

The morning routine



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ment's Daily Workload Projections" section of the 2011 *NALC Letter Carrier Resource Guide*. This guide is available in the "Workroom Floor Issues" section on the City Delivery page of the NALC website at nalc.org/workplace-issues/city-delivery/workroom-floor-issues.

“Don’t lose your cool. While this process can be frustrating, you will do nothing to help yourself by becoming angry.”

1. Verbally inform your manager. Sections 131.41 and 131.42 of *Handbook M-41* require you to orally inform your manager when you believe that you cannot carry all the mail distributed to your route in eight hours or within your normal schedule.

2. Request PS Form 3996. Section 122.33 of *Handbook M-39* requires the manager to provide you with a PS Form 3996 when you request it. No matter what your manager says to you, say the words, “I am requesting a 3996,” and explain the reasons for your request. If you are denied the form, immediately ask to see your shop steward.

3. Fill out the form completely. It is important that you fill out the form completely. In the reason for the request box, write down why you believe you cannot complete your assignment in eight hours. Fully explain the reasons for your request. General comments, such as “heavy volume” or “route overburdened” do not suffice in this section.

Managers sometimes will tell you that you don’t need the

requested overtime or auxiliary assistance because of what DOIS projects for your route. Multiple national-level settlements (e.g., M-01664 and M-01769) have held that these time projections are not the sole determinant of your daily workload. Nothing can replace the opinion of the professional letter carrier. Simply provide your best estimate and the reasons why and move on to Step 4.

4. Keep your cool. Don’t lose your cool. While this process can be frustrating, you will do nothing to help yourself by becoming angry. If your manager denies your request for overtime or assistance, tell him or her that you will do your best. Politely ask what you should do if you are not able to deliver all the mail and are not able to return to the office when they want you back.

5. Don’t argue. There is no reason to argue with your manager at this point. The best thing you can do is tell your manager that you will do your best and ask for a copy of your 3996. Section 122.33 of *Handbook M-39* requires managers to provide you with a copy if you request it.

Finish your office work and go to the street. All you have to do is your best. Work professionally. Never compromise your safety or skip breaks or lunches to make it back to the office by a certain time.

6. Don’t make decisions. Letter carriers get paid to deliver mail. Managers get paid to make decisions. If you realize that you will not be able to deliver all the mail and make it back to the office by the time the manager approved, you should do everything you can to put any further decisions in the manager’s hands.

The best way to handle this situation is to call your supervisor per local instructions. If you have no local instructions, try calling about two hours before the time you are scheduled (approved on PS Form 3996) to be back. Let your supervisor know where you are and how long you think it will take you to finish. Ask whether they want you to bring the mail back or finish the route. Follow whatever instructions your supervisor or manager gives you.

If the supervisor or manager refuses to tell you what to do with the rest of the mail, or if you can’t finish your assigned duties in the amount of time initially specified by your supervisor, you should return to the office in the allotted time and ask for further instructions. Follow whatever instructions your supervisor or manager gives you.

Thanks for your hard work and dedication during the holiday season. You made it a success. I wish you and your family a happy New Year.