



November 2, 2016

MANAGERS, HUMAN RESOURCES (AREA)
MANAGERS, LABOR RELATIONS (AREA)
MANAGERS, HUMAN RESOURCES (DISTRICT)
MANAGERS, LABOR RELATIONS (DISTRICT)
MANAGERS, DELIVERY PROGRAMS SUPPORT (AREA)
MANAGERS, OPERATIONS PROGRAMS SUPPORT (DISTRICT)

SUBJECT: Assistant Rural Carrier (ARC) Implementation Guidelines

Due to the continued expansion of the Sunday/holiday parcel delivery test, the Postal Service and the National Rural Letter Carriers' Association (NRLCA) agreed to the establishment of a new category of non-career employee identified as an assistant rural carrier (ARC), effective with the 2015-2018 USPS-NRLCA National Agreement.

The ARC was specifically created to support package delivery on Sundays and holidays. In addition, ARCs may case and carry routes on Saturday under certain conditions; and may also provide auxiliary assistance to regular and auxiliary routes on Saturday.

In late September we began hiring ARCs through eCareer. It is anticipated that the hiring of ARCs will be a key component in ensuring our success in meeting the demands of parcel delivery during Peak Season. However, ARCs should not be considered seasonal employees. These rural carriers will continue to support Sunday parcel delivery throughout the year.

The attached Implementation Guidelines and accompanying Questions and Answers explain the appointment, training, and utilization of the ARC in detail.

If there are any questions concerning the Implementation Guidelines or the Questions and Answers, district personnel should contact the appropriate area representative. Area representatives should contact Rich Howard in Labor Relations or Gail Sattler in Rural Delivery Operations.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Cathy M. Perron".

Cathy M. Perron
Manager
Contract Administration (NRLCA)

Attachments

ASSISTANT RURAL CARRIER (ARC) IMPLEMENTATION GUIDELINES

INTRODUCTION

Due to the continued expansion of the Sunday/holiday parcel delivery test, the parties have agreed to establish a new category of non-career employee identified as an assistant rural carrier (ARC), with the implementation of the 2015-2018 USPS-NRLCA National Agreement.

NATURE OF THE ARC POSITION

The ARC was specifically created to support package delivery on Sundays and federally-observed holidays. Additionally, the ARC may case and carry routes on Saturday to provide supplemental assistance to leave replacement coverage.

An ARC is an unlimited appointment, bargaining unit employee subject to limited contractual provisions, in particular, Articles 15 and 16. These carriers will not be eligible for non-career employee health benefits, leave earning, nor have bidding rights. In addition, the ARC is not designated as a "leave replacement", for the purposes of definition within the USPS-NRLCA National Agreement.

APPOINTMENT

Assistant rural carriers (ARCs) will be selected by the Employer from a hiring list following a posting in eCareer using the appropriate position description. There will be no exam requirement associated with the eCareer posting for the ARC, although all other hiring requirements will be applicable.

ARCs may be appointed in those offices with rural delivery identified as Sunday parcel delivery hub offices and also in associated 'spoke' offices. Those rural delivery offices identified as "nearby offices" pursuant to the Sunday/Holiday Parcel Delivery Work List memorandum of understanding (MOU), will not appoint ARCs.

There is no limitation to the number of ARCs appointed in either a hub or 'spoke' office, although offices should appoint only the number of ARCs normally needed to complete Sunday/holiday parcel delivery.

The probationary period for these rural carriers will be ninety (90) days worked or one calendar year, whichever comes first.

There is no opportunity for an ARC to automatically convert to a rural carrier associate (RCA) vacancy or bid on any regular route or part-time flexible rural carrier (PTF) assignments. If an ARC wishes to become an RCA they must apply for these positions through eCareer postings, meet exam requirements and subsequently be appointed from a hiring list.

COMPENSATION

ARCs will be compensated for actual hours worked at the appropriate hourly rate. The hourly rate of pay will be based on Table Four, which is currently \$17.02/hour, increasing to \$17.40/hour effective November 26, 2016. Due to the fact that ARCs are strictly an hourly rate employee, Articles 9.2.M.1. & 3. are not applicable.

Management will utilize PS Form(s) 1314-A, *Auxiliary Rural Carrier Time Certificate*, annotating the appropriate route number, such as A991 for Sunday and holiday delivery, when submitting workhours for the assistant rural carrier. PS Form 1314, *Regular Rural Carrier Time Certificate*, will be utilized if the ARC cases and carries the entire regular route on Saturday.

EQUIPMENT MAINTENANCE ALLOWANCE (EMA)

In certain instances an ARC may be required to provide a vehicle for delivery. If the ARC does provide a vehicle for delivery, these carriers will receive the appropriate EMA compensation pursuant to Article 9.2.J. and Section 576 of Handbook F-21, *Time and Attendance*.

TRAINING

ARCs will receive new employee orientation at their duty station as self-study material. In addition, they will receive standard driving instruction, vehicle familiarization and any necessary vehicle certification. ARCs will be provided rural letter carrier training specifically focused on package delivery to include safety, scanning, and customer service. Management may schedule an ARC for the Rural Carrier Academy training, which would provide detailed instruction regarding casing and carrying mail. ARCs will also receive on-the-job training.

SCHEDULING AND UTILIZATION OF ARCs

ARCs will be primarily utilized for parcel delivery on Sunday and holidays and are entitled to complete this work prior to leave replacements assigned to these offices. Any ARC that has been appointed to an associated "spoke" office will be considered assigned to the hub office for the purpose of Sunday/holiday parcel delivery prior to any collapse of the hub concept during Peak Season.

In accordance with the Sunday/Holiday Parcel Delivery Work List MOU, the ARCs will be utilized prior to scheduling any rural carrier leave replacements to perform Sunday and holiday parcel delivery in hub offices and/or spoke offices, upon collapse of the hub concept. Example: An ARC is appointed in a hub office. When the offices are "decoupled" for Peak Season, that ARC may be scheduled for parcel delivery on Sunday or a holiday in the hub office or any of the associated spoke offices.

ARCs may also case and carry routes on Saturday in their assigned office only (either the hub or spoke office). For regular routes, all available leave replacements must be scheduled in accordance with Article 30.2.D.1. through Article 30.2.D.4., before designating an ARC to case and carry the route. The ARC may be assigned to serve the route prior to selecting a regular rural carrier to work in accordance with Article 8.5. For auxiliary routes, the ARC may serve the route pursuant to Article 30.2.G.5, only after the route has been offered to available leave replacements in that office. ARCs may also be utilized to provide auxiliary assistance to regular or auxiliary routes on Saturday, as necessary.

ARCs will not be included on the leave replacement assignment list (matrix) and will not be included in any criteria for implementation of, or calculation of the formula for changing the relief days of regular routes.