

Pilot update and vehicle familiarization training



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Urgent Maternal Protections for Nursing Mothers (PUMP) Act, which became law in 2022. The PUMP Act provides letter carriers with the right to access an appropriate space and take the time necessary to pump breast milk at work.



In this month's article, I will provide an update on one of the Postal Service's pilot tests. I will also discuss familiarization training that carriers should receive before they are expected to operate a postal vehicle.

Lactation pods

In the November 2024 *Postal Record*, I informed the membership of the Postal Service's intent to pilot test the use of lactation pods by nursing mothers in 10 postal facilities¹ throughout the country. USPS explained that the pilot had been initiated to enhance the organization's compliance with the Providing

Urgent Maternal Protections for Nursing Mothers (PUMP) Act, which became law in 2022. The PUMP Act provides letter carriers with the right to access an appropriate space and take the time necessary to pump breast milk at work.

I was recently informed that the pilot had ended in May of this year. The test tracked pod usage at the 10 locations and identified 2,205 visits during the assessment period. Feedback that I received from offices involved with the pilot was positive and constructive.

USPS states that the pods are still in use at the 10 pilot locations. Also, they have determined that lactation pods can be purchased by individual facilities for future use. While the pilot was initiated to enhance the Postal Service's compliance with the PUMP Act, it is important to note that completion of this pilot does not satisfy their obligation under the law. USPS must comply with the requirements of the PUMP Act in every location.

If you are a nursing mother working in a postal facility without a lactation pod, USPS must provide an appropriate space and reasonable time to pump breast

milk. The space provided should be shielded from view, free from intrusion and must be a location other than a bathroom. Nursing letter carriers have the right to file a grievance under Article 3 of the National Agreement if they are denied access to these and other accommodations established by law. Local union representatives should be proactive in their offices by meeting with the head of their installation and discussing the requirements of the PUMP Act. These discussions can help in understanding what efforts are being made to accommodate our nursing mothers.

Vehicle familiarization training

Every newly hired city letter carrier must complete several hours of driver training before operating a postal vehicle. This extensive training is vital for keeping our carriers safe, especially when they are expected to operate any type of Postal Service vehicle they may not be familiar with. Vehicle familiarization is a component of the overall driver training provided to new hires; however, a letter carrier may need to complete familiarization training multiple times in their career.

Through my columns, I have shared information on pilot tests involving various models of vehicles that carriers have been asked to operate in performance of their duties. In these tests, carriers are provided with familiarization training for each type of vehicle before they are provided with driving privileges to operate them. This training is not simply a courtesy for carriers participating in pilot tests, Section 335.4 of *Handbook EL-804, Safe Driver Program* requires that all carriers complete familiarization training under the following circumstances:

335.4 Drivers Required to Take Vehicle Familiarization

Exhibit 335.4

Drivers Required to Take Vehicle Familiarization

If a Postal Service employee...	Then the employee...
- Is a new hire city/rural carrier; or - Does not have driving privileges for a specific kind of vehicle; or - Is a new operator required to have a CDL	Must complete vehicle familiarization training on each type of Postal Service vehicle he or she is required to operate

¹ Facilities that participated in the pilot can be found in my November 2024 column.

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Family's health (continued)

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As with a flexible spending account, funds can be used to purchase medical items or services not covered by health insurance.

To learn more about specific benefit coverage or other wellness incentives, please contact one of our

knowledgeable customer service representatives.

Make sure to mention or ask about our other programs, which include:

- Your Health First Disease Management
- Healthy Pregnancies, Healthy Babies
- Tobacco cessation
- Annual pneumococcal vaccine

Director of
City Delivery

Vehicle familiarization training (continued)

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A driver safety instructor (DSI) conducts many of the driver trainings provided by the Postal Service, including vehicle familiarization. Under Section 335.5 of *Handbook EL-804*, the DSI is responsible for identifying the types of vehicles needed for familiarization:

335.5 Selecting Vehicles

Familiarization training must be provided for each type of Postal Service vehicle that trainees are required to oper-

ate on the job. The DSI must identify the types of vehicles needed for familiarization. The vehicle maintenance manager is responsible for ensuring that the appropriate vehicles (in type and number) are provided when needed.

If you are expected to operate a vehicle that you are unfamiliar with, be sure to inform your local union representative and, if appropriate, file a grievance.

Be sure to read my article each month and visit nalc.org for more City Delivery updates.

Director of
Retired Members

FERS Supplement (continued)

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Getting an estimate

Even though OPM will calculate the exact amount of your Supplement after you retire, you can get an estimate to help with your planning by visiting liteblue.usps.gov or calling the Human Resources Shared Service Center at 877-477-3273. Keep in mind that this is just an estimate, so it's a good idea to have a little ex-

tra room in your retirement budget.

As always is the case with retirement, there is a personal balance to strike between time and money. By understanding the Supplement, especially how working after retirement can affect it and the fact that it doesn't increase with the cost of living, you can make smart choices for a comfortable and secure retirement. Knowing these rules helps you make the most of your FERS benefits and reach your financial goals.