

Contract implementation and collective-bargaining update



**Brian
Renfroe**

Since ratification of the 2016 National Agreement in August of last year, headquarters officers and staff have continued to work to implement the provisions of the Agreement. Notably, six wage increases have already been implemented for career letter carriers – two general wage increases and four cost-of-living adjustments (COLA) identified below.

- July 2016: COLA—\$21
- Nov. 26, 2016: General wage increase—1.2 percent
- Jan. 2017: COLA—\$333
- July 2017: COLA—\$270
- Nov. 25, 2017: General wage increase—1.3 percent
- Jan. 2018: COLA—\$520

City carrier assistants (CCAs) have received the general wage increases identified above as well an additional one percent general increase retroactive to Nov. 26, 2016, and an additional 1 percent increase on Nov. 25, 2017. CCAs also have received wage hikes of 50 cents per hour after 12 weeks of service and an additional 50-cent increase after another 40 weeks of service.

Most recently, the provisions of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) Re: Step Credit for Former Transitional Employees were implemented effective May 26. This MOU advanced certain CCAs who have been converted to career status and who served as transitional employees (TEs) after Sept. 29, 2007, in the city carrier pay scale as follows:

Length of creditable TE Service	No. of Additional Steps
2 years but less than 3 years	1
3 years but less than 4 years	2
4 years but less than 5 years	3
5 or more years	4

For those eligible CCA employees whose conversion to career occurs in the future, the one-time placement to a higher step will take effect on the conversion date. When placed in a higher step under the provisions of this MOU, former CCAs will retain current time-in-step credit.

For those who served five or more years as a TE, the four-step advancement will result in a wage increase of more than 11 percent.

The next potential wage increase for career letter carriers will come in the form of a COLA after the release of the July 2018 Consumer Price Index (CPI). Any COLA necessitated by the CPI increase will likely be payable in early September.

In November, all letter carriers will be upgraded pursuant to the MOU Re: Pay Schedule Consolidation. Effective Nov. 24, 2018, career and CCA letter carriers currently paid at Grade 1 will be moved to the equivalent step in the Grade 2 scale. The average pay increase will be about 2.1 percent. All letter carriers currently being paid at Grade 2 will receive additional compensation equivalent to 2.1 percent of their applicable hourly rate.

In addition to the upgrade for all letter carriers, CCAs will receive an additional 1 percent wage increase on Nov. 24.

The final potential wage increases under the terms of the 2016 National Agreement will be in the form of COLAs paid to career carriers after the release of the January 2019 CPI and the July 2019 CPI.

Negotiations for our next National Agreement will begin roughly one year from the time you receive this month's edition of *The Postal Record*. Two of our sister unions are engaging in contract negotiations this year. The National Rural Letter Carriers' Association (NRLCA) began negotiating a few months ago, and the American Postal Workers Union (APWU) begins this month. The other postal union, the National Postal Mail Handlers Union (NPMHU) begins negotiations next June on the same schedule as NALC. We work with our sister unions to share information and provide support to each other wherever it is helpful. We wish our brothers and sisters the best in their ongoing and upcoming contract negotiations.

Preparations for collective bargaining never stop. Even while negotiating one agreement, preparations for the next round of negotiations and potential interest arbitration are ongoing. While implementing the 2016 agreement, we have continued to prepare for next year.

Our collective-bargaining goals come directly from NALC's members through resolutions submitted, considered and passed at NALC's biennial conventions. We also consider other input we receive from our members in a variety of ways when developing strategy for contract negotiations. This summer, we will be distributing information to members, asking them to participate in a survey that will assist us in preparing for contract negotiations. We are currently finalizing the process for delivering the survey. More information will be available in the near future.