

City delivery updates



Christopher Jackson

Summer has arrived, it's time for Independence Day, and with coronavirus restrictions easing, I hope you are enjoying the warmer weather and outdoor events with family and friends. Summer seems to be a busy time for everyone, personally and professionally; the Postal Service is no different. I want to take a few minutes in this month's column to update you on a few recent city delivery issues.

MDD testing and deployment

In my article in the May edition of *The Postal Record*, I informed city carriers about two new tests involving the Mobile Delivery Device (MDD). The first test involves the ability for carriers

to input the PS Form 3575-Z, Employee Generated Change of Address information, into the MDD for processing. Recently, the Postal Service notified me that the test process has been so successful that it has implemented the automated PS Form 3575-Z option nationwide.

The second test is related to the submission of Customer Connect lead entries on the MDD. This test, originally scheduled to begin in April, was anticipated to last until the end of June in 10 pilot sites: three in California, three in Arizona and four in Iowa. However, the test was delayed slightly to allow USPS to update the MDD software. USPS states that the MDD has been updated and is now equipped to accept leads electronically. City carriers in the test locations will be asked to complete surveys offering feedback on the electronic submission process. The Postal Service reports that the Customer Connect program has surpassed \$3 billion in revenue since its inception. For more information on these tests, read my article on page 40 of the *May Postal Record*.

In addition to the new test processes, the Postal Service recently provided me with an updated list of the Phase Two deployment of the MDD replacement devices. Phase Two deployment began at the end of March and is anticipated to last until Oct. 1. USPS states that the new devices will be deployed to more than 15,000 additional ZIP codes nationwide over the deployment period.

Discontinuation of FSS

In recent months, I have received multiple letters from the Postal Service regarding the discontinuation of Flat Sequence Sorting (FSS) mail or machines in various locations across the country. In one letter, USPS notified me of plans to discontinue and dismantle individual FSS machines in several mail-pro-

cessing facilities across the country. USPS intends to replace the dismantled FSS machines with package sortation equipment. According to the Postal Service, mail currently processed on the FSS machines scheduled for dismantling will be processed by existing FSS machines within the facility and there should be no impact to city delivery operations.

In another letter, the Postal Service notified me that FSS mail was discontinued in 18 post offices or stations on April 17. City carriers in the affected ZIP codes returned to the traditional casing and processing of the previously automated flat mail. USPS conducted full route count and inspections pursuant to Chapter 9 of *Handbook M-41*, City Carriers Duties and Responsibilities, and Chapter 2 of the *Handbook M-39*, Management of Delivery Services, in these sites beginning on May 15. As of the writing of this article, I haven't received any further notifications regarding additional locations in which FSS mail or machines may be discontinued. However, more reduction of FSS may occur due to the changing mail mix and increases in parcel volume. The Postal Service has communicated to NALC the desire to create additional space and opportunities for automated parcel sortation.

AMP consolidations

In 2015, the Postal Service postponed 62 scheduled Area Mail Processing (AMP) consolidations. USPS reports that in 24 of those facilities, most of the corresponding mail moves were completed; however, the remaining limited operations in those facilities continued in place. The Postal Service states that, as part of its 10-year plan to achieve financial sustainability and service excellence, it will implement the remaining additional operational mail moves in 18 of the 24 previously paused facilities. Of the remaining six facilities, two will be reevaluated for possible action in the future and four will have no action taken at this time. USPS anticipates that the mail moves will be completed in all facilities by November 2021.

USPS affirms that the consolidations will not result in the layoff of bargaining-unit employees. Any potential impacts on employees will be handled in accordance with the appropriate collective-bargaining agreements. At this time, NALC has not received any notification of potential Article 12 withholding events that may occur because of these consolidations. For more information on Article 12 and withholding, see the Contract Talk article in the January 2020 edition of *The Postal Record*, which can be found at nalc.org/workplace-issues/resources/nalc-publications.

For the latest updates affecting city carriers, be sure to visit our website and social media platforms. After the challenges of this past year, I hope you can take some time for well-deserved rest and relaxation. Stay well and have a wonderful rest of your summer.