

Joint Workplace Improvement Project (JWIP) update



**Brian
Renfro**

We recently completed on-site meetings in four locations selected by the parties for application of the Joint Workplace Improvement Process (JWIP) established by a memorandum of understanding (MOU) in the 2016-2019 National Agreement. The MOU is reprinted at the end of this article for reference. The locations currently included in the process are:

- Rockville, MD
- New Kensington, PA
- Toledo, OH
- Ontario, CA

After a period of time spent discussing the details of the process with representatives from Postal Service headquarters and gathering information from locations around the country, the parties agreed we would each select two locations.

I jointly conducted each meeting with a counterpart from USPS Labor Relations. Also present were JWIP representatives selected by each party, the appropriate national business agent and representatives from the local NALC branch and local management. The meetings included honest conversation about what everyone believes are the root causes of the issues identified at each location.

While the specific issues at each location differ, discussion was had in every meeting on treatment of all employees with dignity and respect, contractual compliance, communication, and the dispute resolution process as it relates to the factors listed in the JWIP MOU. Everyone was forthcoming and shared useful information on each topic.

In each location, we were able to develop solutions that have a chance to make significant progress. The background work prior to these meetings and the conversation in each meeting are not the end of the process. Diligent follow-up and the addressing of future issues are crucial to the success of the process.

I want to thank everyone, on both the union and management sides, for their participation and commitment to the process in these four locations. In particular, I want to thank NALC Assistant to the President for City Delivery Tim McKay, Region 11 Regional Administrative Assistant John Collins, Region 1 Regional Administrative Assistant James Henry and recently retired Region 7 National Business Agent Chris Wittenburg for going outside their normal areas of work to serve as JWIP representatives in these locations.

Additional locations will be selected and entered in JWIP in the future. While we are off to a positive start, we will learn as we implement the process and continually work to improve it.

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE AND THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LETTER CARRIERS, AFL-CIO

Re: Joint Workplace Improvement Process

The parties are committed to creating and enhancing a culture in every workplace that improves relationships between management and city letter carriers for the purposes of providing a safe, efficient work environment in which all employees are treated with dignity and respect. The parties recognize that such a work environment puts the Postal Service and its employees in the best position to accomplish our mission of providing the highest quality service to our customers. Therefore, the parties agree to the following Joint Workplace Improvement Process (JWIP):

Joint Workplace Improvement Process (JWIP)

The process will be overseen by the Vice President, Labor Relations and the NALC National President, or their designees. Representatives will be appointed by the Vice President, Labor Relations and the NALC National President, or their designees, to represent the Postal Service and the NALC. These representatives will work in teams of two, with one member representing the Postal Service and one member representing the NALC.

The national parties will jointly select locations for teams to implement the JWIP process. The appropriate Area Manager, Labor Relations or National Business Agent, or their designees, may submit locations to the national parties for consideration.

Once a location is selected, teams will thoroughly review all factors in a selected location that affect the workplace culture, safety, service or efficiency of a location. These factors include, but are not limited to:

- The treatment of employees
- The relationship between the local union and local management
- Communication between city letter carriers and local management
- Corrective solutions/remedies to repetitive contractual violations/disciplinary issues
- Policies and practices regarding safety both in the office and on the street
- Service to customers, operational efficiency, and opportunities for business growth
- Staffing levels and properly adjusted routes

After the process described above is completed, the team will jointly develop recommendations for changes and a plan to implement such changes in each location. Each team will promptly report their findings and recommendations for each selected location to the Vice President, Labor Relations and the NALC National President, or their designees.

The national parties will determine what, if any, changes are necessary based on the joint review and will assign responsibility for implementing such changes. Additionally, the national parties are committed to monitoring the effectiveness of such changes.