NALC Collective Bargaining History

(1971-Present)

1. **1971-1973 Negotiated settlement JBC: NALC, APWU crafts, NPMHU, NRLCA**
   Joint bargaining with seven postal unions (pre-APWU merger), including today's APWU crafts, the NPMHU and the NRLCA. The contract provides: Wage increases totaling $1,250 annually; a single cost-of-living adjustment (COLA - capped at $160 annually); a $300 lump-sum payment; and no lay-off protection for length of contract.

2. **1973-1975 Negotiated settlement JBC: NALC, APWU, NPMHU, NRLCA**
   Joint bargaining with other three unions (APWU, NPMHU and NRLCA). The contract provides: Wage increases of $1,100 annually over two years plus biannual uncapped COLAs based on the Consumer Price Index; new overtime rules; and new language on subcontracting.

3. **1975-1978 Negotiated settlement JBC: NALC, APWU, NPMHU, NRLCA**
   Joint bargaining with other three unions. The contract provides: Wage increases of $1,400 annually over three years and uncapped biannual COLAs; a Memorandum of Understanding requiring that time/work standard changes be "fair, reasonable and equitable;" and a casual employee limit set at 5.0 percent.

4. **1978-1981 Healy Award (partial arbitration) JBC: NALC, APWU, NPMHU**
   Joint bargaining with APWU and the NPMHU (Rural Carriers bargained separately.) The tentative agreement provides: Wage increases of $500 annually in year one, 3.0% in year two and $500 annually in year three; a revised grievance-arbitration procedure; and improved work rules.

   NALC membership rejects the agreement in a ratification vote because of cap on COLA (COLAs were not to exceed those paid in 1975 contract regardless of actual inflation). Mediation-arbitration process decides two issues: Whether to cap the COLA and whether to eliminate the no-lay-off clause.

   Mediation fails and arbitrator James Healy rules in favor of unions on COLAs (no cap) and partially in favor of management on no lay-off clause, which is changed prospectively to cover only employees with a minimum of six years of service.

5. **1981-1984 Negotiated settlement JBC: NALC, APWU**

   Joint bargaining with APWU. Mail Handlers and Rural Carriers bargained separately. National Labor Relations Board rejected USPS request to force merger into a single bargaining unit. The contract provides: Wage increases of $300 annually in each of three years; cash payments of $350 in all three years; a $150 ratification bonus; and the elimination of mandatory annual route inspections.

6. **1984-1987 Kerr Award (arbitration) JBC: NALC, APWU**

   Joint bargaining with APWU. USPS seeks reduced COLAs and a two-tier wage schedule. Entire contract is set through interest arbitration featuring debate over pay comparability. Arbitrator Clark Kerr rejects two-tier pay scales and reduced COLAs, but lowers the starting salaries of carriers by 10 percent (by adding two new steps to bottom of pay scale) and calls for "moderate restraint" in future postal wage increases. The contract provides: annual wage increases of 2.7 percent; and a 10th national holiday in 1986 (Martin Luther King Jr. Day).

7. **1987-1990 Negotiated settlement JBC: NALC, APWU**

   Joint bargaining with APWU leads to a negotiated 40-month contract. The contract provides: Six general wage increases (2.0% in year one and $1,300 in annual wage increases over the next three years) and seven COLAs at six-month intervals.

8. **1990-1994 Mittenthal and Valtin Awards JBC: NALC, APWU**

   Joint bargaining with APWU. USPS demands a wage freeze, health benefit give-backs, more part-timers and a temporary work force during a "transition" to full letter-mail automation. Parties again debate pay comparability but expand the debate to cover benefits and work-force structure. Arbitrator Richard Mittenthal invokes "moderate restraint" and issues a four-year contract with wage increases (1.2%, 1.5%, 1.5%, and 1.6%), uncapped COLAs, a new starting step A and a $351 cash payment. Separate dispute resolution procedures are begun to consider health benefits and "transitional employees."

   Mediation/Fact-Finding with mediator Rolf Valtin fails to achieve health benefits agreement and the parties resort to interest arbitration, with a panel chaired by Valtin. The resulting Valtin Award reduces the USPS contribution for health benefits from 90 to 85 percent and gives employees the ability to pay for health premiums with pre-tax dollars.

Mittenthal panel returns to resolve the terms and conditions of Transitional Employees (TEs) in the city carrier craft while APWU reaches a voluntary deal. The award provides: The salary of a Step A part-time flexible; twice-a-year COLAs; a four-hour minimum guarantee; and access to the grievance-arbitration procedure.

9. 1994-1998 Stark Award (arbitration) NALC

Convention in Atlantic City instructs NALC to bargain alone. NALC takes offensive and demands higher-level pay to reward productivity gains and more difficult work as a result of letter mail automation.

Negotiations and mediation fail and parties return to interest arbitration with a panel chaired by Arthur Stark. Pay comparability remains a central theme, but impact of automation is also litigated.

The Stark Award provides: the “cash out” of the first-year wage and COLA increases with a $950 lump-sum payment; two 1.2 percent general wage increases; a second lump-sum payment of $400; the conversion of Sunday and night premiums to fixed amounts per hour.

Stark does not find a violation of the pay comparability standard in the city carrier craft but labels the NALC demand for a pay upgrade as “premature.”

10. 1998-2001 Fleischli Award (arbitration) NALC

NALC bargains alone. NALC resumes campaign for higher-level pay with a nationwide media campaign and informational picketing in the summer and fall of 1998.

Bargaining is extended well beyond the expiration date but the contract is resolved through interest arbitration with arbitrator George Fleischli as chairman. Focus shifts from pay comparability to job content, automation impacts and productivity growth. Proceeding is converted into a Final Last Best Offer case and the NALC position is adopted.

The Fleischli Award’s contract provides: a pay upgrade for all city carriers (worth 2.5% - 3.1% as Grade 5 carriers are upgraded to Grade 6 and Grade 6 carriers are upgraded to Grade 7); a cash payment of $725-$1,034 (depending on a carrier’s grade and step);

and annual wage increases of 2.0%, 1.4% and 1.2% over the next three years plus biannual COLAs during the same period.

11. 2001-2006 Negotiated settlement NALC

NALC negotiates alone and achieves an unprecedented five-year contract. Negotiations are delayed due to the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 and the postal anthrax attacks of October 2001, which together cause the most serious decline in mail volume since the Great Depression. NALC works with mailers and other employee organizations to win significant financial assistance from Congress to help defend the mail system against future bio-terror attacks.

The parties return to bargaining in the spring of 2002 and reach a voluntary agreement providing five general wage increases, eight COLAs and a single lump-sum payment.

The parties use the long period of stability to secure legislation to prevent the over-funding CSRS pensions and to explore the possibility of a new route evaluation system, Efforts on the former are successful, saving the USPS $2.6 - $3.4 billion per year, while talks on the latter fail.

12. 2006-2011 Negotiated settlement NALC

Twelfth National Agreement ratified by a 9-to-1 vote of the membership.

The contract had been on track for arbitration when the parties failed to reach a negotiated agreement by the November 20, 2006 deadline. The key bone of contention centered around the Postal Service's insistence on handing out city letter carrier delivery routes to private, non-union subcontractors.

Following several rallies across the country and testimony by President Young before Congress against contracting out, the NALC and the Postal Service reached a tentative agreement on July 12, 2007. The agreement called for limits on contracting out carrier work, as well as general wage increases of 8.85 percent over five years and regular cost-of-living adjustments (COLAs).

The Agreement abolished the use of “casuals,” replacing them with bargaining unit “transitional employees.” Also negotiated were resolutions to several long-standing issues involving automated sorting of large flat mail, adjustment of carrier routes and other operational matters. In addition, the contract provided the Postal Service relief on health care costs by increasing the share of health care premiums paid by city letter carriers by five percentage points over the life of the contract.

13. 2011-2016 Award (arbitration) NALC

NALC bargains alone. No two-tier pay scale; NALC successfully argued that reducing the top step pay of city carriers was not justified given the extension of street times in recent years and the increased physical demands of our jobs.

Three general wage increases(1.0%, 1.0% and 1.5%) and seven COLAs awarded.

New non-career category with career path replaces TEs as well as all PTFs converted.

Although the NALC fought hard for better CCA pay rates, CCAs will be eligible for health insurance after one year and the Postal Service will contribute toward their premiums and offer coverage beyond that required by the Affordable Care Act starting in 2014. They also will qualify for regular carrier uniform allowances and will be covered by the opting provisions of Article 41. The NALC will investigate the establishment of a non-contributory 401(k) plan for CCAs that would allow non-career carriers to save for retirement, with provisions to transfer such savings to the Thrift Savings Plan once they obtain career positions.
Ban on sub-contracting continued, strengthened. By retaining the historic ban on sub-contracting achieved in the 2006 round of bargaining and by adding a new Memorandum of Understanding on the Delivery and Collection of Competitive Products, the new contract strengthens the job security of all letter carriers. The new MOU ensures the assignment in city delivery areas to the city carrier craft the delivery and collection work involving competitive products (during or outside regular business hours). All of the MOUs restricting sub-contracting were retained.

Management's demand for the elimination of the no-layoff clause for carriers with at least six years of service also was rejected; the existing provision is retained.