



October 2, 2012

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

SUBJECT: Withholding of Residual Rural Route Vacancies

The U.S. Postal Service and the National Rural Letter Carriers' Association have signed the attached memorandum of understanding (MOU) to supersede all previous MOUs relating to delivery point sequence (DPS) letter mail and DPS flats implementation on rural routes. The provisions of this MOU are effective October 2, 2012.

The provisions of this MOU include:

- Temporary modification of three contractual provisions.
- Withholding of all residual route vacancies in rural delivery offices (including stations and branches) scheduled for implementation of DPS letter mail or DPS flats, and those rural delivery offices currently receiving DPS flats.
- Suspension of conversion to regular status of auxiliary routes evaluated at 42:00 standard hours or more, in rural delivery offices (including stations and branches) scheduled for implementation of DPS letter mail or DPS flats, and those rural delivery offices currently receiving DPS flats.
- Adjustment guidelines for all withheld residual vacancies and auxiliary routes.
- A requirement to designate a representative at both the district and area levels who will have the authority to jointly determine the release of residual vacancies withheld pursuant to this MOU. (A Joint Release Form is also attached)

If there are any questions concerning this MOU or the Joint Release Form, area representatives should contact Reggie Rabon at [REDACTED]

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Cathy M. Perron".

Cathy M. Perron  
Manager  
Contract Administration (NRLCA)

Attachments

cc: District Managers



**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING  
BETWEEN THE  
UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE  
AND THE  
NATIONAL RURAL LETTER CARRIERS' ASSOCIATION**

In recognition of the potential impact to rural route evaluations from the increased implementation of delivery point sequence (DPS) letter mail and flats, the parties agree to supersede all previous memoranda of understanding relating to DPS letter mail and DPS flats; and to temporarily modify three contractual provisions as outlined below. These modifications will be applicable in rural delivery offices (including stations and branches) scheduled for the implementation of DPS letter mail or DPS flats; and also those rural delivery offices currently receiving DPS flats.

1. Article 12.3.A.1.a. - Requires an auxiliary rural route be converted to regular status when the official evaluation reaches 42:00 standard hours or more. Auxiliary rural routes will not be converted to regular status and will be held for buffer.
2. Article 12.3.C.2. - Normally requires residual vacancies to be awarded to leave replacements in the office. Residual vacancies will not be awarded and will be held for buffer.
3. Article 9.2.C.6. - Identifies 47K and 48K rural routes as interim classifications pending route adjustments. Where it is impractical to adjust routes classified as 47K and 48K by transferring deliveries to an auxiliary route, routes will maintain the interim classification provided the route's standard weekly hours do not exceed 57:36.

These temporary provisions will continue in each rural delivery office scheduled for implementation of DPS letter mail or DPS flats, or currently receiving DPS flats until such time as the parties determine they are no longer necessary.

The parties also agree to the following:

**District Representatives**

- A U.S. Postal Service (USPS) representative designated by the District Manager, Human Resources, and a representative(s) designated by the President of the National Rural Letter Carriers' Association (NRLCA) for each district, will have the authority to jointly decide to release residual vacancies held pursuant to this MOU, on a case-by-case basis. These representatives will also have the authority to release auxiliary routes evaluating to 42:00 standard hours or more in order to convert these routes to regular status.
- The designated representatives will meet, as necessary, to determine whether sufficient buffer is available to rebuild encumbered routes in those offices scheduled for implementation of DPS letter mail or DPS flats, or currently receiving DPS flats.

- If it is determined that sufficient buffer is available or the obligations for rebuild have been met in accordance with the appropriate implementation procedures, a joint release form will be signed by the designated representatives. Residual vacancies released by the designated representatives will be considered newly vacant routes in accordance with Article 12 of the USPS-NRLCA National Agreement. Any auxiliary route evaluating to 42:00 standard hours or more will be converted to a regular route within 30 days of release and subsequently posted in accordance with Article 12.
- The date indicated on the Joint Release Form will represent the initial vacancy date for the released regular route(s) in applying the provisions of Article 12.3.A.2. This date will also begin the 30-day period in which the auxiliary route(s) is to be converted.
- The release of one or more withheld residual vacancies in rural delivery offices (including stations and branches) scheduled for implementation of DPS letter mail or DPS flats or currently receiving DPS flats does not eliminate the applicability of this MOU for future withholding.

### **Route Adjustments**

All residual vacancies being withheld pursuant to this MOU may be used, in whole or in part, to increase the evaluation of other regular routes in the office. Any auxiliary routes(s) in the same zone will be eliminated where operationally feasible prior to adjusting the withheld residual vacancy below 40 standard hours per week or eliminating the route through consolidation. There is no limit to the amount of adjustment to the residual vacancy. If a withheld residual vacancy is reduced to less than 35:00 standard hours, the appropriate action will be taken to convert this route to auxiliary status.

Auxiliary routes evaluated over 42:00 standard hours or more per week, which have not been converted to regular routes pursuant to this MOU, may be used, in whole or in part, to increase the evaluation of regular routes in the office, prior to release by the parties.

### **Excessing of Rural Carriers**

A regular rural carrier will not be excessed from an office if a withheld residual vacancy exists in the office. The withheld residual vacancy will be posted and the residual vacancy utilized, as necessary, for reassignment of the regular rural carrier.

In certain circumstances, withheld residual vacancies in another office may be released, posted, and subsequently utilized for reassignment of excess rural carriers in accordance with Article 12. A USPS area representative designated by the Area Manager, Human Resources, and a representative designated by the President of the NRLCA will have sole discretion when releasing a withheld residual vacancy for the purposes of reassignment pursuant to Article 12.

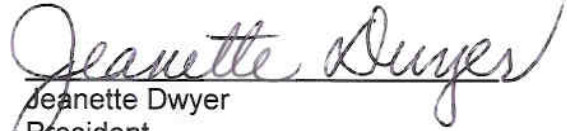
All newly vacant routes may be considered for consolidation, adjustment, or conversion in accordance with the provisions of Article 12, prior to posting of the vacancy. Management may consider consolidation of the vacant route or any route in the office and if appropriate, provide a 60-day extension in accordance with Article 12.3.A.2.a, prior to posting of the rural route vacancy. Once a rural route vacancy is posted in a rural delivery office (including stations and branches) scheduled for implementation of DPS letter mail or DPS flats or currently receiving DPS flats, the provisions of this MOU will be applicable, and the residual vacancy will be withheld until such time as it is consolidated or released by the designated representatives.

If there is a dispute between the designated representatives regarding the provisions of this MOU, the final determination will be made by the parties at the area level.

The parties agree that this MOU does not set precedent in same or similar instances, nor does it prejudice the position of either party as it relates to the provisions of Article 12. In the future, if either party has a concern(s) regarding the effectiveness of these temporary provisions, as the scope of the implementation of DPS letter mail or flats evolves, a meeting will be scheduled at the national level to discuss such concern(s).



Cathy M. Ferron  
 Manager  
 Contract Administration (NRLCA)  
 U.S. Postal Service



Jeanette Dwyer  
 President  
 National Rural Letter Carriers'  
 Association

Date: Oct. 2, 2012

# JOINT RELEASE FORM

October 2, 2012  
Memorandum of Understanding  
DPS Letter Mail and Flats Impact

The designated USPS and NRLCA District or Area representatives, as appropriate, have jointly decided to release the residual vacancies withheld pursuant to the October 2, 2012 MOU, as identified below:

DISTRICT: \_\_\_\_\_

OFFICE: \_\_\_\_\_

REGULAR ROUTE(S) RELEASED (RTE NO): \_\_\_\_\_

AUXILIARY ROUTE RELEASED (RTE NO): \_\_\_\_\_

DATE OF RELEASE: \_\_\_\_\_

This date represents the initial vacancy date for a regular route in accordance with Article 12.3.A.2., or the beginning of the 30-day timeframe within which the auxiliary route is to be converted to regular status.

## NOTES:

1. Regular routes released by Area Representatives to be used for reassignment of excess rural carriers will be posted within 30 days of the Date of Release noted above.
2. Future residual vacancies will be withheld pursuant to the October 2, 2012 MOU, unless otherwise indicated by the parties at the national level.

\_\_\_\_\_  
USPS Representative

\_\_\_\_\_  
NRLCA Representative