



MOVING

Letter carriers have a privilege that is uncommon among employees in general: the ability to transfer to almost anywhere in the country. Since letter carriers in Maine do the same job as letter carriers in Hawaii and everywhere in between, letter carriers have a standardized process for transferring to a new city of their choice.

Some carriers move to be near family members—to take care of an aging parent or follow a spouse who has moved for his or her own job, for instance. Others want to work in different weather, or just need a change of scenery.

Transfers may bring challenges, though. There may not be many openings in the region you prefer. If you find one, you will have to learn a new route or routes, perhaps in a city you don't know so well. Moving from a

small to a large office or branch, or vice versa, is also a new experience.

Requesting a transfer is easy. A letter carrier must have worked at least one year at his or her current installation to request a reassignment to a different geographical area. The carrier can submit a request to human resources, which will enter the request into the Postal Service's automated assignment system, eReassign, or the carrier can enter the request directly into eReassign through liteblue.usps.gov, through the Postal Service intranet using a post office computer or through the self-serve kiosks at some facilities. Only career carriers can transfer, though CCAs may arrange an informal transfer that technically involves resigning at their old installation and being rehired at the new one the next day.

A letter carrier can even try to trade

Submitting for a voluntary reassignment

Career letter carriers desiring to transfer to another installation have two options for submitting their request for a voluntary reassignment. Regardless of the option they choose, the request will be entered in eReassign, the automated system used by the Postal Service to administer transfer requests. eReassign may be accessed either online at liteblue.usps.gov, through the Postal Service intranet for employees with computer access at work, or through the self-serve kiosks located in some postal facilities.

The first option is for an employee to submit a written request to human resources (HR) in the installation where

he or she wants to transfer. The employee should keep a written record of the request. In addition, HR is required to provide the employee with written confirmation of the request.

The second option is to submit the request through eReassign, using one of the options listed above; however, most letter carriers will use LiteBlue for their submission. To log into LiteBlue, employees will need their employee identification number (EIN) and password. Once the employee logs in, eReassign is accessed by the "My HR" tab at the top of the page and then by clicking on "Access eReassign." Accessing eReassign requires the em-

ployee to log in again using their EIN and password.

After logging in, employees can submit a request if they know the installation and craft into which they want to transfer. If they do not know which craft positions are employed in offices where they hope to work, eReassign allows them to search by city or state. Even though an office may have letter carrier craft employees, a vacant position may not be available at the time of the request. Employees still should request a transfer to the installation, because when a position does become available, all individuals who request transfer into that installation will be



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places with another carrier. Many find others who want to swap jobs by placing a mutual exchange ad in *The Postal Record* (this month's ads are on page 72). In that case, both carriers would require a reassignment to each other's city.

Here are stories from some carriers who have made the switch.



Nestor Vivas

Nestor Vivas transferred several hundred miles, twice, to make it back home.

Vivas, a member of Ponce, PR Branch 826, carries mail in his hometown, Guayama, in Puerto Rico. But when he first looked for a job with the Postal Service in 2007, there were no openings in the small town.

"In this office, there are only eight

routes," he said. With the help of family, he landed a job as a PTF in River Edge, NJ.

But New Jersey is 1,500 miles from Puerto Rico, and visiting relatives at home was difficult, so in 2012, Vivas transferred to Fort Lauderdale, FL, using eReassign.

"The transfer to Fort Lauderdale was easy," Vivas said. "They sent me a letter with the start date and that was it." He enjoyed his time in the new city, but he still longed for home. He traveled to Puerto Rico several times.

By 2014, he had found a carrier job in Guayama. Vivas said the long path back home was worth it. "I learned a lot, and I met a lot of carriers," he said.

For **Chris Riley**, who now is an alternate steward in the Fort Lee, NJ, post office, the journey was wholly within state. A resident of the Fort Lee area,

considered in the order in which the requests are made.

Employees may submit an unlimited number of transfer requests; however, each request expires one year from the date of submission. If a request is placed in review in eReassign because transfers are being considered to fill a vacancy, it will automatically be extended for one year. If the request is never in review, the employee is responsible for renewing the request, which may be done up to 90 days prior to the expiration date. If an employee fails to renew the request, any new requests will be placed in order based on the date of the new submission. This could result in their missing out on a transfer opportunity that they would have otherwise

been offered.

Career letter carriers who wish to transfer to another craft within the installation where they are currently employed must submit a written request to the installation head. As stated above, the employee should keep a copy of his or her request. These types of requests are not entered in eReassign; therefore, there is no need for the employee to renew the request on a yearly basis. Requests to transfer to another craft are filled based on the contract covering the requested craft.

Letter carriers seeking a more detailed explanation of the transfer process should read the Contract Talk article in the March 2018 *Postal Record* available on the NALC

website at nalc.org/news/the-postal-record/2018/march-2018/document/2018-03_ct.pdf. Additional resources include the 2016-2019 National Agreement at nalc.org/workplace-issues/resources/agreement/National-Agreement-2016-2019.pdf and the 2014 *Joint Contract Administrative Manual (JCAM)* at nalc.org/workplace-issues/contract-administration-unit/body/JCAM-2014.pdf.

Letter carriers should direct questions regarding the transfer process to their local union representative or national business agent (NBA). Contact information for the NBA who covers your region can be found on the NALC website at nalc.org/union-administration/nalc-regions. **PR**



MOVING ABOUT



Chris Riley

he took his test in a town several hours away, hoping that he would be able to work closer to home.

“I took the test for Central New Jersey,” he said, only to learn that his job would be where he had taken the test. He took the job, as a PTF in 2005 in New Providence, NJ, several hours by car in busy traffic from his home near Fort Lee.

When he sought to work closer to home, he learned something else, as well: “I didn’t realize it was such an ordeal to transfer.”

After he worked up to full-time regular carrier two years later, Riley took his shot at transferring.

“My decision to transfer was simply based on family considerations,” Riley said, “because of the travel, gas money it was costing me and the inconvenience with traffic.”

Riley took out a Mutual Exchange ad in *The Postal Record*. It can be difficult to match two carriers who both want to move to each other’s locations, but the ad worked.

“Sure enough, somebody called me,” he said. “I was really surprised.” The postmasters in each office reviewed each carrier’s file, and both had to approve. The transfer process took about three months to finalize.

Since his was a mutual exchange, Riley was able to keep the seniority he built at his first installation. The carrier he swapped with had to come to New Providence at Riley’s lower seniority level in that office. In the case of a single, non-mutual transfer, a carrier starts from the bottom in the new office with no seniority carried over.

Life has kept **Jenny Woodall** moving. The Salt Lake City, UT Branch 111 member has transferred between crafts and between cities, using both eReassign and a mutual exchange, six times.

Woodall began her postal career as a clerk in Salt Lake City, UT, and transferred as a clerk between several local facilities before taking a job as a letter carrier in nearby Provo and then an associate office in West Jordan, UT.

To move closer to her mother, who had health problems at the time, Woodall then used eReassign to transfer to Henderson, NV, near Las Vegas, in 2003. She wanted to go to Las Vegas where her mother lived, but after waiting two years for a slot to open there, she chose Henderson. Her mother got better, so in 2011, she moved back to Utah to be closer to other family members who could help care for her children. She shifted jobs again in the Salt Lake City area with a mutual exchange.

All that moving has helped Woodall keep up with her family while pursuing a steady postal career, but it has brought one setback: her seniority in each office was reset with each move. “I have four or five years of seniority,” she said, “and I’ve been with the Post Office since 1992.”

“The hardest part was being a PTF so many times,” she said. At the time, each transfer, whether to a clerk or carrier job, required her to start again as a PTF before reaching regular status. **PR**



Jenny Woodall

