



## NATIONAL RURAL LETTER CARRIERS' ASSOCIATION

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### MEMORANDUM

**Date:** January 29, 2001  
**To:** State Stewards and Asst. State Stewards  
**From:** Gus Baffa, Director of Labor Relations  
**Subject:** Extension to the 1995 USPS-NRLCA National Agreement

Back in September of 2000, the Postal Service (Labor Relations) sent the attached letter to the field. The letter does spell out several conditions on PTF, Relief Day work list, assignment of Relief Days and RCA transfers. However, there is a major error on page 2, in the second paragraph, of the letter. It states, "PTFs may not bid on district-wide PTF postings." That statement is incorrect. We did not send out a copy of the letter because we understood that the U.S.P.S. was going to re-do the letter. We did put most of the contents of the letter on the NRLCA Website "What's New" page at that time. Nothing was done for several months and, when it was corrected, it only mentioned the error and did not re-do the entire letter. Therefore, I am sending this out now because it has concise information on several timely issues. If you incur a problem with the PTF bidding on a district-wide posting, have the labor representative call for verification at the phone number referenced in the letter.

LABOR RELATIONS



September 1, 2000

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

SUBJECT: Extension to the 1995 USPS-NRLCA National Agreement

Following ratification of the Extension to the 1995 USPS-NRLCA National Agreement, joint training sessions were held in Tampa, Florida, and Salt Lake City, Utah. During the training sessions it was requested that further written clarification be provided on several issues. This letter will serve to clarify those issues and provide additional guidance on the PTF rural carrier positions.

#### **Part-time Flexible Rural Carrier**

The Extension to the 1995 Agreement introduces the part-time flexible rural carrier (PTF). Information regarding the establishment of PTF positions can be found in the Analysis of Changes to the Extension to the Agreement and the Implementation Guidelines distributed with advance copies of the Extension in May. Several key points must be noted prior to the establishment of a PTF position.

The district office is responsible for ensuring that local managers are making every effort to fill leave replacement vacancies with RCAs or TRCs. The district is also responsible for ensuring that rural carrier examinations are given on a regular basis and that hiring registers are continually maintained. In addition, the district office will require that local managers obtain the appropriate district approval prior to establishing a PTF position.

As stated in the Extension, the establishment of a PTF is at the discretion of the Employer, however, each regular rural carrier shall have the right to require that a leave replacement be assigned to his or her route. Management has a reasonable period of time, which has been defined as 120 days, to obtain an RCA or TRC for the route after the carrier's request. If management is unsuccessful in obtaining an RCA or TRC to serve on a K route, a PTF position will be established, provided the PTF will be assigned at least two K routes.

**PTF rural carrier positions will not be effective prior to September 9, 2000.** PTFs will be assigned only to K routes. The assignment will include no less than two (2) K routes and the total evaluated hours of the assigned routes must not exceed 40 hours each week. Generally, the PTF assignment will include no more than four (4) K routes. Management may add or remove routes from the PTF assignment at any time, provided the number of assigned routes does not fall below two (2) K routes, or exceed five (5) K routes.

All qualified substitute rural carriers and RCAs that have completed their probationary period are eligible to bid on PTF assignments. If the PTF assignment still exists after posting in the office, the assignment will be posted district-wide. Only substitutes and RCAs who have completed their probationary period will be eligible to bid on these posted assignments. PTFs may not bid on district-wide PTF postings. If a PTF assignment becomes vacant in an office, management will have the option of eliminating the position or posting the assignment.

When one of the assigned routes of the PTF becomes vacant or the regular carrier is out on extended absence, management may utilize the PTF full-time on the assigned route or utilize the provisions of Article 30.2.D to provide coverage for the route.

### **Relief Day Work List**

If a regular rural carrier on the relief day work list, works his or her relief day and selects option #1 in accordance with Article 9.2.C.5.f.(1), a Form 3971 will be completed for the mutually agreed X day. This scheduled X day will be given the same consideration as approved annual leave.

A regular rural carrier on the relief day work list will be bypassed in the rotation if the carrier has at least one day or annual leave (including an approved X day from option #1) or sick leave adjacent to the relief day. However, the carrier may notify management that he or she does not wish to be bypassed in this situation.

Management must provide three (3) working days notice to a regular rural carrier when assigning an X day, except from the beginning of the guarantee year through the end of the designated Christmas period.

If a regular rural carrier works the relief day and fails to complete the entire route, i.e. illness, the carrier will be compensated 150% of the carrier's hourly rate for the actual number of hours worked, regardless of the option selected. PS Form 1314 will be annotated with a J or K as appropriate and PS Form 2240R will be submitted for the actual number of hours to be paid at 150%.

Signing the relief day work list does not provide an entitlement to the regular rural carrier to work the relief day due to the unavailability of a leave replacement. Management must first follow the provisions outlined in Article 30 to provide coverage for a route by utilizing the matrix, PTFs, or qualified leave replacements in the delivery unit. Management may then assign the route to a TRC or other leave replacements in the office, or on some occasions, management may split a route, prior to utilizing a regular to work on the relief day. A regular carrier on the relief day work list must be utilized prior to other regular rural carriers on his or her relief day, in accordance with the appropriate provisions of the Agreement. A regular carrier may not work the relief day in

order to allow the assigned leave replacement a day off without utilizing the relief day work list procedures.

Article 30.2.D.4. indicates that if management has exhausted the matrix and attempted to use a qualified RCA in the delivery unit in order to cover a route, "...the Employer may designate any other leave replacement prior to selecting a regular rural carrier to work in accordance with Article 8 Section 5." The other leave replacements referred to would be unqualified substitutes, RCAs, or RCRs in the delivery unit; TRCs in the delivery unit; or qualified or unqualified substitutes, RCAs, RCRs, or TRCs in other delivery units within the office. A leave replacement may not be borrowed from another office until all available regular rural carriers (on and off the relief day work list) have been assigned to work the relief day.

### **Assignment of Relief Days**

The provisions of Article 9.2.C.5.b, (the formula), may not be implemented until an office has met three (3) criteria. Those criteria are:

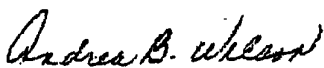
1. There must be a shortage of leave replacements.
2. Regular rural carriers are working relief days on more than an infrequent basis.
3. The office has been unsuccessful in its hiring efforts. Offices must have made reasonable effort to obtain RCAs or TRCs to fill leave replacement vacancies.

Once an office has implemented the formula and reassigned relief days, there may be a need to recalculate the formula. If the recalculation results in the availability of an additional Saturday relief day, the reassignment to Saturday must be completed within 30 days of the recalculation. If the formula is being recalculated due to an increase in the number of leave replacements (RCAs or TRCs have been hired), the recalculation will not be done until the newly hired employee has completed basic orientation and training, including on-the-job training.

### **RCA Transfers**

RCAs who have completed their probationary period may request a transfer in accordance with Article 30.2.F. If the gaining office accepts the employee's request for transfer, the losing office must release the RCA. The transfer will be effective within 30 days of the notification to the losing office.

If there are further questions on the information presented, please contact Bill Daigneault at (202) 268-5125 or Cathy Perron at (202) 268-4130.



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