALC Headquarters.

2. **Members who retire and are paid through OWCP must also be placed on the semi-yearly per capita tax call, as NALC has not been able to obtain an agreement with the Department of Labor to deduct dues from OWCP checks.** The branch must notify NALC's Membership Department that this person does not receive an annuity check from the Office of Personnel Management (OPM), rather from OWCP, and thus should appear on the semi-annual per capita tax roster.

Note: In most cases, the Membership Department sends a Form 1189 to all retiring members, as we do not know when a member retires under OWCP instead of the usual OPM retirement. Therefore, when those members return the Form 1189 to NALC Headquarters and the Membership Department enters the data and forwards the information to OPM, OPM will reject the information and the member will be identified as "in a special pay status," as no dues can be deducted through OPM. The branch will be notified by the Membership Department and a branch officer should follow up with the member to ensure dues are paid and the member is placed on the semi-annual per capita tax call.

If a member refuses to pay dues owed, the branch may write my office and request that membership be canceled due to non-payment of dues. Please see Article 7 of the *NALC Constitution* for more information. (NALC members enrolled in the NALC Health Benefit Plan should be advised that cancellation of membership due to non-payment of dues will affect their enrollment status in the NALC HBP.)

A branch need not suffer loss of funds due to paying per capita tax on a person who is no longer an employee of the USPS. Should a branch discover that it has been doing so, it may seek reimbursement for the national dues deducted from the branch's reimbursement check by submitting proper documentation in a timely manner. The Membership Department will require a letter from the branch secretary, along with a copy of the member's Form 50. Please highlight the date that the member was separated from the USPS and the date the Form 50 was issued. The number of pay periods for which the branch is seeking reimbursement should also be noted.

Headquarters does not normally reimburse more than six months' worth of dues. However, if a Form 50 is cut so late that the branch incurs more than six months of per capita tax withholdings, special consideration will be given. However, Headquarters will not reimburse a branch if the Form 50's *issue* date is more than six months old. Branch secretaries must be diligent in reviewing the biweekly roster and communicating with the NALC Membership Department.