

Contract Administration Unit

Brian Renfro, Executive Vice President
Lew Drass, Vice President
Christopher Jackson, Director of City Delivery
Manuel L. Peralta Jr., Director of Safety and Health
Dan Toth, Director of Retired Members
Jim Yates, Director of Life Insurance

Voluntary reassignments

Transfers within the letter carrier craft are governed by four contractual provisions: Article 12 of the National Agreement, the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) Re: Transfers, the MOU Re: Full-time Regular Opportunities – City Letter Carrier Craft, and the MOU Re: Reassignment Opportunities (M-01947 in the NALC Materials Reference System). These provisions, which apply only to career employees, must be read in concert to fully understand the transfer process.

Article 12 of the National Agreement lays the groundwork for the transfer process in Section 6, which states:

- A. Installation heads will consider requests for transfers submitted by employees from other installations.
- B. Providing a written request for a voluntary transfer has been submitted, a written acknowledgment shall be given in a timely manner.

The MOU Re: Transfers, which is incorporated into Article 12, is comprised of two sections which define the categories of transfers:

1. Reassignments (transfers) to other geographical areas.
2. Local reassignments (transfers).

Determining which section covers the transfer request requires knowing where the employee currently works and the location of the requested office. All transfer requests are covered under Section 1, unless they are defined as local transfers, which are covered under Section 2. A local transfer is a voluntary reassignment to an office within the employee's current or an adjacent district.

The MOU Re: Transfers also defines the criteria management should consider when deciding whether to accept an employee for transfer. Grievances filed over a denial of transfer must be filed in the employee's current office, even if the denial was issued by the office where the employee wished to transfer. This issue is addressed in the *2014 Joint Contract Administration Manual (JCAM)* on page 12-45:

The denial of a transfer request is a grievable matter. When the denial of a transfer request is grieved, the disputed decision is by the Postmaster of another installation. Nevertheless, any grievances concerning the denial of a transfer request must be filed with the aggrieved employee's immediate supervisor as required by Article 15.2. Arbitrators from one region have the authority to order Postmasters in another region to accept a transfer request.

The only difference between the two types of reassignments is the lock-in period an employee must serve before being eligible to transfer. For transfers covered under Section 1, the employee must serve a 12-month lock-in period,

while those covered under Section 2 must serve a lock-in period of 18 months.

There are some exceptions to the lock-in periods. One exception is granted if a letter carrier who previously transferred wants to return to his or her former installation. In this case, there is no lock-in period. This exception applies only to employees who were career employees prior to transferring. A current career employee wishing to return to an office where he or she previously served as a city carrier assistant (CCA) is not eligible for this exception.

A second exception to the lock-in period is available to a letter carrier who previously transferred if the installation head of the current office releases the employee early. A third exception is available to part-time employees. Under Section 2.C of the MOU Re: Transfers, employees who can increase the number of hours by eight or more per week will need only to serve a 12-month lock-in period, even if the transfer is covered by Section 2. The employee must still meet all of the other criteria required to transfer.

Keep in mind that newly converted career employees must serve this lock-in period, and time spent as a CCA does not count toward the minimum service time requirements discussed above. Newly converted career employees may not be released early from the lock-in period in the second exception; however, those employees converted to PTF may be granted the third exception. This issue is covered in the *Questions and Answers 2011 USPS/NALC National Agreement (M-01870)*, dated March 16, 2016:

28. After a CCA becomes a career employee does he/she serve a lock-in period for transfers as defined by the Memorandum of Understanding, Re: Transfers?

Yes.

Once career letter carriers have met the lock-in period described above, they have two options for submitting their request. Regardless of which option they select, the request will be entered in eReassign, the automated system used by the Postal Service to administer transfer requests. Employees may access eReassign 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. Once a request is received, HR is required to provide written confirmation of the request to the employee.

The second option is for the employee to submit their 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 employee 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 available in offices where they desire 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 a transfer into that installation will be 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. Once a request is received, the employee will be placed on hold until the office is able to accept a transfer. Once the opportunity for transfer is available and an employee is being considered, he or she will be placed in review. Employees can check the status of their requests via eReassign.

To keep a request active, it must be renewed every year on or before the date of submission. Requests may be renewed up to 90 days prior to the expiration date. Requests in eReassign will automatically renew if it is in review on the date the request expires. Letter carriers should not rely on this automatic renewal and should instead renew their requests each year. Requests that are in review prior to the expiration date will not be renewed if the employee is placed back on hold. 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 missing out on a transfer opportunity that the employee 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.

Once an employee has requested a transfer and has met all of the criteria to be eligible for reassignment, the MOU

Re: Full-time Regular Opportunities – City Letter Carrier Craft and the MOU Re: Reassignment Opportunities (M-01947) are applied.

The MOU Re: Full-time Regular Opportunities – City Letter Carrier Craft sets forth the pecking order for filling full-time opportunities, whether through the assignment of unassigned regulars (UARs), promotion of part-time flexibles (PTFs), the conversion of city carrier assistants (CCAs) to career status, or the acceptance of transfer requests. Under Paragraph 1 of this agreement, the opportunity would be filled through the assignment of a UAR. If there are no UARs in the installation, the PTF with the highest seniority in the office would be promoted to full-time regular. Paragraph 3, which allows opportunities to be filled through reassignment, limits the ratio of career transfers based on the size of the office. Offices defined as having more than 100 workyears can accept no more than one transfer for every four full-time opportunities that become available. Offices with less than 100 workyears may accept no more than one transfer for every six full-time opportunities. The workyear designation of each office is determined at the beginning of each collective-bargaining agreement. Letter carriers with questions regarding the designation of an office should contact their local union representative or national business agent (NBA).

In offices where CCAs will continue to be converted to PTF in accordance with the MOU Re: City Carrier Assistants – Conversion to Career Status, the ability of career employees to transfer would be limited, since opportunities must be filled through the promotion of PTFs prior to accepting a transfer. M-01947 addresses these situations by modifying some of the terms of the MOU Re: Full-time Regular Opportunities – City Letter Carrier Craft. Under M-01947, offices which could have accepted a transfer had there been no PTFs on the rolls, may still offer the transfer opportunity to a career employee; however, the transferring employee would become a PTF letter carrier in the new office. Employees accepted for transfer under M-01947 will be counted in the ratios described above.

When an employee is accepted for transfer, whether as full or part time, and reports to the new installation, he or she begins a new period of seniority. This is governed by Article 41.2.A.2, which states:

Seniority is computed from date of appointment in the Letter Carrier Craft and continues to accrue so long as service is uninterrupted in the Letter Carrier Craft in the same installation, except as otherwise specifically provided.

Letter carriers with questions regarding the transfer process should contact their local union representative or NBA. Contact information for the NBA who covers your region can be found at nalc.org/union-administration/nalc-regions.