

# Task forces and committees



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**T**he process of preparing and negotiating a national collective-bargaining agreement often takes many months to complete, as it did in our last round of negotiations for the recently ratified 2019 National Agreement. Once a new agreement takes effect, there are many provisions that must be implemented, such as the economic provisions. The cover story in this month's *Postal Record* explains several of those economic issues.

**There also are a number of task forces and committees that the new Agreement either continues or establishes. We have started work on a number of these. Some**

are long-standing and continue through the negotiations process, and others are modified or newly created.

One of the modified task forces was established by the Memorandum of Understanding Re: City Delivery and Workplace Improvement Task Force. We have had a city delivery task force in the past. The task force established by this MOU will continue to address several issues that were previously under the city delivery task force, but also incorporates other topics. The vision of the parties in negotiations was to create a high-level task force that would address a comprehensive group of issues related to the daily work of letter carriers and the service we provide. The following are listed in the MOU:

- **Creating a positive work environment/culture where everyone is treated with dignity and respect:** Evaluate the workplace culture and develop solutions to address the causes of conflicts between management and city letter carriers, including disagreements over the amount of time a letter carrier needs to complete their daily assignment.
- **Efficiency and use of space:** Jointly develop and test new work methods/concepts to prepare for future delivery environments that ensure the Postal Service remains the provider of choice for our customers. Jointly explore the modification of current case configurations and work methods to identify more efficient techniques for handling residual and sequenced mail volumes. Jointly examine current casing standards and times for associated line items. Explore various combinations of office and

street functions, and other alternatives for structuring city carrier routes that will drive efficiency associated with variable daily workloads.

- **Staffing and scheduling:** Jointly review and address issues regarding city letter carrier complements, starting times, employee availability and related transportation schedules to optimize staffing and scheduling efficiencies.
- **Route evaluation:** Using the alternative and technological findings of the Alternate Route Evaluation and Adjustment Process Task Force, jointly develop and implement a process to efficiently and accurately evaluate delivery routes and assignments, and determine the most efficient and effective mix of letter routes, parcel routes, etc. Jointly explore the use of technology, data, advanced analytics and machine learning to improve operations, route evaluation, adjustment and optimization, delivery capabilities and visibility.
- **Safety:** Jointly ensure that the parties are fully using the provisions of Article 14 to maintain a safe environment for all employees, including adherence to COVID-19 protocols for as long as necessary.
- **Contractual compliance:** Jointly address issues with repeated violations of the parties' collective-bargaining agreement, as well as any issues with the timely and effective functioning of the Dispute Resolution Process.
- **Mentorship:** Explore the possibility of jointly developing and discussing implementation options for a mentorship program for new employees intended to improve the onboarding experience and retention rate of city carrier assistants.
- **Business growth:** Using the findings of the New Product Development and Innovation Task Force, jointly explore how to safely and effectively perform existing, expanding and future services, and how to efficiently integrate such services into the structure of city delivery. Jointly review the office's use of the Customer Connect program and the potential for new business.

**I am privileged to serve on this task force with President Rolando, Director of City Delivery Chris Jackson, Special Executive Assistant to the President Tim McKay and Assistant to the President for City Delivery Michelle McQuality. We have subcommittees working on each of the topics listed above and have several pilot tests started. I am encouraged thus far by the Postal Service's commitment to this task force and the others included in the National Agreement. We look forward to continuing the work we've started.**