

Part-time flexible (PTF) letter carriers Q-and-A

Due to the recent settlement of national-level case Q16N-4Q-C 18034102, M-01892 in NALC's Materials Reference System (MRS), concerning the Postal Service hiring city carrier assistant (CCA) employees above the contractual caps, many former CCAs have now been converted to career status. This settlement provides that all CCAs in all size offices with 30 months of relative standing on Sept. 1, 2018, will be converted to career status within 60 days from the signing of the agreement on July 27, 2018. This is exciting news for all of our newly converted letter carriers; however, conversion to part-time flexible (PTF) status has caused some confusion and raised some concerns for those converted as well as for union representatives who may be unfamiliar with this classification of employee.

Since Jan. 10, 2013, when the Das interest arbitration award set the terms of our 2011-2016 National Agreement and created the CCA classification, the number of PTF letter carriers has dwindled as those employees converted to full-time status. As a result, many individuals are unfamiliar with and unaccustomed to dealing with the rights and benefits afforded to PTFs. The following questions and answers will shed some light on the benefits of being a PTF, and also will highlight areas of the National Agreement that apply differently to PTFs than other employee classifications.

Q. What are PTFs?

A. PTFs are career carriers who are a part of the regular work force and have flexible work hours rather than a fixed schedule. While PTFs have no weekly work-hour guarantees, they maintain the daily work-hour guarantees that apply to CCAs. PTFs are identified by USPS designation-activity code 43-4 on their PS Form 50, Notification of Personnel Action and in the Time and Attendance Collection System (TACS).

Article 7 of the National Agreement defines the different classifications of employees, including PTFs:

ARTICLE 7 EMPLOYEE CLASSIFICATIONS

A. *Regular Work Force.* The regular work force shall be comprised of two categories of employees which are as follows:

1. *Full-Time.* Employees in this category shall be hired pursuant to such procedures as the Employer may establish and shall be assigned to regular schedules consisting of five (5) eight (8) hour days in a service week.

2. *Part-Time.* Employees in this category shall be hired pursuant to such procedures as the Employer may establish and shall be assigned to regular schedules of less than forty (40) hours in a service week, or shall be available to work flexible hours as assigned by the Employer during the course of a service week.

Article 8.8.C provides the same work-hour guarantees to PTFs as Article 8.8.D provides for CCAs:

C. *The Employer will guarantee all employees at least four (4) hours work or pay on any day they are requested or scheduled to work in a post office or facility with 200 or more workyears of employment per year. All employees at other post offices and facilities will be guaranteed two (2) hours work or pay when requested or scheduled to work.*

D. *Any CCA employee who is scheduled to work and who reports to work in a post office or facility with 200 or more workyears of employment shall be guaranteed four (4) hours of work or pay. CCAs at other post offices and facilities will be guaranteed two (2) hours work or pay.*

Q. What are the benefits of being a PTF?

A. There are many increased benefits to being a career USPS employee. PTF is a career classification that entitles letter carriers to additional compensation and benefits, including paid sick leave, annual leave carryover, employer contributions to retirement and increased employer contributions to health insurance through the Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) program, and seniority privileges—just to name a few. Hopefully this article will help explain the contractual differences between PTFs and CCAs related to certain articles of the National Agreement.

Q. As a PTF, can I be laid off?

A. Members of the regular work force are protected from layoffs or reductions in force once they reach six years of continuous service, as provided in Article 6 of the National Agreement:

ARTICLE 6 NO LAYOFFS OR REDUCTION IN FORCE

(1) *Each employee who is employed in the regular work force as of the date of the Award of Arbitrator James J. Healy, September 15, 1978, shall be protected henceforth against any involuntary layoff or force reduction.*

(2) *Employees who become members of the regular work force after the date of this Award, September 15, 1978, shall be provided the same protection afforded under (1) above on completion of six years of continuous service and having worked in at least 20 pay periods during each of the six years*

Additionally, Appendix B.3 Other Provisions, A. Article 6 – No Layoffs or Reduction in Force provides:

A. *Article 6 – No Layoffs or Reduction in Force*
Prior to laying off career city letter carriers in an installation, management will, to the extent possible, offer the impacted employee the opportunity to work any letter carrier assignments being performed by CCA employees, or if necessary, separate CCA employees. There will be no out-of-schedule pay provided to the impacted employees.

The intent of these provisions is to provide security to each career employee during his or her work lifetime. Career employees achieve protected status upon completion of six years of continuous service, which begins upon conversion to career status. To receive credit, employees must work at least one hour in at least 20 of the 26 pay periods for six consecutive years following their conversion date. Absences from duty while on paid leave, military leave, leave without pay for union business, or leave due to a compensable on-the-job injury are considered work for application of this provision.

Q. What hours/schedule will I be expected to work as a PTF?

A. Article 8 of the National Agreement describes the work-week, work hours and work schedule for letter carriers. PTFs work a flexible schedule and most of scheduling/work hour guidelines for PTFs are similar to CCAs; however, there is one important difference, found in Section 6:

ARTICLE 8 HOURS OF WORK

Section 6. Sunday Premium Payment

Each employee whose regular work schedule includes a period of service, any part of which is within the period commencing at midnight Saturday and ending at midnight Sunday, shall be paid extra compensation at the rate of 25 percent of the employee's base hourly rate of compensation for each hour of work performed during that period of service.

An employee's regularly scheduled reporting time shall not be changed on Saturday or Sunday solely to avoid the payment of Sunday premium payment.

PTFs may be required to work on Sunday, but will receive an additional 25 percent of the base hourly rate for each hour worked.

Q. My supervisor has instructed me to come back to work later in the day. Is that proper under the National Agreement?

A. While PTFs may be required to work a split shift under certain conditions, the following rules determine the work or pay guarantees the employee is due:

Split Shifts: When PTF employees work a split shift or are called back, the following rules apply (Step 4, H8N-1N-C 23559, Jan. 27, 1982, M-00224):

1) When a part-time flexible employee is notified prior to clocking out that he or she should return within two hours, this will be considered as a split shift and no new guarantee applies.

2) When a part-time flexible employee, prior to clocking out, is told to return after two hours:

- *The employee must receive the applicable guarantee of two or four hours work or pay for the first shift, and;*

- *The employee must be given another minimum guarantee of two hours work or pay for the second shift. This guarantee is applicable to any size office.*

3) All part-time flexible employees who complete their assignment, clock out and leave the premises regardless of intervals between shifts, are guaranteed four hours of pay if called back to work. This guarantee is applicable to any size office.

Q. Will my pay be different as a PTF?

A. With conversion to career status, PTFs will see changes in their pay structure and new entries on their pay stub. Article 9 of the National Agreement identifies the pay structure for all city letter carriers:

ARTICLE 9 SALARIES AND WAGES

Section 1. Salary and Wage Schedules

Employees with career appointments before January 12, 2013 shall be paid and earn step increases according to the rates and waiting periods outlined in Table One.

Employees appointed to career positions on or after January 12, 2013 shall be paid and earn step increases according to the rates and waiting periods outlined in Table Two.

Wages: PTFs are paid on an hourly basis and have no guaranteed annual salaries, so contractual wage increases are reflected in their hourly rates.

Step Increases: PTFs will be paid and earn step increases according to the rates and waiting periods in Table 2 of the current pay chart. The current pay chart is found on the NALC website at www.nalc.org/paychart.

Cost-of-living adjustments (COLAs): Once converted to career status, PTFs become eligible for periodic COLAs as calculated in Article 9.3.D of the National Agreement.

Q. As a PTF, what types and amounts of leave am I entitled to?

A. Article 10 of the National Agreement outlines the leave program the parties have negotiated. These leave provisions are contained in chapter 5 of the *Employee and Labor Relations Manual (ELM)*.

ARTICLE 10 LEAVE

Section 2. Leave Regulations

The leave regulations in Subchapter 510 of the Employee and Labor Relations Manual, insofar as such regulations establish wages, hours and working conditions of employees covered by this Agreement, shall remain in effect for the life of this Agreement.

The ELM defines which employee classifications are eligible for paid leave and the different types of leave they

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earn. Upon conversion to PTF, letter carriers earn sick leave and receive access to added leave categories above the leave benefits CCAs receive. When a CCA is converted, any annual leave earned will be paid out. Newly converted PTF letter carriers will continue to earn annual leave at the same rate as they did as a CCA for the first three years as a career employee. After three years, the rate at which a career employee increases.

Annual Leave: Career letter carriers earn annual leave based on their years of career service and the number of hours in which they are in a pay status accrues as follows:

- Less than 3 years = 1 hour for each unit of 20 hours in pay status
- 3 years but less than 15 years = 1 hour for each unit of 13 hours in pay status
- 15 years or more = 1 hour for each unit of 10 hours in a pay status

Military veterans may submit their Form DD-214 to receive credit toward their years of service for earning annual leave.

PTFs need to be aware that there is a 90-day “**qualifying period**” when new career employees may not use paid annual leave. Even though you may have earned annual leave during your qualifying period, USPS will not authorize any paid annual leave, according to *ELM* guidelines.

From *ELM* section 512.313:

Ninety-Day Qualifying Period.

- 1) *Requirement. New employees are not credited with and may not take annual leave until they complete 90 days of continuous employment under one or more appointments without a break in service.*

PTFs may carry over and accumulate unused annual leave from year to year (instead of the terminal payout at the end of a CCA appointment) up to a maximum of 55 days or 440 hours.

Sick leave: PTFs earn sick leave based on the number of hours in which they are in a pay status as follows: 1 hour for each unit of 20 hours in a pay status up to 104 hours per 26 pay-period leave year. Sick leave for PTFs is not subject to the qualifying period, may be carried over from year to year, and has no maximum accumulation limit.

Court leave: PTFs who have completed their probationary period (CCAs converted to career who have completed one 360-day term as a CCA do not have a probationary period) are eligible for court leave if the employee would otherwise have been in a work status or annual leave status. The amount of court leave for PTFs shall not exceed eight hours in a service day or 40 hours in a service week.

Military leave: PTFs who are members of the National Guard or reserve components of the armed forces are granted

paid military leave. Paid military leave is authorized absence from postal duties for hours the employee would have worked during his or her regular schedule, without loss of pay, time or performance rating, granted to eligible employees. Eligible PTFs receive one hour of military leave for each 26 hours in pay status. Employee must have a minimum of 1,040 hours in the preceding fiscal year and paid military leave cannot exceed 80 hours annually.

Q. Do PTFs receive holiday pay?

A. While PTFs do not receive holiday pay per se, Article 11 of the National Agreement explains how PTFs are compensated for holidays:

ARTICLE 11 HOLIDAYS

Section 7. Holiday Part-Time Employee

A part-time flexible schedule employee shall not receive holiday pay as such. The employee shall be compensated for the ten (10) holidays by basing the employee's regular straight time hourly rate on the employee's annual rate divided by 2,000 hours. For work performed on December 25, a part-time flexible schedule employee shall be paid in addition to the employee's regular straight time hourly rate, one-half (1/2) times the employee's regular straight time hourly rate for each hour worked up to eight (8) hours.

Rather than basing a PTF's hourly pay rate on a 2,080-hour work year as is the case with full-time employees, the hourly pay rate for PTFs is based on a 2,000-hour work year. The result is a higher hourly straight time rate for PTFs, which offsets the lack of holiday pay. The additional holiday portion of a PTF's hourly straight time rate is not used when calculating overtime or Sunday premium.

Q. How and when will I be converted to full-time regular status?

A. PTFs are converted to full-time regular status in accordance with Memorandum of Understanding Re: Full-time Regular Opportunities – City Letter Carrier Craft found on pages 159-162 of the 2016-2019 National Agreement.

Q. How is “seniority” different from “relative standing”? How does it benefit me?

A. Seniority applies to all regular work force letter carrier craft employees. It is computed from your career appointment date in the letter carrier craft and continues to accrue so long as service is uninterrupted in the same installation. CCAs converted to career status on the same day in the same installation will be in the same seniority order as their relative standing order. Seniority determines the “pecking order” for many of your contractual rights, including annual leave scheduling, opting

under Article 41, and filling temporarily vacant higher level assignments within the city letter carrier craft under Article 25.

Q. As a PTF, may I be involuntarily reassigned to another installation? What are my rights if I am?

A. Article 12 of the National Agreement has many provisions regarding the reassignment of career employees. Article 12.5.B.5 provides that full-time and part-time flexible employees involuntarily detailed or reassigned from one installation to another shall be given not less than 60 days advance notice, if possible.

ARTICLE 12 PRINCIPLES OF SENIORITY, POSTING AND REASSIGNMENTS

12.5.B.5 Full-time and part-time flexible employees involuntarily detailed or reassigned from one installation to another shall be given not less than 60 days advance notice, if possible. They shall receive moving, mileage, per diem and reimbursement for movement of household goods, as appropriate, if legally payable, as governed by the standardized Government travel regulations as set forth in the applicable Handbook.

If a PTF is required to involuntarily relocate due to an involuntary reassignment, USPS is obligated to reimburse certain expenses under the policies contained in the *F-15, Travel and Relocation* handbook. The provisions for paying mileage in these circumstances are the same as for a CCA.

Q. As a PTF, may I voluntarily transfer to another installation?

A. Career employees wishing to transfer to another installation must serve a lock-in period in their current installation before being eligible to transfer. Local transfers (within the district to which the employee is currently assigned or to an adjacent district) require an 18-month lock-in period while all other transfer requests require a 12-month lock-in period.

Whether a CCA must serve a “lock in” when they are converted to career status is addressed by the parties’ joint *Questions and Answers 2011 USPS/NALC National Agreement*, dated March 16, 2016 (M-01870 in NALC’s Materials Reference System).

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

2011 USPS/NALC NATIONAL AGREEMENT

29. After a CCA becomes a career employee does he/she serve a lock-in period for transfers as defined by the Memorandum of Understanding, Re: Transfers?

Yes.

There are specific factors that management must consider fairly when evaluating transfer requests. These factors are referred to as “normal considerations.” These normal considerations and other requirements governing voluntary transfers

are contained in the Memorandum of Understanding Re: Transfers on pages 184-188 of the National Agreement.

The MOU Re: Full-time Regular Opportunities – City Letter Carrier Craft allows letter carriers who were PTFs on Aug. 7, 2017, the ratification date of the 2016-2019 National Agreement, to transfer without being subject to normal transfer considerations. This provision does not apply to CCAs converted to PTF after Aug. 7, 2017.

Q. I am having surgery and may not be able to carry my route until I recover. As a PTF, can I request a light-duty assignment?

A. Article 13 of the National Agreement includes PTFs among the employees who may submit a written request, accompanied by a medical statement from a licensed physician, for light duty following an off-duty illness or injury from which the carrier has not yet fully recovered.

ARTICLE 13 ASSIGNMENT OF ILL OR INJURED REGULAR WORKFORCE EMPLOYEES

Section 2. Employee’s Request for Reassignment

A. Temporary Reassignment

Any full-time regular or part-time flexible employee recuperating from a serious illness or injury and temporarily unable to perform the assigned duties may voluntarily submit a written request to the installation head for temporary assignment to a light duty or other assignment. The request shall be supported by a medical statement from a licensed physician or by a written statement from a licensed chiropractor stating, when possible, the anticipated duration of the convalescence period. Such employee agrees to submit to a further examination by a physician designated by the installation head, if that official so requests.

B. Permanent Reassignment

1. Any ill or injured full-time regular or part-time flexible employee having a minimum of five years of postal service, or any full-time regular or part-time flexible employee who sustained injury on duty, regardless of years of service, while performing the assigned duties can submit a voluntary request for permanent reassignment to light duty or other assignment to the installation head if the employee is permanently unable to perform all or part of the assigned duties.

Career employees must have five years of career service to be eligible to apply for permanent reassignment due to a non-job-related injury or illness.

Q. What about my health insurance? What are the changes? What are my options?

A. As a career PTF letter carrier, you are now entitled to participate in the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program

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(FEHBP). From the date you were converted, you have 60 days to enroll in a FEHBP plan. You should have received a package of information in the mail that included a brochure listing the available plans and their cost. Your right to these benefits, and to have a large portion of their cost paid for by the Postal Service, is covered by Article 21 of the National Agreement:

ARTICLE 21 BENEFIT PLANS

Section 1. Health Benefits

B. The bi-weekly Employer contribution for self only, self plus one, and self and family plans is adjusted to an amount equal to 76% in 2017, 74% in 2018, and 73% in 2019, of the weighted average bi-weekly premiums under the FEHBP as determined by the Office of Personnel Management. The adjustment begins on the effective date determined by the Office of Personnel Management in January 2017, January 2018, and January 2019.

If as a CCA you were enrolled in the USPS Non-Career Employee Health Benefits Plan, your enrollment in that plan is terminated either; (1) the last day of the month that is 28 days after you are converted to a career position, or (2) if you choose to enroll in a FEHB plan the date your FEHB coverage begins, whichever is earlier. It is recommended that you enroll in the FEHBP as soon as possible to avoid any gap in coverage or to start receiving health benefits.

Q. Do I receive dental and vision insurance?

A. The Federal Employees Dental and Vision Insurance Program (FEDVIP) is a voluntary program designed to provide supplemental dental and vision benefits, which are available on an enrollee-pay-all basis (no government contribution toward premiums) to Federal Civilian and U.S. Postal Service employees, retirees and their family members. Letter carriers are eligible to enroll in FEDVIP upon conversion to career status. For more information on available plans and their associated costs, visit www.benefeds.com.

Q. Are there any other programs that will help me save money on my health care costs?

A. As a career employee, you are automatically eligible to contribute to a Flexible Spending Account (FSA) on a pre-tax basis. An FSA allows you to pay for eligible out-of-pocket health care and dependent care expenses with pre-tax dollars. By using pre-tax dollars to pay for eligible health care and dependent care expenses, an FSA gives you an immediate discount on these expenses that equals the taxes you would otherwise pay on that money. For plan information and enrollment options, go to www.fsafeds.com.

Q. Do I now receive life insurance?

A. Employees converted to career status are automatically enrolled in Federal Employee Group Life Insurance (FEGLI) for basic life insurance coverage, unless this coverage is waived. Basic coverage begins the first day in a pay and duty status after conversion. USPS pays the entire cost of the basic coverage. The coverage is the annual rate of base pay rounded up to the next \$1,000 plus \$2,000.

You may choose to increase the amount of life insurance coverage up to five times your annual salary or provide optional coverage for your spouse and eligible dependent children; however, these additional premiums are paid entirely by the employee. To enroll you must submit a completed Life Insurance Election form (SF 2817) to your local personnel office within 60 days of your conversion to career. Eligibility to enroll in optional insurance after your first 60 days is limited. Open season for FEGLI is rare, and the most recent FEGLI open seasons were held in 2016, 2004 and 1999. Outside of an open season, eligible employees can enroll or increase their coverage by taking a physical exam or with a Qualifying Life Event (QLE). For more information on FEGLI and a list of QLEs, visit www.opm.gov/healthcare-insurance/life-insurance.

Q. What about retirement? Do I start earning it? How does it work?

A. Upon conversion to career, employees are enrolled in the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS). FERS comprises three components: FERS Basic Benefit Plan, Social Security and Thrift Savings Plan (TSP). The basic benefit plan and Social Security portion of your retirement are defined benefits, while the TSP is similar to a 401(k) retirement plan.

Career employees have control over their TSP. The Postal Service automatically contributes 1 percent of your base pay and will match employee contributions up to 5 percent of base pay. Although participation in TSP is voluntary, letter carriers are automatically enrolled, and 3 percent of base pay will be deducted each pay period and deposited into your TSP account, unless you elect to change or stop contributions. For more information on retirement, please visit the NALC website or contact the NALC Retirement Department at 202-393-4695.

Q. Can I opt on a carrier technician assignment? If so, do I receive carrier technician pay?

A. Temporarily vacant carrier technician positions are higher-level assignments and thus are not subject to opting under the provision of Article 41.2.B. Rather, temporarily vacant carrier technician positions must be filled in accordance with Article 25, and as a career letter carrier, you

are now entitled to the provisions outlined in this article. Employees who are detailed to carrier technician positions under the provisions of Article 25.4 are entitled to higher-level pay as if promoted to the position. These provisions are outlined below:

ARTICLE 25 HIGHER LEVEL ASSIGNMENTS

Section 1. Definitions

Higher level work is defined as an assignment to a ranked higher level position, whether or not such position has been authorized at the installation.

Section 2. Higher Level Pay

An employee who is detailed to higher level work shall be paid at the higher level for time actually spent on such job. An employee's higher level rate shall be determined as if promoted to the position.

Section 4. Higher Level Details

Detailing of employees to higher level bargaining unit work in each craft shall be from those eligible, qualified and available employees in each craft in the immediate work area in which the temporarily vacant higher level position exists. However, for details of an anticipated duration of one week (five working days within seven calendar days) or longer to those higher level craft positions enumerated in the craft Article of this Agreement as being permanently filled on the basis of promotion of the senior qualified employee, the senior, qualified, eligible, available employee in the immediate work area in which the temporarily vacant higher level position exists shall be selected.

Q. Is my uniform allowance now different as a PTF?

A. PTFs are provided a uniform allowance under Article 26 of the National Agreement. You will retain the same uniform anniversary date that you established as a CCA (90 work days or 120 calendar days, whichever came first, after your hire date). This uniform anniversary date will remain the same provided you maintain continuous employment.

ARTICLE 26 UNIFORMS AND WORK CLOTHES

Section 2. Annual Allowance

- A. *Effective May 21, 2018 the annual allowance for all eligible employees shall be increased from \$441.00 per annum to \$452.00 per annum. The increase shall become effective on the employee's anniversary date. Effective May 21, 2019 the annual allowance for all eligible employees shall be increased from \$452.00 per annum to \$464.00 per annum. The increase shall become effective on the employee's anniversary date.*
- B. *A newly eligible employee entering the reimbursable uniform program will receive an additional credit to the employee's allowance as follows:*

Effective May 21, 2017 - \$102.00 if entitled to \$441.00 per annum.

Effective May 21, 2018 - \$104.00 if entitled to \$452.00 per annum.

Effective May 21, 2019 - \$107.00 if entitled to \$464.00 per annum.

With the first uniform allotment following conversion to career, letter carriers receive an additional \$104 if the anniversary date is prior to May 21, 2019. Effective May 21, 2019, the annual allowance increases to \$464. Those letter carriers who reach their first uniform as a career employee with an anniversary date after May 21, 2019, will receive an additional \$107.

As a career employee, you will now use a USPS-issued Uniform Allowance Purchase Card (UAPC) to purchase your uniform items. The UAPC is a prepaid declining balance purchase card from Citibank. The card is funded each year on your uniform anniversary date with the proper uniform allowance for that year, and as you purchase your uniform items, the amounts are deducted from the value of the card.

Q. An unassigned regular (UAR), PTF and CCA all have requested to opt (hold down) on the same vacant route for the same time period. Who gets the hold-down?

A. Full-time reserve, unassigned regulars and PTFs have first preference, by use of their seniority, to be awarded a hold-down assignment prior to a CCA. This is outlined in Article 41, Section 2.B of the National Agreement as follows:

ARTICLE 41 LETTER CARRIER CRAFT

Section 2.B Seniority

3. *Full-time reserve letter carriers, and any unassigned full-time letter carriers whose duty assignment has been eliminated in the particular delivery unit, may exercise their preference by use of their seniority for available craft duty assignments of anticipated duration of five (5) days or more in the delivery unit within their bid assignment areas, except where the local past practice provides for a shorter period.*
4. *Part-time flexible letter carriers may exercise their preference by use of their seniority for vacation scheduling and for available full-time craft duty assignments of anticipated duration of five (5) days or more in the delivery unit to which they are assigned. City carrier assistants may exercise their preference (by use of their relative standing as defined in Section 1.f of the General Principles for the Non-Career Complement in the Das Award) for available full-time craft duty assignments of anticipated duration of five (5) days or more in the delivery unit to which they are assigned that are not selected by eligible career employees.*

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Q. I have opted on a temporary vacancy. Can management move me to another assignment?

A. Article 41, Section 2.B.5 of the National Agreement requires management to honor opts for the duration of the vacancy. These rules apply to all carriers properly awarded a hold-down assignment.

ARTICLE 41 LETTER CARRIER CRAFT

Section 2.B Seniority

5. A letter carrier who, pursuant to subsections 3 and 4 above, has selected a craft duty assignment by exercise of seniority shall work that duty assignment for its duration.

The opting carrier awarded the hold-down works the assignment until the regular carrier returns, a new regular carrier is assigned, or as outlined below. Opting carriers are entitled to work the regular schedule/hours of the assignment, but are not automatically entitled to the scheduled day off of the assignment. A carrier may be removed from the hold-down only to provide work for a full-time carrier who does not have sufficient work for a full-time assignment.

When a CCA or PTF letter carrier on a hold-down is converted to full-time regular and assigned to a residual vacancy pursuant to Article 41.1.A.7, the employee may voluntarily choose to end the hold-down and assume the new assignment. The is in accordance with the MOU Re: Opting Duration found on pages 222-223 of the 2016-2019 National Agreement.

Q. I wasn't converted to PTF, but I think I qualify. What happened? Is my relative standing date wrong?

A. Under M-01892, a CCA who had 30 months or more of relative standing on Sept. 1, 2018, should have been converted to career status. Relative standing is determined by the original CCA hire date in an installation. Additionally, for CCAs who were city letter carrier transitional employees (TEs) at any time after Sept. 29, 2007, before being hired as CCAs, the time served as a TE is added to their relative standing less any breaks in service.

Paragraph f of the CCA General Principles found in Appendix B of the National Agreement addresses this:

f. When hired, a CCAs relative standing in an installation is determined by his/her original CCA appointment date to the installation, using Article 41.2.B.6.(a) where applicable, and adding the time served as a city letter carrier transitional employee for appointments made after September 29, 2007 in any installation.

CCA relative standing issues are further explained by the jointly developed *Questions and Answers 2011 USPS/NALC National Agreement*, dated March 16, 2016 (M-01870):

60. How is time credited for transitional employee employment when determining relative standing for CCAs?

All time spent on the rolls as a city letter carrier transitional employee after September 29, 2007 will be added to CCA time in an installation to determine relative standing. Breaks in transitional employee service are not included in the relative standing period.

63. For time spent as a city letter carrier transitional employee, does it matter where an individual was employed when determining relative standing?

No. All time on the rolls as a transitional employee after September 29, 2007 counts toward relative standing regardless of the installation(s) in which the transitional employee was employed.

64. Does time credited toward relative standing for time worked as a transitional employee after September 29, 2007 transfer from one installation to another once hired as a CCA?

Yes.

65. Does relative standing earned as a CCA in one installation move with a CCA who is separated and is later employed in another installation?

No.

66. How is relative standing determined for a CCA who is employed in an installation, then permanently moves to a different installation and then is subsequently reemployed in the original installation?

Relative standing in this situation is based on the date the employee is reemployed in the original installation and is augmented by time served as a city letter carrier transitional employee for appointments made after September 29, 2007 (in any installation).

If you believe that you qualify based on your relative standing and have not received notification regarding your conversion, please contact a local NALC union representative for further investigation. Local NALC union representatives who think they have members who qualify but have not been converted should contact their national business agent.

Converting to a career letter carrier position is an exciting time. Although PTFs deliver mail in the same manner as they did when they were CCAs, there are increased benefits and different rules. It is important to remember that all the provisions of the National Agreement that did not apply to you as a CCA now apply to you as a career employee. Hopefully, these Q-and-A's have answered some of the questions you may have. For further information on benefits and rights for all letter carriers, visit the NALC website at www.nalc.org. **PR**