

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
BETWEEN THE
UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE
AND THE
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LETTER CARRIERS,
AFL-CIO

Re: New Employee Experience, Retention and Mentoring Program

Pursuant to the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) Re: *City Delivery and Workplace Improvement Task Force*, the parties agreed to conduct two pilot programs related to the onboarding, retention, and mentoring of new employees. These pilot programs, outlined in MOU Re: *New Employee Experience and Retention Program* and MOU Re: *New Employee Mentoring Program*, were agreed to in April 2021, and August 2021, respectively. The programs were subsequently combined and modified through an addendum in June 2022.

As a result of the testing and expansion of these programs within hundreds of offices throughout the country, as well as the proven success in the pilot sites, the parties agree to implement the New Employee Experience, Retention and Mentoring Program within all USPS installations in which city letter carriers work. All newly hired city letter carriers will be informed of this program as part of the education they receive at the Carrier Academy. The guidelines of the program are as follows:

New Employee Experience and Retention

Prior to leaving the Carrier Academy and reporting to their employing office, all newly hired city letter carriers will receive:

- Contact information for the applicable employing office, including the direct phone number/email address of the employee's immediate supervisor, the office phone number, address of the delivery unit, building access information, and the employee's reporting date and time.
- A defined work schedule for the employee's first week in the delivery unit. This schedule will include anticipated reporting start and end times, daily hours of work, and scheduled day(s) off. It will also identify days specified for training with an on-the-job instructor (OJI). An employee's first day in the office will not be on a Sunday.
- An Employee Identification Number (EIN) and instructions for completing time reporting records.

No later than the first day in the employing office following completion of the Carrier Academy, or as soon as administratively possible, all newly hired letter carriers will receive:

- A new USPS-branded reflective vest, mail satchel, and hat. These employees will also receive dog spray and all other items regularly supplied to new employees.
- Introduction to and familiarization with the employing office, including a facility tour, introduction to union steward/officials, management staff, and other key personnel, and locations of communication/bulletin boards. The introduction and tour will be performed jointly by USPS and NALC representatives.

Additionally, the following policies will be in effect:

- All City Carrier Assistant (CCA) and Part-time Flexible (PTF) city letter carriers will be guaranteed a minimum of one (1) nonscheduled day each service week, except during the penalty overtime exclusion period. This exception to receiving at least one nonscheduled day each service week during the penalty

overtime exclusion period does not apply to CCAs or PTFs during Weeks 1 through 8 following completion of the Carrier Academy. Effective beginning Week 9, CCAs and PTFs may volunteer to work beyond six days per service week.

- Following completion of the Carrier Academy, work-hours and work locations for CCAs and PTFs will be limited as follows (week 1 begins the week the new employee begins OJI training):
 - Weeks 1 through 8 - restricted to working only in their employing office. This includes restricting these employees from working in hubs outside of the employing office.
 - Weeks 1 through 4 - limited to a maximum of 8 workhours per day and 40 workhours per week, including OJI training.
 - Weeks 5 through 8 - limited to a maximum of 10 workhours per day and 56 workhours per week.
 - Effective beginning week 9 - 11 limited to a maximum of 11.5 workhours per day (consistent with Employee and Labor Relations Manual, Section 432.32), and 60 workhours per week.
 - Effective beginning week 12 limited to a maximum of 11.5 workhours per day (consistent with Employee and Labor Relations Manual, Section 432.32).

Note: CCAs and PTFs are unavailable beyond the hours specified above during weeks 1-11.

- All CCAs and PTFs will receive a defined work schedule, identifying anticipated non-scheduled days, start and end times, and route assignments. This schedule will be posted by the close of business on the Wednesday of the preceding week.
- All newly hired city letter carriers will receive training on Sunday/Dynamic Delivery procedures with an experienced employee prior to performing Sunday delivery services on their own.
- Progress reviews for newly hired city letter carriers will be conducted at 30-, 60-, and 80-day intervals in accordance with current guidelines. During these progress reviews, local management will identify opportunities for improvement, provide constructive feedback, and consider additional OJI/hands-on training, as necessary. Copies of these reviews will be provided to the local union.
- Employees will have access to updated route books and maps. Prior to delivering a new route assignment, employees will be provided reasonable time to review the route book and, if desired, converse with another carrier familiar with the assignment.
- To the extent possible, newly hired letter carriers will be provided consistent route assignments to help promote confidence, route knowledge, quality of service, and familiarity with the employing office. It is the parties' expectation that newly hired letter carriers will be given the same assignment as was worked the previous day, to the extent possible during their first 12 weeks. In circumstances in which a letter carrier is assigned to work on a route with which they are not familiar, the reasonable amount of time necessary to become familiar with the route will be considered when evaluating the carrier's performance.

- New employees are prohibited from performing work outside of the city letter carrier craft during their first 90 work days or 120 calendar days, whichever comes first.
- During the first 90 work days or 120 calendar days of a new city letter carrier's employment, a meeting should occur prior to any voluntary or involuntary separation. When practicable the new employee, a union representative, their mentor, and the appropriate management representative should discuss the reasons for the potential separation and whether there are possible alternatives or resolutions to address the underlying issues. Note: The new employee has the right to decline union or mentor representation during these conversations.
- Joint Retention Teams (JRTs) may be established by mutual agreement of the USPS District Manager and NALC National Business Agent, or designees. JRTs are comprised of one NALC member (compensated on a no loss, no gain basis) and one USPS member. The respective NALC National Business Agent, or designee, will select the NALC team member and the District Manager, or designee, will select the USPS team member. JRTs will educate, assist, and monitor compliance with this program at installations with city letter carriers.

Mentoring Program

Research concerning mentoring programs has shown that mentoring relationships increase retention rates and help employees adapt to new workplaces. Employees who have workplace mentors have been found to be more likely to experience greater job satisfaction, and mentoring relationships can help eliminate obstacles, difficulties, and stumbling blocks new employees may encounter. Additionally, effective mentoring programs provide opportunities for new employees to freely ask questions, gain information necessary to effectively perform their jobs and help build effective and diverse organizations. With this in mind, a mentoring program will be established for all newly hired city letter carriers.

City letter carriers interested in serving as mentors may submit their names to the postmaster or branch president, or their designees, for consideration. Mentors will be jointly selected by the applicable NALC National Business Agent and USPS District Manager, or their designees, based on the following criteria:

- Sufficient understanding of USPS policies, rules, and regulations
- Ability to convey a positive image and attitude
- Demonstrated good communication skills, safe working practices, and regular attendance
- Commitment to a four-month mentoring relationship, during which time the mentor will make themselves available for telephonic and/or in-person discussions during regularly scheduled workhours
- Willingness to meet, both independently and with mentee participation, with management concerning the work performance of mentee
- Ability and willingness to successfully complete a mentor training program jointly developed by the national parties

Once a reasonable amount of time has been provided for employees to volunteer as mentors, the local parties (installation head or designee and the branch president or designee)

will begin to facilitate mentor-mentee relationships. Pairings will be jointly selected by the local parties.

Mentoring relationships established by this program will include the following:

- When practicable, the mentor will participate in the mentee's tour of the delivery unit, introducing the new employee to colleagues and providing them with an overview of the workroom floor.
- The mentor and mentee should meet regularly, as needed, to discuss the mentee's experiences and to address any workrelated concerns or issues the mentee may be experiencing. Such requests should not be unreasonably denied.
- The mentor should provide encouragement and advice to the new employee regarding their performance and ability to adapt to the requirements of being a city letter carrier.
- During the first 120 calendar days of a mentee's employment as a city letter carrier, whenever possible, topics and results of any discussions related to the performance of a mentee (positive or negative), including 30-, 60-, and 80-day evaluations as described by Handbook EL-312, *Employment and Placement*, Section 584, *Employee Evaluation*, should be shared with the mentor. Note: The new employee may choose to not have this information shared with the mentor.

Mentor and mentee participation in this program will be voluntary. While the parties have a joint expectation that mentoring relationships will last for a period of four calendar months, the mentorship may be terminated by either the mentor or mentee at any time. In these circumstances, when practicable, efforts will be made to jointly assign a new mentor to the newly hired employee.

This program will be implemented as agreed upon by the national parties. Prior to implementation, all city letter carriers will be provided with information about the program. This agreement is without prejudice to the position of either party in this or any other matter.