

REFERENCES FOR THE FORMULA AND RELIEF DAY ASSIGNMENT

Clarification of EL 902, Article 9.2.C.5 – Relief Days

Following are excerpts from the ***National Agreement (EL 902)***, the 1999 Analysis of Changes to the National Agreement, the *2000 Analysis of Changes to the National Agreement*, and the Q & A from the 1999 Analysis. They have been put in some semblance of order to enable to have all the Relief Day and Formula information in one place.

EL 902, Article 9.2.C.5

- a. Assistance in the form of relief days on evaluated routes, except during the Christmas period, will be provided when the evaluated time exceeds forty-six (46) hours per week or as necessary to keep the total actual work hours under 2,080 during the guarantee period. When such relief is provided, the rural carrier's compensation will be on the basis of the remaining hours of required evaluated service per week.***

- b. In offices where the employer determines it is necessary to change the relief day of one or more regular routes, the following formula will be utilized. The minimum number of routes on which a Saturday relief day must be authorized will be calculated using the total number of leave replacements assigned and working in the office minus the number of auxiliary routes divided by the total number of regular routes authorized a relief day. Then, subtract .10 and the result is then multiplied by the total number of routes authorized a relief day and rounded down to the next whole number. This figure is the minimum number of routes on which management must authorize a Saturday relief day. Subtract this figure from the total number of regular routes authorized a relief day. This final figure is the maximum number of K routes that management may require a non-Saturday relief day.***

1999 Analysis

Formerly subsection C.6., this subsection has been rearranged for clarity and inclusion of new language. The language in subsection C.5.b., was created to provide a process for changing the relief day of one or more K routes when an office has a shortage of leave replacements. This process may be utilized only when two conditions are met. First, there is a shortage of leave replacements in the office and second, regular rural carriers are working the relief days on more than infrequent occasions. If an office has an available leave replacement assigned to each regular route in the office, i.e., full coverage, then this process will not be utilized. A formula is provided to ascertain the

maximum number of routes that may be assigned a non-Saturday relief day, if the Employer determines it is necessary to change the relief day of one or more routes. Following is an example of applying the formula:

- An office has 13 regular routes (12 K routes and 1 J route) and 2 auxiliary routes.
- The office has a total of 10 available leave replacements.
- The formula requires that you start with the total number of leave replacements assigned and working in the office and subtract the number of auxiliary routes: $10 - 2 = 8$
- Then divide by the total number of regular routes authorized a relief day: $8 / 13 = .615$
- Then subtract .10, a pre-determined flexibility factor: $.615 - .10 = .515$
- Then multiply this factor by the total number of routes authorized a relief day and round down to the next whole number. This number is the minimum number of routes on which management must authorize a Saturday relief day: $.515 \times 13 = 6.7$ rounded down to 6 (routes).
- Subtract this number of routes from the total number of routes authorized a relief day. This final result is the maximum number of K routes on which management may require a non-Saturday relief day: $13 - 7 = 6$

In this example, management may require no more than 7 K routes have a non-Saturday relief day.

In all cases, J routes will retain a Saturday relief day. Only K routes will have non-Saturday relief days. Should a K route with a non-Saturday relief day change to a J route as a result of a substantial service change or option election, the relief day will be changed to Saturday and if available, a K route may be moved to the non-Saturday relief day. The K route will move from the Saturday relief day in accordance with subsection C.5.d. If a PTF is assigned to a K route that changes classification to a J route and has the relief day changed back to Saturday, the route will be removed from the PTF's assignment.

Q & A—1999 Analysis

- Q. When can management change the relief days on one or more regular K routes in an office?
- A. Management may change the relief days in an office, only if there is an insufficient number of leave replacements and one or more regular carriers are working their relief days on more than an infrequent occasion.

EL 902, Article 9.2.C.5

- c. The Employer will not require a single non-Saturday relief day to be assigned to more routes than a Saturday relief day. A Friday/Saturday rotating relief day or any pair of Friday/Saturday rotating relief days equates to one Friday relief day.**

1999 Analysis

The language in subsection C.5.c. was provided to ensure that the number of Saturday relief days in an office would never be less than any other day of the week.

EL 902, Article 9.2.C.5

- d. The following actions will occur in the order presented until the required number of K routes with relief days other than Saturday is reached:**

- 1.) Any regular rural carrier assigned to a K route with a Saturday relief day may elect to permanently change the relief day to another day (including Friday/Saturday rotating), provided the new relief day will assist in reaching the required number of routes with relief days other than Saturday. Any rural carrier that selects Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday as the relief day will be given the incentive of allowing the route's evaluation to increase to 53:00 to 55:00 standard hours through normal growth and maintain such evaluation for the duration the rural carrier is assigned that route and that relief day. The Employer will adjust these routes down to 53:00 to 55:00 standard hours when adjustments are necessary. However, adjustments may be made below 53:00 to 55:00 standard hours consistent with contractual provisions and applicable regulations. Bids for posted routes with Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday relief days and residual vacancies with Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday relief days awarded to part-time flexible rural carriers, substitutes, or rural carrier associates, will not result in the above incentive.**
- 2.) If the required number of K routes with relief days other than Saturday has not been reached, the Employer may assign a relief day other than Saturday to those K routes with a Saturday relief day, based on juniority in the office. Should the new relief day be Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday the provisions in (1), above, are not applicable.**

1999 Analysis

The language in subsection C.5.d. was created to establish a pecking order for management when reassigning relief days. Once the formula is complete and the result indicates the number of routes on which a non-Saturday relief day may be required; management should determine which relief days would benefit the office before beginning the process of changing relief days to non-Saturday. Management may offer only the non-Saturday relief days that would benefit the office.

The first step when reassigning relief days is to offer regular rural carriers assigned to K routes with a Saturday relief day, the option to change the routes' relief day to a non-Saturday. Non-Saturday relief days are Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, or Friday/Saturday rotating. Any regular carrier who elects a Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday relief day will receive an incentive of allowing the route to grow and maintain an evaluation of 53:00 – 55:00 standard hours for the period he or she is assigned to that route with that relief day. When adjustments are necessary, the route will not be adjusted below 53:00 – 55:00 standard hours, except for operational reasons consistent with national policy.

The following situations will not result in the incentive:

- A regular carrier bids to another route with a Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday relief day.
- Assignment of Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday relief day by juniority.
- A residual vacancy awarded to a PTF, substitute, or RCA, with a Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday relief day.

Q & A—1999 Analysis

Q. If a regular carrier elects a Friday/Saturday rotation, a Monday, or a Friday as the non-Saturday relief day, will they be provided the 53:00 – 55:00 standard hour route evaluation incentive?

A. No. Only those carriers who elect Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday as their non-Saturday relief day will be provided the 53:00 – 55:00 standard hour route evaluation incentive.

Q. When a carrier elects Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday as the relief day, they will be provided an incentive of allowing the route to grow to 53:00 – 55:00 standard and maintain that evaluation for the period that the carrier remains on that route. Will the route evaluation be “built up” to 53:00 – 55:00 standard hours?

A. No. The route will increase through normal growth or as a result of a mail count, not through adjustments to build the evaluation. If the route becomes overburdened it will be adjusted no lower than 53:00 – 55:00 standard hours, except as provided in the Extension or in accordance with national policies.

EL 902, Article 9.2.C.5

- e. The Employer may reassign the non-Saturday relief day if the office has increased the number of leave replacements. Such reassignment will be offered to rural carriers by seniority. If additional Saturday relief days are available, the Employer may then mandate the reassignment of the relief day by juniority. Any incentive provided for the relief day will cease upon such reassignment.***

1999 Analysis

If, after offering the opportunity to elect a non-Saturday relief day, additional non-Saturday relief days are needed, the next step is to assign K routes a non-Saturday relief day, by juniority. Subsection C.5.e. (above) indicates that when additional leave replacements are obtained management may change relief days back to Saturday. The carrier will be notified of the reassignment no later than the Saturday of the service week preceding the effective week of the change in accordance with Article 30.1.G.

The following circumstances require recalculation of the formula to determine if carriers with non-Saturday relief days must be offered the opportunity to return to a Saturday relief day, or if management may assign additional non-Saturday relief days:

- A change in the number of regular routes authorized a relief day in the office.
- A change in the number of auxiliary routes in the office.
- A change in the number of available leave replacements in the office.

If the formula recalculation results in the availability of additional Saturday relief days, the reassignment back to Saturday must be completed within 30 days. If the formula recalculation results in additional non-Saturday relief days, management may reassign these days at any time provided the carrier receives notice of the change no later than the Saturday of the service week preceding the effective week of the change.

There may be occasions when it is necessary to change the non-Saturday relief day of a regular route to another non-Saturday relief day, in order to provide an additional primary assignment for a PTF. A PTF rural carrier position will only be established to include assignment to K routes. The assignment will include no less than 2 K routes and no more than 5 K routes and no two routes designated as primary assignments may have the same relief day. The carriers assigned to routes with the non-Saturday relief day that needs to be changed will be given the opportunity to change to another available non-Saturday relief day based on seniority, or possibly replace a junior carrier assigned to a K route with a Saturday relief day. If carriers with the relief day needing to be changed do not elect another relief day, then the relief day will be reassigned by juniority.

The following example illustrates a situation as described above and the appropriate solution.

Route	Saturday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
K-1	RCA-1					
K-2	RCA-2					
K-3	RCA-3					
K-4	RCA-4					
K-5	RCA-5					
K-6	RCA-6					
K-7	PTF-1					
K-8		PTF-1				
K-9		0				
K-10		RCA-7				

The regular carrier on Route 9 informed management that he wants a leave replacement assigned to his route. The office is unable to obtain an RCA or TRC. Based on the formula, the maximum number of non-Saturday relief days is 3. Management must add Route 9, with a Monday relief day, to the PTF assignment. Because the PTF is already assigned Route 8 with a Monday relief day, one of the three routes with a Monday relief day must change relief days.

The carriers with the Monday relief day will be offered the opportunity to elect another available non-Saturday relief day based on seniority. Carriers electing a Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday relief day will be given the incentive of allowing the route's evaluation to increase to 53:00 – 55:00 standard hours in accordance with Article 9.2.C.5.d.(1). If none of the carriers with the Monday relief day elect to reassign to another non-Saturday relief day and the junior regular with a Monday relief day is senior to the junior regular on a K route with a Saturday relief day, the carrier with a Monday relief day may elect to reassign to a Saturday relief day by seniority and replace the junior regular. The junior regular on a K route with a Saturday relief day will then be assigned the non-Saturday relief day needed. If the junior regular carrier with a Monday relief day is not senior to the junior regular on a K route with a Saturday relief day, then the Monday relief day will be reassigned by juniority.

Q & A—1999 Analysis

- Q. If a carrier elects or is assigned a non-Saturday relief day, will there ever be occasion for reassignment back to Saturday as the relief day?
- A. Yes. There are several circumstances that may necessitate reassignment back to Saturday relief days. If the number of leave replacements in the office increases or the number of routes with an authorized relief day changes, the formula will be recalculated and management may be required to reassign the appropriate number of relief days to Saturday. In addition, if a residual vacancy is awarded to a PTF, substitute, or RCA, and a Saturday relief day is available, the residual vacancy will be assigned a non-Saturday relief day and the Saturday relief day will be reassigned accordingly.

- Q. If circumstances in the office require that the formula be recalculated and the number of Saturday relief days increases, how long does management have to complete the calculation and the reassignment of relief days back to Saturday?
- A. Management must recalculate the formula and complete the reassignment process within thirty (30) days.
- Q. Under what circumstances can management change the non-Saturday relief day of a route to a different non-Saturday relief day?
- A. Management may change the non-Saturday relief day to a different non-Saturday relief day when it is necessary to provide an additional primary assignment for a PTF rural carrier and the relief day of the route is the same as one of the PTF's other routes. In addition, if a new PTF rural carrier assignment is being created and it is necessary to provide an additional primary assignment for the PTF, non-Saturday relief days may need to be changed.
- Q. Are K routes the only routes that will elect or be assigned non-Saturday relief days?
- A. Yes. The results of the formula provide the maximum number of non-Saturday relief days that may be assigned to K routes. When implementing the formula, only K routes will be assigned non-Saturday relief days.
- Q. If a K route with a non-Saturday relief day changed to a J classification, will the route retain the non-Saturday relief day?
- A. No. If a K route is assigned a non-Saturday relief day and changes to a J classification at a later date, the relief day will be changed to Saturday and if available, another K route may be assigned a non-Saturday relief day.
- Q. If a carrier assigned to an H or J route requires management to provide a leave replacement for their route in accordance with Article 30.2.A.2., may a PTF position be established or a PTF assignment extended to include the H or J route?
- A. No. However, the employee has a contractual entitlement to have a leave replacement assigned to his or her route and management has a contractual obligation to continue to make every effort to hire a leave replacement for the route until that obligation is met.

EL 902, Article 9.2.C.5

- f. Except as provided in item i. below, regular rural carriers on the relief day work list who work the relief day will select one of the following options:***
- 1.) An X day (a day for working a prior relief day) to be immediately scheduled by mutual agreement between the carrier and the Employer. The scheduled X day must be within the next twelve (12) weeks. PS Form 3971 will be completed for the mutually agreed X day***

and the scheduled X day will be given the same consideration as approved annual leave.

2.) Compensation at 50% of the carrier's daily rate of pay, in addition to receiving an X day within twelve (12) weeks as scheduled by the Employer.

3.) Compensation at 150% of the carrier's daily rate of pay. The carrier will not receive an X day.

1999 Analysis

The language in subsection C.5.f. provides the compensation options available for the regular rural carrier whose name is on the relief day work list when working a relief day. The carrier must select one of the three options no later than the day the relief day is worked.

2000 Analysis

The language in Subsection C.5.f.(1) was added to clarify that should a regular carrier on the relief day work list select the option of receiving only an X day to be scheduled by mutual agreement as compensation for working the relief day, a PS Form 3971 will be completed indicating the scheduled X day. The scheduled X day will then be given the same consideration as approved annual leave.

Q & A—1999 Analysis

- Q. If a carrier is on the relief day work list and is scheduled to work a relief day, how soon must he or she select the option of payment?
- A. The carrier must select one of the options listed in Article 9.2.C.5.f. no later than the day the relief day is worked.

EL 902, Article 9.2.C.5

- g. Except as provided in item i. below, regular rural carriers not on the relief day work list who are required to work the relief day will receive compensation at 50% of the carrier's daily rate of pay, in addition to receiving an X day within twelve (12) weeks as scheduled by the Employer.**

1999 Analysis

Regular rural carriers not on the relief day work list do not have the compensation options when working the relief day. The language in subsection C.5.g. provides compensation

at 50% of the carrier's daily rate of pay and an X day, scheduled by the Employer within the next 12 weeks, for those carriers not on the relief day work list when working the relief day.

It should be noted that in both subsections C.5.f.(2) and C.5.g., the Employer will schedule the X day to be taken within the next twelve weeks. In situations where compensation at 50% of the daily rate of pay plus an X day was intended for the carrier working the relief day, and the carrier exceeds 56 hours in the work week, compensation will be provided at 150% of the daily rate of pay for the relief day worked and no X day will be received. This applies to both, carriers on the relief day work list who choose compensation at 50% of the daily rate of pay plus an X day, as well as regular carriers not on the relief day work list.

Q & A—1999 Analysis

- Q. What does “immediately scheduled by mutual agreement” mean in Article 9.2.C.5.g.(1)?
- A. When a carrier on the relief day work list is selected to work, the carrier may select option #1. At that time or no later than the day the relief day is worked, the carrier and manager should mutually agree when the X day will be given and annotate it on the schedule.
- Q. When a regular carrier is entitled to an X day in accordance with the provisions of this Extension, does the carrier schedule the X day?
- A. No. Except in those cases where the relief day is scheduled by mutual agreement, management will schedule the X day.

EL 902, Article 9.2.C.5

- h. The Employer will not allow a regular rural carrier to work a relief day in accordance with their personal wishes when a qualified leave replacement is available in the delivery unit.***

1999 Analysis

The language in subsection C.5.h. was revised to clarify that the Employer schedules the X day, except when a rural carrier on the relief day work list chooses an X day to be immediately scheduled by mutual agreement between the carrier and the Employer. During the period that starts with the beginning of the guarantee period through the end of the designated Christmas period, regular rural carriers must receive an X day in the same pay period in which the relief day is worked.

The language also clarifies that X days earned prior to the beginning of the guarantee period are not used during this period. Language was added that provides the remedy when a rural carrier, who is entitled to an X day, does not receive that X day during the same pay period as the relief day worked. In these circumstances, the rural carrier is compensated 100% of the daily rate of pay and does not receive the X day. This is in addition to the compensation of 50% of the daily rate of pay received for working the relief day.

EL 902, Article 9.2.C.5

i. Without recourse to Article 8 Section 5, the Employer may allow a regular rural carrier to work on his or her relief day in order to grant the leave replacement scheduled to serve the regular's route, the day off, provided:

1.) The leave replacement has submitted a written request to be non-scheduled or to have leave on the regular's relief day;

2.) The regular rural carrier has signed the request, thereby indicating agreement; and

3.) The regular rural carrier and the Employer have agreed that compensation for working the relief day will only be an X day to be immediately scheduled by mutual agreement.

The scheduled X day must be within the next twelve (12) weeks. PS Form 3971 will be completed for the mutually agreed X day and the scheduled X day will be given the same consideration as approved annual leave. A part-time flexible rural carrier is not entitled to the route's evaluated hours for any day the Employer has granted his or her request to be non-scheduled.

1999 Analysis

Subsection C.5.i. was added to clarify that regular rural carriers are prohibited from obtaining a schedule change for personal wishes when a qualified leave replacement is available in the delivery unit.

2000 Analysis

The new language in Subsection C.5.i. provides the opportunity for management to allow a regular rural carrier to work his or her relief day in order to grant a day off to the leave replacement scheduled and available, to work the regular carrier's relief day. With the provisions of the Extension to the Agreement to the 1995 – 1999 National Agreement that provided for the establishment of a relief day work list, some managers had been

reluctant to allow a scheduled leave replacement a day off because of the potential additional cost when a regular carrier serves the route on his or her relief day. This provision is intended to give management the opportunity to grant a leave replacement's request for a day off without incurring the additional costs that would result from usage of the relief day work list. With the provision that if the regular carrier agrees, it allows management to permit a regular rural carrier to work the relief day, regardless of whether or not the carrier is on the relief day work list. This is an option and applicable only after management has used all available leave replacements in accordance with Article 30.2.D.2. and 3. The only compensation received for working this relief day will be an X day to be scheduled by mutual agreement. As with one of the compensation options available to those carriers who have signed the relief day work list, a PS Form 3971 will be completed no later than the day prior to the relief day to be worked indicating the scheduled X day and this X day will be given the same consideration as annual leave. Article 9.2.C.5 j. does not provide any leave entitlements for leave replacements or additional work entitlements for regular rural carriers, including those on the relief day work list.

Q & A—1999 Analysis

- Q. Can a regular rural carrier request to work his or her relief day for personal reasons?
- A. No. Working the scheduled relief day in accordance with personal wishes is not permitted when there is a qualified leave replacement available in the delivery unit.

EL 902, Article 9.2.C.5

- j. During the period that starts with the beginning of the guarantee period through the end of the designated Christmas period, a regular rural carrier who works the relief day (R day) and is entitled to an X day, must be given the X day as scheduled by the Employer within the same pay period in which the relief day (R day) was worked. Regular rural carriers shall be prohibited from scheduling a previously earned X day from the beginning of the guarantee period through the end of the designated Christmas period. If the X day is not received within the same pay period, the Employer will compensate the regular rural carrier 100% of the carrier's daily rate of pay in lieu of the X day.***

1999 Analysis

Subsection C.5.j. was added for situations where an X day cannot be scheduled within twelve weeks. The carrier is compensated 100% of the daily rate of pay and does not receive the X day. This is in addition to the compensation of 50% of the daily rate of pay received for working the relief day. Any X days earned prior to the beginning of the

guarantee period are held until after the end of the Christmas period. The twelve-week count is stopped during this period and resumes at the end of the designated Christmas period.

Q & A—1999 Analysis

- Q. Does the period from the beginning of the guarantee period through the end of the designated Christmas period, extend the twelve-week period to schedule an X day?
- A. Yes. For example, a regular carrier works their relief day on Saturday, September 23, 2000. At the beginning of the guarantee period six weeks have passed. Management will continue counting the 12-week period after Christmas and will have until February 2, 2001, to provide the X day. The X day earned for working the relief day on September 23, 2000, cannot be granted from the beginning of the guarantee period through the end of the designated Christmas period.

EL 902, Article 9.2.C.5

- k. If, for any reason, an X day is not received within the twelve week period in accordance with Subsections f.(2) and g. above, the Employer will compensate the regular rural carrier 100% of the carrier's daily rate of pay in lieu of an X day. The period from the beginning of the guarantee period through the end of the designated Christmas period is not included when counting the twelve weeks in which an X day must be received.***

Q & A—1999 Analysis

- Q. What action is taken if a carrier does not receive an X day within twelve (12) weeks or within the same pay period from the beginning of the guarantee period through the end of the designated Christmas period?
- A. Any carrier who is not provided an X day within twelve weeks or during the same pay period as required in Article 9.2.C.5 h., will receive 100% of the carrier's daily rate of pay in lieu of the X day.
- Q. If a carrier is to be compensated in accordance with Article 9.2.C.5.j. for not receiving an X day in the required time and has changed route assignments since working the relief day (R day); what route evaluation will be used to calculate the 100% compensation?
- A. The evaluation of the route on which the carrier was assigned when working the relief day will be used to determine the compensation of 100% of the daily rate of pay.