Embracing modern communication

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Over the last few years, we have witnessed a dramatic shift in the way the world communicates. Just a few years ago, landline phones and written letters were our primary means of communication and print media were our primary means of finding out news and information.

Today, people increasingly use electronic and digital means to achieve these same ends. As letter carriers, we have seen this firsthand as we have witnessed a decline in letter and flat-mail volume due to electronic and digital advances. At the same time, we've seen dramatic increases in parcel volume thanks to the rise of e-commerce, built on the same electronic platforms as the readily available information that has affected letter and flat-mail volume.

NALC continues to adapt to these changes to keep members informed. By now, most letter carriers are familiar with the NALC Member App for smartphones. It is our primary means for instant communication with members. We continue to work on improvements to the app—most of them based on the feedback we receive from members.

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If you haven't installed it, I strongly encourage you to do so. You can receive push notifications on topics of your choice and have instant access to the latest news and resources. Instructions for downloading the app are at the end of this article.

We also continue to use our social media platforms to provide news and information. You can like us on Facebook at National Association of Letter Carriers (@nalc.national) and follow us on Twitter @NALC_National. We are working hard to put out useful and interesting information to you daily.

We are developing an NALC members-only app for smartphones. The first phase will include a function to track your work hours and help identify any issues with your pay. We plan to have this app out in the next couple of months.

NALC Member App installation instructions

On Apple iPhones, find the App Store (the letter A in a circle on a blue button) on your phone's home screen. When it opens, go to the search button (with the magnifying glass) in the lower right and click it. In the gray search bar at top, enter "NALC Member App." Then hit the blue search button in the lower right. When you see the app, click the blue "Get" button at right; it will turn to a green "Install" button. Click that. You will be asked for your password or touch ID, depending on how you've set up your phone. Once you authorize the installation, it will begin. When completed, there will a blue "Open" button, if you want to use it immediately. The NALC Member App also will appear on your home screen for whenever you want to use it.

On Android phones, find Google Play (sometimes called Google Play Store or Play). It looks like three overlapping triangles pointed right. When it opens, go to the search bar at the top and enter "NALC Member App." Click on the entry with the red-white-and-blue NALC logo, and then click on the green "Install" button. If it asks whether you'll give the app access to your location, click the "Accept" button (location is used only to personalize push notifications and to give you a precise congressional directory). After it has been installed, there will be a green "Open" button, if you want to use it immediately. The NALC Member App may appear on your home screen. If it doesn't, go to your phone's Apps function to find it and drag it to the home screen.

iPhone app can be used on iPads, too

While the app was built for phones, it can be used on iPads as well. Follow the instructions above, but your search will not find the NALC Member App. Simply go to the top left where it says in blue, "iPad Only," and change it to "iPhone Only." You should now be able to download the app with the instructions above. Once the iPhone app is installed, you'll notice that it will automatically scale up to display full-size on the iPad screen, causing the buttons, fonts and graphics to look proportionately larger than normal.