

# New office activities study for city carriers



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**A**s time marches on and the seasons continuously change, so does the testing USPS conducts with city letter carriers. In this month's article, I will describe a new office activities study recently introduced by USPS.

**In August, pursuant to Article 34 of the National Agreement, the Postal Service began collecting data to be included in a study of city carriers' office activities. As with several other recent unilateral tests involving city letter carriers, USPS once again decided to perform this study on its own rather than examining methods to improve the work environment and procedures related to city delivery**

with NALC through the joint City Delivery Task Force. With this new study, the Postal Service contracted third-party contractor Deloitte to observe and collect data related to city carriers' office activities. USPS states this data will be analyzed to potentially develop new work methods or standards. Joint exploration by USPS and NALC of both new work methods and/or standards are among the many subjects established and directed jointly in the Memorandum of Understanding Re: City Delivery Task Force incorporated in the National Agreement.

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NALC was first notified of the Postal Service's intent to conduct this study in a letter dated April 19, 2019. In a subsequent notification, dated May 1, 2019, USPS told us the information collected from this study might be used during the collective-bargaining process. During a meeting held on May 17, 2019, the Postal Service informed NALC that it intended to contract a third-party company to conduct this study. USPS also stated that sites and routes would be randomly selected to collect data related to office activities. USPS anticipated collecting one day

of data from approximately 400 routes during the study; the information would be used to evaluate current office standards and, if necessary, create new standards.

**NALC didn't hear anything further from USPS about this study until March 3.** We were notified that a contract had been awarded for the data collection analysis, and we were provided with a list of 36 sites of various sizes that had been randomly selected for the study. USPS stated that the contractor will collect data through on-site visits both in the morning and the afternoon.

In a letter dated March 17, NALC was provided a list of the routes selected to be included in the study. Subsequently, on March 18, the Postal Service notified NALC that the study was being temporarily postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

On July 9, the Postal Service notified NALC that it was resuming preparations for the study and intended to visit two sites in Marietta, GA, to record city carriers performing office activities. USPS indicated the purpose of this video is to assist the contractor with creating training to be used by their observers in the study. On July 15, I, along with a member of my staff, traveled to Marietta to visit and observe these sites while this videotaping was being conducted. Three volunteer letter carriers were filmed while performing office duties and loading/unloading of their delivery vehicles, in the morning and afternoon.

On July 24, NALC was provided a schedule for the data collection in the randomly selected sites. Data collectors counted the mail and observed carriers performing office and loading/unloading duties in the morning and the afternoon on the selected routes. Throughout the study, data collectors were required to maintain the appropriate social distancing, per Postal Service protocol and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidelines.

**Prior to the study, NALC sent regional representatives** to each site to explain the study to the letter carriers and answer any questions they had. Once the data collection was completed, those representatives returned to obtain feedback from the carriers involved in the study. NALC Headquarters is communicating with USPS regarding the data collected and its potential usage to determine whether this study complies with the applicable provisions of the National Agreement.

As always, my department is closely monitoring this initiative and getting feedback from letter carriers involved in the study. Be sure to check the NALC website and our social media platforms regularly for updates on USPS testing involving city carriers.