

# New benefits for former CCAs on conversion to career status



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**A** recent settlement of a national-level grievance (M-01892) regarding city carrier assistants (CCAs) hired over the contractual caps, provides that in all size offices, CCAs with 30 months of relative standing on Sept. 1, 2018, will be converted to career status within 60 days from the signing of the agreement on July 27, 2018. CCAs meeting this criteria in offices other than those in 200 work-year offices or larger will be converted to part-time flexible (PTF) status. We project that this will result in approximately 3,500 conversions to PTF.

Now is a good time to review some rights and benefits for PTFs that change when converted to career status. Detailed information on rights

and benefits upon conversion to career may be found in the *NALC City Carrier Assistant Resource Guide* on the website [atnalc.org/cca-resource-guide](http://atnalc.org/cca-resource-guide).

Below are just a few important issues that newly converted career employees should be aware of:

**Health benefits**—Once converted to a career position, employees have 60 days to enroll in a Federal Employees Health Benefits Program (FEHBP) plan. The employer contribution for Self Only, Self Plus One and Self Plus Family plans is adjusted to an amount equal to 74 percent in 2018 and 73 percent in 2019 of the weighted average bi-weekly premiums under the FEHBP as determined by the Office of Personnel Management (OPM).

**Dental and vision**—The Federal Employees Dental/Vision Program (FEDVIP) has Self Only, Self Plus One and Self Plus Family plans available for all employees eligible for FEHBP. For more information, visit [benefeds.com](http://benefeds.com).

**Flexible spending account**—With a flexible spending account (FSA), you can save on a wide variety of medical, dental, vision and day care expenses. It is a tax break that is simple to use and works for all employees eligible for FEHBP.

**Life insurance**—Employees converted to career status are automatically enrolled in Federal Employee Group Life Insurance (FEGLI) to receive basic life insurance unless coverage is waived. Basic coverage begins the first day in a pay and duty status after conversion. USPS pays the entire cost of the basic coverage. The coverage is the annual rate of base pay rounded up to the next even \$1,000, plus \$2,000. Additional optional coverage is available. Visit [opm.gov/healthcare-insurance/life-insurance](http://opm.gov/healthcare-insurance/life-insurance) for more information.

**Retirement**—Once converted to career status, letter carriers are automatically enrolled in the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS). There are three components: FERS Basic

Benefit Plan, Social Security and Thrift Savings Plan (TSP). The basic benefit plan and Social Security portion of your retirement are defined benefits. Employees have control over the TSP portion. USPS automatically contributes 1 percent of your base pay and will match employee contributions up to 5 percent of base pay. Although participation in TSP is voluntary, letter carriers are automatically enrolled and 3 percent of base pay will be deducted from pay each pay period and deposited in the TSP account unless the employee elects to change or stop contributions. For more information, please visit the NALC website or contact the NALC Retirement Department at 202-393-4695.

**Hours of work**—PTF letter carriers have flexible work hours. In addition, over the course of a service week, the employer will make every effort to ensure that PTFs are utilized at the straight-time rate prior to assigning such work to CCAs working in the same location on the same tour.

**Conversion to full-time status**—PTF letter carriers are converted to full-time status in accordance with MOU Re: Full-time Regular Opportunities—City Letter Carrier Craft found on pages 159-162 of the 2016-2019 National Agreement.

**Seniority**—Seniority applies to all regular work force letter carrier craft employees. It is computed from the date of appointment in the letter carrier craft and continues to accrue so long as service is uninterrupted in the same installation.

**Annual Leave**—PTFs earn annual leave based on the number of hours in which they are in a pay status as follows:

- Less than 3 years—1 hour for each unit of 20 hours in pay status
- 3 years but less than 15 years—1 hour for each unit of 13 hours in pay status
- 15 years or more—1 hour for each unit of 10 hours in a pay status

More information on leave programs locally may be found in the Local Memorandum of Understanding (LMOU).

**Sick leave**—PTFs earn sick leave based on the number of hours in which they are in pay status—one hour for each unit of 20 hours in pay status up to 104 hours per 26 period leave year.

**Court leave**—PTFs who have completed their probationary period are eligible for court leave if the employee would otherwise have been in a work status or annual leave status. The amount of court leave for PTFs shall not exceed eight hours in a service day or 40 hours in a service week.

**Uniform allowance**—Effective May 21, 2018, annual allowance is \$452. On the first uniform anniversary date after conversion to career, letter carriers receive an additional \$104 prior to May 21, 2019. Effective May 21, 2019, the annual allowance shall increase to \$464. Those letter carriers who reach their first uniform anniversary date after May 21, 2019, will receive an additional \$107 pursuant to Article 26.2.B of the National Agreement.