

Veterans Group

For more information, go to nalc.org/veterans



More from OPM's Vet Guide

The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) administers entitlement to veterans' preference as well as other statutory requirements relating to employment of veterans. OPM publishes the *Veterans Employment Initiative Vet Guide*. The guide offers detailed information about a host of rights available to veterans and their families, including prior to, during and after employment with the federal government.

The Veterans Group column in the September issue of *The Postal Record* highlighted some information in OPM's *Vet Guide* that may be useful to veterans. This column expands on that previous column by highlighting additional information.

Service credit for leave accrual rate

Annual leave is an important benefit for working letter carriers. It can also be important to retiring letter carriers, because saved annual leave is paid out in a lump sum at the pay rate on the date of retirement. Plus, the days of saved annual leave are projected into the future, and if any holidays are scheduled within the projected time, the lump-sum payment will include pay for the holidays in addition to the annual leave.

Military service can increase the amount of annual leave that a letter carrier earns. Full-time career letter carriers earn four, six or eight hours of annual leave for each full bi-weekly pay period. A carrier's leave accrual category (four, six or eight) is based on years of creditable service. Letter carriers with fewer than three years of service earn four hours of annual leave each pay period, adding up to 104 hours per leave year. Carriers with

three to 15 years of service earn six hours of annual leave each pay period, adding up to 160 hours per leave year. Carriers with more than 15 years of service earn eight hours of annual leave each pay period, adding up to 208 hours per leave year. See the *Employee and Labor Relations Manual (ELM)* 512.3.

For the purpose of leave accrual, full credit for military service is given at the time of appointment to a career letter carrier position. For example, a newly hired career letter carrier who has three years of prior military service

military service for annual leave accrual. The only requirement is that the military service be performed under honorable conditions. However, the credit is substantially limited for veterans receiving retired military pay. If a veteran is receiving military retirement pay, credit is available for leave accrual only for periods of actual service in a war or campaign (for which a campaign badge is authorized), or all active duty when retirement was based on disability incurred as a direct result of armed conflict or caused by an instrumentality of war and incurred in the line of duty during a period of war.

Note that receipt of a Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) disability rating does not in any way limit credit of military time for the purpose of the Postal Service's leave accrual rate.

OPM's *Vet Guide* can be accessed online at opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/veterans-services/vet-guide-for-hr-professionals.

If you do not have online access, call NALC Headquarters at 202-393-4695 to request a mailed copy.



begins immediately earning six hours of annual leave each pay period, instead of four. As another example, a newly hired career letter carrier who has 14 years of prior military service also immediately begins earning six hours of annual leave each pay period, and would graduate to earning eight hours each pay period after one year of postal service because they would then reach the necessary 15 years of service.

No deposit for, or "buy back" of, military time is required for crediting

Join the NALC Veterans Group

The NALC Veterans Group is designed to provide NALC members—both active and retired letter carriers—who are also military veterans the ability to connect with fellow NALC veterans and stay informed on issues of importance to letter carrier veterans. It is free to join.

Members receive a pin as a symbol of gratitude for your military service and membership in NALC.

If you are interested in joining the group, complete the sign-up card at nalc.org/veterans.