

Wounded Warriors Federal Leave Act regulations

Last year, Congress made good on a promise to better help disabled veterans who choose to continue their career in the civilian federal workforce, including in the Postal Service, by assisting in their transition when it comes to access to sick leave.

To review, during the 113th Congress, Rep. Stephen Lynch (D-MA) introduced the Wounded Warriors Federal Leave Act (H.R. 313) into the House of Representatives. The bill promised to provide a one-time benefit of 104 hours of paid medical leave for veterans with a service-related disability rating of at least 30 percent during their first year in the workforce. The leave would be used to seek treatment without being forced to take unpaid leave or forego their

appointments. Sens. John Tester (D-MT) and Jerry Moran (R-KS) introduced companion legislation (S. 242) shortly after and both pieces of legislation passed unanimously. It was signed into law soon afterward by President Obama and the Office of Personnel and Management (OPM) began working immediately to issue final regulations to implement the newly created disabled veteran leave category.

Before “wounded warriors leave” was available, first-year government employees were only eligible to accrue four hours of paid sick leave each pay period, forcing many disabled veterans to take unpaid leave. Now, the 104 hours provided will be given up front and will eliminate the requirement for those covered under this new

law to take unpaid leave in order to receive necessary treatment immediately after starting a new job.

The new law required the postmaster general to prescribe regulations for such leave for postal employees. The NALC Contract Administration Unit worked with the Postal Service to finalize those regulations. The Contract Talk column in this issue of *The Postal Record* explains the new USPS regulations and how they apply to postal employees under the law.

Implementation of this great benefit to those who have served our nation in the military is an incredible feat, given the dysfunction in Congress. NALC members were instrumental in turning this bill into law. Kudos to our activists on this victory.

Nalcrest Update

From the Trustees

Thank you, L.A.! Branch 24 was the perfect host and put on a great convention.

Matty Rose, Don Southern and I manned the Nalcrest booth. We also want to thank Nalcrest resident Annette Alversa for her help in the booth. Every day, we were able to talk to many delegates and their families about the union’s great retirement community and all it has to offer.

So many of those we spoke to were entering that window of one to three years until retirement eligibility. This is prime time to be considering Nalcrest as your destination.

Excitement abounded over the news that we now have a waiting list that currently equates to about a year’s time for an apartment to become available.

Excitement, too, revolved around our short-term vacation rentals. These rentals offer a tremendous opportunity to become acquainted with Nalcrest and all its amenities.

Speaking of amenities, wait till you see the new library, which includes many outlets for plugging in your electronics, including the availability of USB ports.

With all of this excitement, we are very sorry to relate the sudden, untimely passing of one of Nalcrest’s employees. James E. “Mad Dog” Medlock passed away on Aug. 29. Mad Dog,

or “Dog,” as most of us called him, was a long-time and very valuable member of the Nalcrest maintenance crew. His creative talents went far beyond the normal maintenance activities and he has left a large void to fill. All of the Nalcrest family sends our heartfelt condolences to his family and to his many friends.

Tom Young



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