

LABOR RELATIONS



March 18, 2004

Mr. Dale Holton
President
National Rural Letter
Carriers' Association
1630 Duke Street 4th Floor
Alexandria, VA 22314-3465

Dear Dale:

Enclosed please find the final revisions to the Rural Route AMS and EDIT book questions and answers. As noted in my December 17, 2003, letter, many of the original 1997 questions had been deleted because they were no longer applicable. In reviewing the final revisions, you will find that many of the union's concerns and questions as you addressed in your February 2, 2004, letter have been incorporated.

The following will provide an explanation to those concerns and questions you offered that were not incorporated:

- #4. The capability of including blank spaces does exist on the stick-on labels and is recommended as it is for the old-style labels. There is also an option to print a selection of less than 10 inches; however, this will waste the complete 10-inch strip.
- #6. Changes in casing equipment often accompany changes due to route adjustments and the information is adequately covered in the original answer.
- #16. Any regularly scheduled reviews should be built into the route evaluation as indicated in question 9. Reviews that occur on a limited basis, such as those that may accompany route adjustments, etc., should be handled in accordance with question 6.
- #17. The Edit Book process has been introduced to every rural route, therefore the last sentence of the 1997 answer to item 20 is no longer necessary.

Additionally, your February 2, 2004, letter requested clarifying language be included to address the term "DROPS". Only a reissuing of the questions and answers from the 1997 memorandum with clarifications and some deletions was contemplated at the meeting held between the parties. A "DROP" is defined by AMS as "any place where multiple entities, be they businesses or people, get mail through the same delivery address."

Should you have any questions concerning this matter, please contact Judi Stokowski at

Sincerely,



Andrea B. Wilson
Manager
Contract Administration (NRLCA/NPMHU)

Enclosure

RURAL ROUTE EDIT BOOK

1. When is "B" (for P.O. Box), "N" (for non-delivery) and "V" (for vacant) used in the 1621 code block for rural routes?

Customers residing along a rural route line of travel who receive P.O. Box delivery in lieu of rural delivery are not included in the rural box count and their residence is not recorded on the edit sheet with a "B" code. Therefore, the "B" code is not utilized on rural routes. Addresses that are on the route line of travel but not delivered, such as local P.O. Box customers, shall be recorded as code "N". However, deliveries recorded with an "N" will appear on both the edit sheet and case labels. To suppress the address from the carrier case labels, the use of cell sizes with the following standards will cause the address not to print on the labels, but will be retained on the edit sheet.

- 80-vacant addresses
- 81-PO Box throwbacks
- 82-internal addresses (gated communities)
- 83-future deliveries

All of the 80+ entries to the cell size field will appear with a pound sign (#) in cell size on edit sheets.

Because the use of a "V" code signifies a vacant address and these addresses are not recorded in rural delivery until the vacancy is in excess of 90 days, the "V" code will not be used on rural routes. Once the vacancy is in excess of 90 days, the "N" code would be recorded and the 80 cell size noted, maintaining the address on the edit sheet, but not on the case label.

2. Will carriers be required to have non-delivery locations; i.e., a permanently vacant house, people who have post office boxes, etc., included in the Edit Books and listed on the case labels?

While it is desirable to have all addresses on a rural route line of travel included in the Edit Book, there is no requirement for these addresses to appear on the case labels. As stated in the answer to question 1 above, addresses that exist on the rural route line of travel but are not delivered by the carrier must be coded with an "N" in the 1621 column. Use of the appropriate 80 entry in the cell size field will keep this address from appearing on the case label. In those instances where the carrier is required to complete a review of the Edit Book and record all non-delivery locations, compensation will be provided in the form of auxiliary assistance or by utilizing Form 8127.

3. When the Edit Book is returned to the delivery unit, is it to be kept at the carrier's case so that changes can be entered daily?

Yes. The Edit Book is normally kept at the carrier's case for easy access. The Edit Book does not have to be specially secured within a post office however, they may only be removed from the office for official business use such as maintenance, route inspections, etc. The edit sheets within the Edit Book may not be duplicated except for purposes authorized by management.

4. Can rural carriers cut and write on CLASS case labels?

Rural carriers who utilize the customer name to assist them in casing the mail may write the customer name(s) on CLASS labels. To ensure easy access to the CLASS labels, rural routes are not required to utilize the plastic label guards which restrict access to the labels limiting their ability to write new addresses or customer names on the labels. However, if the new self-adhesive labels are utilized these must be placed on the outside of the plastic label guard. Cutting of labels is generally prohibited unless the carrier casing equipment being used will not accommodate CLASS labels (case ledges/separations do not conform to Address Management Service office product capability) or the case requires new labels immediately and cutting is the only solution to have the labels in proper order or sequence. Carriers concerned about cutting labels may do so where multiple addresses are being added and labels must be shifted to allow for the new deliveries to be placed in the appropriate location on the line of travel. Care should be taken to ensure blank spaces are left where new deliveries have a potential to be added in the near term and to minimize the need to cut labels.

5. Are rural carriers going to be required to complete the "Add Sheet" in the Edit Book?

No. The carrier will normally not be required to complete the Add Sheet. The Add Sheet is usually utilized when large groups of new deliveries are added to the route all at once. As an example, a manager may want to add an apartment project to a route but will flag the new deliveries with an "N" code until such time as the carrier reports the customers are moving in. There is also a Line of Travel (LOT) Worksheet that is intended to be used for route adjustments and carrier line of travel changes. This information is normally completed by the manager or a designated individual. Rural carriers will write new delivery information on the Maintenance Worksheet during those periods that the Edit Book is at the AMS unit, being input and having new labels generated. However, if carriers are required to complete the Add Sheet, appropriate compensation for this type of work must be provided at the time it occurs. This compensation could be in the form of auxiliary assistance or by utilizing Form 8127.

6. Are carriers required to make corrections on edit sheets for changes due to route adjustments?

No. Carriers will normally not make edit sheet changes associated with route adjustments. This is a management responsibility. If carriers are required to make route adjustment changes on the edit sheets, appropriate compensation for this type of work must be provided at the time it occurs. This compensation could be in the form of auxiliary assistance or by utilizing Form 8127.

7. Who is responsible for making changes (and maps) because of a new street on the route?

Management is responsible for making these changes. If carriers are required to make map changes, appropriate compensation for this type of work must be provided at the time it occurs. This compensation could be in the form of auxiliary assistance or by utilizing Form 8127.

8. Will names be printed on CLASS labels if they were included in the additional information block?

Only carriers that ordered customer names with their initial CLASS label order will have the names printed on their labels by address management. Names will not be added at a later date unless management determines that it is necessary to include a name(s) on the label for clarification purposes for specific individual address or group of addresses. Names may be discontinued from the labels when the carrier initially ordering names leaves the route. Carriers not eligible for pre-printed names on the CLASS labels may hand write names on the labels or use some form of stick-on label applied to the CLASS labels to annotate the names.

9. By what means will a record of additions or deletions of deliveries be kept?

Carriers will record box additions and deletions on the edit sheets included in the Edit Book. When the Edit Book is submitted to Address Management Systems (AMS) for maintenance, carriers will record box additions, deletions and changes on the Maintenance Worksheet. This sheet may be contained in the Edit Book and must be taken out and kept at the carrier case when the Edit Book has been submitted for revision. When the new Edit Book is received, carriers will copy all changes from the Maintenance Worksheet onto the new edit sheets in the Edit Book. Copies of the Route Summary Pages may be kept to ensure that changes in the number of boxes on the route are properly recorded on the front of PS Form 4240, Rural Carrier Time Sheet, and submitted on PS Form 4003, Official Rural Route Description. The average weekly time associated with additional work required for all forms contained in the Edit Book will be built into the route evaluation to ensure appropriate compensation. While Edit Book work may not be performed during the mail count period, an average weekly time associated with the additional work required will be recorded as appropriate.

10. Does completing the edit sheets only apply to routes receiving automated mail?

No. The Edit Book process and edit sheets will be used on all rural routes.

11. Because red ink is supposed to be used on edit sheets, will pens be provided?

Annotations made to the edit sheets should be made in red ink. Red ink is suggested because it is more noticeable to the persons inputting the data. If necessary, other colors may be used. However, these colors should contrast with the black print on the white pages of the edit sheets. Red pens will be provided wherever Edit Books are in use. Carriers are not responsible for providing red pens.

12. Are there any plans to use the edit sheets to trigger an interim adjustment?

No. The address management database does not interface with the route information data base used for payroll purposes.

13. Is there an understanding that management must return the edit sheets, new labels, summary sheets, etc. in a timely manner and in the order submitted?

Yes. Management expects to be able to process most Edit Books in approximately 15 days. Each Edit Book contains a tracking sheet which will show when a book was submitted to AMS and when it was returned. Books will generally be processed in order of receipt unless a special change is required in a particular office/zone which would cause that office to be expedited.

14. If not returned in a timely manner, will the carrier be compensated for any extra work required by the delay in management's action?

While the Edit Book is away being processed, carriers will track changes on the Maintenance Sheet. If the books are processed in a timely manner, a minimal number of addresses should be on these add/delete sheets and the transfer of this data to the new edit sheet and the new case labels should be minimal. If processing has been delayed so long that the new labels and new edit sheets would require extensive reworking to make them usable, then compensation for the carriers additional efforts should be provided. This compensation could be in the form of auxiliary assistance or by utilizing Form 8127.

15. What criteria would management normally use to determine to have the carrier do the edit sheets on an as needed basis?

Normally Edit Book submission for the purpose of incorporating edit sheet changes should be made at the time the change occurs. It is expected that when a new address(es) is recorded it should be submitted at least on a monthly basis. More frequent submissions might be necessary where delivery additions and deletions are extensive.

16. Will management be allowed to have carriers review the edit sheets each week?

Weekly review of edit sheets will not be required where the carrier properly maintains the Edit Book and appropriate worksheets.

17. How will carriers be compensated for reviewing the edit sheets?

An average weekly time required for the Edit Book and associated worksheet additions, deletions and reviews will be included in Column R time for the route during the mail count.

18. What is the summary or history sheet?

The route History sheet is actually the Route Summary Sheet, which is usually included as the last page of the edit sheet for a route. The Route Summary Sheet includes the most current route data as reflected by the edit sheet, at the time it is returned to that office.