



December 20, 2005

MANAGERS, HUMAN RESOURCES (AREA)  
MANAGERS, LABOR RELATIONS (AREA)

SUBJECT: Rural Carrier Mutual Exchanges

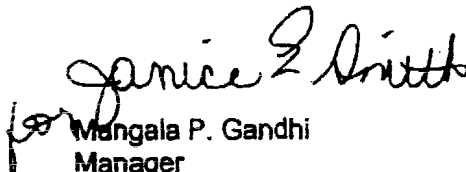
Local postmasters and managers with rural delivery are responsible for the decision to approve or disapprove requests from rural carriers for mutual exchanges. However, it has come to our attention that there have been occasions when postmasters have approved requests for the mutual exchange of rural carriers when one of the rural carriers involved is planning to retire and has no intention of exchanging duty offices and work in the new assignment.

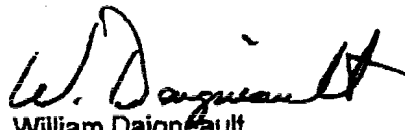
The mutual exchange provisions allow regular rural carriers to actually trade offices and were intended to provide each post office with a rural carrier to work in their office. It is our position that it is not a "mutual exchange" when one of the regular carriers never actually works, or never intends to work, in the other office.

It is the Postal Service's position that a request for the mutual exchange of regular carriers, that includes an employee about to retire, resign or otherwise leaves the rural carrier craft, is outside the intent of a "mutual exchange".

When postmasters and installation heads or designees receive a request for the mutual exchange of regular rural carriers they should only approve requests that, to the best of their knowledge, do not involve a regular rural carrier who intends to retire or otherwise leave the rural carrier craft, and therefore does not intend to work as a rural carrier in the new office.

If you have any questions concerning this matter, you may contact Pat Connelly at 202-268-6865 or Judi Stokowski at 202-268-5842.

  
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