

Spring updates for City Delivery



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Spring is the season of change, and some letter carriers are looking forward to warmer temperatures and better weather conditions. However, improved weather conditions may not be the only changes city letter carriers experience with the arrival of spring. I want to use this month's article to update members on potential changes in the workplace and to provide a preview of a new resource for members.

Consolidated casing test

In a letter dated January 13, 2020, USPS provided NALC with a list of an additional 35 test sites for this initiative. However, as of the date of this article, NALC has not been provided any specific dates when testing will

commence in these locations. NALC has been monitoring this unilateral USPS initiative since the beginning of the test on May 18, 2019, in Annandale, VA. A national-level grievance was filed disputing the test and both parties' arguments were heard by Arbitrator Shyam Das in hearings conducted in November and December. NALC is currently waiting for the arbitrator to issue a ruling on this unilateral initiative.

In the meantime, NALC observers have been present at each test site, recording information related to the initiative. Based on work-hour data received, USPS projected 432,129 city delivery work hours would be used in October 2019 for the 62 test sites combined. In reality, 505,898 total work hours were used for the month. This work-hour data reflects almost 74,000 hours more than USPS's projected hours. That 74,000 work hours equates to an additional 9,250 full-time city carrier assignments for the month of October.

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Keep in mind, the additional work hours identified above do not include any hours resulting from additional transportation runs and clerk staffing increases that USPS has initiated in some test sites. Also not included in the work-hour data is the time used by non-letter carrier craft employees performing city carrier work. NALC is aware of grievances that have been filed in multiple test sites disputing these cross-craft hours. I will be sure to keep our members informed of

any changes regarding this test process.

Caseless test

In addition to consolidated casing, USPS is gathering data and considering another unilateral test related to casing duties. On January 28, USPS provided NALC with notification pursuant to Article 34 of the National Agreement of its intent to collect data in order to develop a study (including test parameters) related to determining the impact of caseless duty assignments on city delivery routes. USPS states that in this test, letter carriers would take residual mail directly to the street and collate this mail into their automated mail, thereby eliminating all casing and pulling time in the office. If USPS initiates this unilateral test, NALC representatives will closely monitor and observe the testing process. USPS states that this testing will occur in 240 nationwide test sites, last approximately one year, and proceed on a similar schedule to consolidated casing. If USPS moves forward with this test, I will provide the membership with more information as this situation develops.

Next Generation Delivery Vehicle (NGDV)

According to Article 41.3.L of the National Agreement, NALC has the right to examine, comment and submit recommendations on new vehicle specifications. As written in previous articles, NALC has attended multiple meetings with USPS representatives to provide feedback on the proposed NGDV. In January of 2020, USPS provided NALC with a copy of the final Statement of Work (SOW) given to potential suppliers of the NGDV. Potential suppliers will be given several months to review the SOW and provide USPS with production proposals. USPS anticipates that a contract will be awarded this year and that the first production vehicle will be deployed 18 months following the contract award. NALC has reviewed the SOW and is pleased to report that the SOW includes a requirement for air conditioning and several additional safety features designed to help protect letter carriers.

Veterans Guide

Over the last several months, NALC has been developing an informational resource for letter carriers who are military veterans. The NALC *Veterans Guide* contains various topics of interest to veterans, including the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA), Wounded Warriors Leave (WWL), the Veterans' Preference Act of 1944 and retirement credit for military service. The guide also discusses several National Agreement provisions and memorandums of understanding (MOUs) specific to military veterans. In the coming months, a copy of the guide will be mailed to every member of the NALC Veterans Group; it also will be available in electronic format at nalc.org. In addition, a copy will be mailed to each member upon joining the group. I would like to give a special thank you to our Branch 421 member, Jim Ruetze, for his many hours of work assisting NALC with this project.