

**Memorandum of Understanding  
Between  
National Association  
of Letter Carriers  
Merged Branch 86,  
AFL-CIO**



**And  
United States  
Postal Service**

**Stafford Springs, Connecticut  
06076-9998**

**2023-2026**



Memorandum of Understanding for Local  
Implementation of the 2023-2026 National Agreement

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## **ITEM #1**

### **ADDITIONAL OR LONGER WASH-UP PERIODS**

- A. Additional amount of wash-up time will be granted to all carriers engaged in dirty work and/or work with toxic materials, in addition to incidents of personal need. Such wash-up time shall be part of the carrier's normal work day. The amount and frequency of wash-up time will vary with the circumstances in each individual case.

## **ITEM #2**

### **THE ESTABLISHMENT OF REGULAR WORK WEEK OF FIVE (5) DAYS WITH EITHER FIXED OR ROTATING DAYS OFF**

- A. Letter carriers of the Stafford Springs Post Office will have fixed days off.

### **ITEM #3**

## **GUIDELINES FOR THE CURTAILMENT OR TERMINATION OF POSTAL OPERATIONS TO CONFORM TO ORDERS OF LOCAL AUTHORITIES OR AS LOCAL CONDITIONS WARRANT BECAUSE OF EMERGENCY CONDITIONS**

- A. The curtailment or termination of postal procedures and operations due to any emergency will be made by the postmaster for each individual situation.
- B. Consideration for termination of postal operations to conform to orders of local authorities or as local conditions warrant because of emergency conditions, shall be based upon available information.
- C. Consideration shall be given to “Acts of God” such as storms, fire, floods, community disasters and physical limitations that jeopardize the safety and health of employees. Situations must be general rather than personal in scope and must prevent groups of employees from working or reporting to work (as defined in the Employee and Labor Relations Manual.)
- D. Every effort will be made to disseminate this information utilizing all available media.

- E. Every effort will be made to notify all employees as soon as possible when such weather conditions or disasters/disorders occur.
- F. The President of Branch 86, or his/her designee will be notified of such termination, or curtailment of operations. Such a decision to curtail or terminate postal operations will be applicable only to those units affected.
- G. Carriers will not be required to endanger their personal safety and health. Therefore, the following conditions will be applicable:
  - 1. When ice and sleet storms make walking and/or driving hazardous.
  - 2. When wind, snow, and/or cold could be detrimental to the health or the creation of hazardous driving conditions.
  - 3. When high winds create danger from falling trees and limbs, electrical wires, and other falling or blowing objects.
- H. A letter carrier's safety shall supersede any other consideration. No letter carrier shall be required to enter any premises or perform any duties which he/she believes would result in bodily harm.

## **ITEM #4**

### **FORMULATION OF LOCAL LEAVE PROGRAM**

- A. Annual leave (AL) will be granted on as liberal a basis as possible consistent with the needs of the service and sound business practices. Annual leave will be granted in accordance with Article 10 of the National Agreement.
- B. Choice vacation preference will be granted in order of seniority, for both first and second selections, including CCAs who will select in order of relative standing after the full time regulars have selected. This process will be consistent with the needs of the employees and management. The granting of leave under such provisions must be contingent upon all carriers having a sufficient leave balance when the leave is taken.
- C. Military leave taken during the choice vacation period will not be charged to the choice vacation period. Employees on military leave may be granted another period, provided that no other carrier is deprived of his/her first choice.
- D. Letter Carriers, including City Carrier Assistants, will make their first selection for the choice vacation period from February 1st through February 28th (29th).
- E. "Letter Carriers, including City Carrier Assistants, will make their second selection for the choice vacation period from March 3rd through March 18th.

- F. (See Item #10 for notification procedures.)
- G. First consideration will be given for granting annual leave for up to one (1) delegate to attend state conventions. The union will submit to the employer a list of these delegates within thirty (30) days prior to the convention date.
- H. Carriers who become ill while on annual leave during the choice period shall be allowed to change the annual leave to SL, (or LWOP) and select another period of time that is vacation period, equal to the amount of sick leave used not to exceed prior approved annual leave.
- I. In the event of death in the immediate family, a carrier on annual leave during the choice period shall be allowed another selection that is vacant.
- J. Reposting of a cancellation - All cancellations shall be reposted as soon as the employer is notified of the cancellation. Cancellation will be for lack of annual leave. All other requests for cancellation must be in writing and meet with the approval of the union and the employer.
  - 1. When a vacant week occurs during the choice period as a result of cancellation, the week (s) will be awarded to a carrier which was previously denied annual leave because the allotment was full. The pecking order for approval will be first come, first served, chronologically as the leave request was submitted.



2. When a vacant week occurs during the choice period as a result of a cancellation and there is no pending annual leave which was previously denied in weekly increments, the week(s) will be posted and awarded within the unit by seniority.
  3. If a cancelled week is not bid within 48 hours of posting, carriers shall have the opportunity to bid in increments of eight (8) hours.
  4. No letter carrier will be denied annual leave if the unit's quota for annual leave is not met. Such annual leave must be applied for a minimum of 48 hours in advance.
- K. Management shall encourage the use of annual leave for rest and relaxation. Every effort will be made to allow letter carriers off upon request. No carrier will be refused annual leave solely because it may cause overtime during the course of the service week. No carriers shall be refused annual leave because of shortage of carriers due to the detailing of a letter carrier to a higher level assignment during the course of a service week.
- L. No letter carrier may volunteer nor be solicited to work his/her non-scheduled work day(s) if the carrier has eight (8) hours annual leave, directly prior to and after, the non-scheduled work day(s). This applies to both the choice and non-choice vacation periods

- M. No carrier will be denied annual leave in hours or days for any unbid choice vacation period, provided 72 hours advance notice is supplied.
- N. Emergency leave will be granted when the health, welfare, and safety of an employee, or family member, is involved.
- O. Military leave will not be counted as part of a carrier's selections for the choice vacation period nor will it count against the union quota for the choice vacation period.
- P. In the carrier craft, there will be a minimum of 20% of the total city carrier workforce, comprising all city carriers on the rolls as of February 1st of each year, off each day during the non-choice vacation period with preference given to periods of five (5) days or more. No employees, will be denied annual leave if the 20% is not met.

## **ITEM #5**

### **THE DURATION OF THE CHOICE VACATION PERIOD**

- A. The choice vacation period will be from the fourth Monday in May through the third Saturday in September.
- B. Further, the calendar week Monday through Sunday, inclusive of the Thanksgiving holiday, will be part of the choice vacation period.

- C. Further, the calendar days between the Christmas and New Year's Days, will be part of the choice vacation period.

## **ITEM #6**

### **THE DETERMINATION OF THE BEGINNING OF AN EMPLOYEE'S VACATION PERIOD**

- A. Vacation during the choice vacation period shall begin on Monday at 12:01 a.m. and end on Sunday at 12:00 p.m.

## **ITEM #7**

### **WHETHER EMPLOYEES AT THEIR OPTION MAY REQUEST TWO (2) SELECTIONS DURING THE CHOICE VACATION PERIOD, IN UNITS OF EITHER (5) OR (10) DAYS**

- A. An employee may, at his/her option request two (2) selections during the choice vacation period in units of five (5) or ten (10) consecutive working days; however, his/her seniority will be used in one selection. After all carriers have had an opportunity to select their vacation period, the list will then be presented, by seniority, to the carriers for a second choice. Such selections shall not exceed the total number of weeks the employee is entitled to during the period.

- B. Once an employee has been notified of the weeks available, he/she will be allowed three (3) scheduled work days to make their selection. If an employee has made no selection at the end of the three (3) scheduled work days, the selection list will be passed on to the next senior employee and the process will continue. Employees not available to make their selection will be notified by the employer, by certified mail or the telephone and allowed the same amount of time from the date of receipt to respond. If an employee does not respond, the selection list will be passed on to the next senior employee and the process will continue. Employees equal to the number or percentage allotted off during the choice period within the unit will be contacted.
- C. Any employee who has either voluntarily passed up his/her selection or did not make a selection in the time allotted may make a selection only after all employees have been afforded their first opportunity.

## **ITEM #8**

### **WHETHER JURY DUTY AND ATTENDANCE AT NATIONAL AND STATE CONVENTIONS SHALL BE CHARGED TO THE CHOICE VACATION PERIOD**

- A. Absences of employees selected for jury duty or attending a national or state convention of his/her craft will not be charged to the choice vacation period and will be in addition to the number allowed off on annual leave.
- B. Letter carriers will be allowed to request schedule changes for jury duty. This includes daily hours and non-scheduled days, so as the letter carrier schedule will be the same as the jury duty schedule.

## **ITEM #9**

### **DETERMINATION OF THE MAXIMUM NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES WHO SHALL RECEIVE LEAVE EACH WEEK DURING THE CHOICE VACATION PERIOD**

- A. A maximum of 30% of the total city carrier workforce, comprising all city carriers who are on the rolls as of February 1st of the leave year, shall be granted annual leave during the choice vacation period. In computing the 30%, when the multiplication results in a decimal of .5 or above, the number will be rounded up to the next whole number. Likewise, when the decimal is less than .5, the number will be rounded down to the next whole number.
- B. When vacant weeks occur during the choice vacation period, those weeks will be offered within the station or branch where they occur. The vacant weeks will be posted for employees.

## **ITEM #10**

### **THE ISSUANCE OF OFFICIAL NOTICES TO EACH EMPLOYEE OF THE APPROVED VACATION SCHEDULE APPROVED FOR SUCH EMPLOYEE**

- A. Employees will be notified by posting of the first choice selections no later than March 2nd. Employees must be notified by posting the final vacation schedule in stations no later than March 21st or the first Friday in April, whichever is later. A copy of the annual leave schedules is to be furnished to the NALC, Merged Branch 86, by mail simultaneously with the posting of the schedules. A copy of the station vacation schedule will be furnished to the station steward.
- B. PS Form 3971 will be submitted in duplicate by each carrier at least one (1) week prior to the effective date of scheduled leave. A copy will be returned to the carrier.

## **ITEM #11**

### **DETERMINATION OF THE DATE AND MEANS OF NOTIFYING EMPLOYEES OF THE BEGINNING OF THE NEW LEAVE YEAR**

- A. The employer shall, no later than November 1st, publicize on bulletin boards and by other appropriate means the beginning date of the new leave year, which shall begin with the first day of the first full pay period of the calendar year.

## **ITEM #12**

### **THE PROCEDURE FOR SUBMISSION OF APPLICATIONS FOR ANNUAL LEAVE DURING OTHER THAN THE CHOICE VACATION PERIOD**

- A. For annual leave other than for the choice vacation period, employees submitting a P.S. Form 3971 seventy-two (72) hours in advance, shall be given a decision within 48 hours under normal conditions. Failure to notify within 48 hours under normal conditions will automatically result in the granting of the leave.



## **ITEM #13**

### **THE METHOD OF SELECTING EMPLOYEES TO WORK ON A HOLIDAY**

The following sequence will be followed when scheduling employees to work on a holiday or designated holiday, provided that such scheduling produces a work force which meets the operating skill requirements of the holiday or designated holiday:

- A. All CCAs and part -time flexible employees to the maximum extent possible regardless of the necessity to pay overtime.
- B. Full time regulars who volunteer to work either their holiday or their non-scheduled day shall be combined into a single group, ranked in seniority order.
- C. City Carrier Assistant employees.  
(This language will replace the language which refers to “TE’s as this category of employee no longer exists. As in your current LMOU, this language will appear inbetween the provisions for volunteers and non-volunteers.
- D. All full time regular carriers who did not volunteer to work their holiday in inverse seniority order.
- E. If, after the posting period, a need develops for additional or replacement employees, employees shall be selected according to the same order as above.

## **ITEM #14**

### **WHETHER “OVERTIME DESIRED” LISTS IN ARTICLE 8 SHALL BE BY SECTION AND/OR TOUR**

- A. The overtime desired list will be maintained by section. Section shall be defined as the installation.

## **ITEM #15**

### **THE NUMBER OF LIGHT DUTY ASSIGNMENTS WITHIN EACH CRAFT OR OCCUPATIONAL GROUP TO BE RESERVED FOR TEMPORARY OR PERMANENT LIGHT DUTY ASSIGNMENT**

- A. The method to be used in reserving light duty assignments within the carrier craft will be to place them on the same tour whenever possible and on an as needed basis.
- B. The employer agrees to place up to one (1) incapacitated carrier on light duty assignments within the installation as work is available.

## **ITEM #16 & 17**

### **ASSIGNMENT OF ILL OR INJURED REGULAR OR SUBSTITUTE EMPLOYEES**

- A. Request(s) for temporary or permanent/light duty will be put into writing and submitted to the installation head for approval. The request will be supported by medical proof of illness or injury and, if possible, state the anticipated duration of the convalescence in order to be allowed permanent/light duty.
- B. Once approved, the employer will establish positions consisting of eight (8) hours which will be designated as light duty assignments for letter carriers in the normal letter carrier tour if practical.
- C. In the event there is no, or insufficient, light duty assignments available in the letter carrier craft, carriers may be assigned to other duties on Tour 1 and/or 3 for additional hours.
- D. The Postmaster will make every effort to employ letter carriers in their own office for light duty assignments.

- E. Identification of light duty assignments: light duty assignments within the Stafford Springs Post Office for city letter carriers may include, but are not limited to the following:
1. Casing mail on his/her route;
  2. Casing mail on routes assigned by the supervisor;
  3. Assisting routes by setting up mail and flats;
  4. Re-labeling carrier cases;
  5. Coverage of suitable collection routes;
  6. Re-writing carrier's route books;
  7. Labeling inside of apartment boxes;
  8. Training employees when, in fact, training is done at the station level;
  9. Keeping 3982's up to date when regular carriers are out on extended absences;
  10. Delivering parcel post on overburdened routes when it is medically approved and not in conflict with the physician's orders;
  11. Answering phone calls within the delivery unit.
  12. Follow up on Customer Connect leads.

- F. Management shall explore ways and means with the union to make adjustments in normal assignments to convert them to light duty assignments without seriously affecting the production of the assignments.
- G. The installation head will show consideration for full time regular or part time flexible employees requiring light duty assignments giving each request careful attention and will reassign such employees to the extent possible in the employee's office. When a request is denied, the employee will be notified in writing and the reason for the denial stated.
- H. If light duty is available in another craft, the president of the craft concerned will be invited to the discussion prior to the assignment when possible.
- I. When numbers of another craft will be given light duty within the carrier craft, the President of Merged Branch 86 will be notified prior to the assignment when possible.
- J. Letter carriers will be allowed to case mail on his/her regular duty assignment if such casing meets medical restrictions, prior to begin assigned other duties.

## **ITEM #18**

### **THE IDENTIFICATION OF ASSIGNMENTS COMPRISING A SECTION, WHEN IT IS PROPOSED TO REASSIGN WITHIN AN INSTALLATION EMPLOYEES EXCESS TO THE NEEDS OF A SECTION**

- A. A section shall be defined as a unit throughout the Stafford Springs Post Office. It is agreed that the Stafford Springs Post Office shall be known as an installation.
- B. When a letter carrier route or full time duty assignment other than the letter carrier route(s) or full time assignments or the junior employee(s) is abolished at a delivery unit as a result of, but not limited to route adjustments, highway, housing projects, all routes and full time duty assignments at that unit held by letter carriers who are junior to the carrier(s) whose route(s) or full time duty assignments was abolished shall be posted for bid within the section, using seniority in awarding bid.

## **ITEM #19**

### **THE ASSIGNMENT OF EMPLOYEE PARKING SPACES**

- A. Management agrees to provide employee parking if available and excess to the needs of the service.

## **ITEM #20**

### **THE DETERMINATION AS TO WHETHER ANNUAL LEAVE TO ATTEND UNION ACTIVITIES REQUESTED PRIOR TO DETERMINATION OF THE CHOICE VACATION SCHEDULE IS TO BE PART OF THE TOTAL CHOICE VACATION PLAN**

- A. Attendance at union functions by union stewards and officers and duly elected delegates will be included in number of carriers off during the choice period.

## **ITEM #21**

### **THOSE OTHER ITEMS WHICH ARE SUBJECT TO LOCAL NEGOTIATIONS AS PROVIDED IN THE CRAFT PROVISIONS OF THIS AGREEMENT**

- A. The provision(s) of the National Agreement, Article 41, Section 3, Paragraph O, shall prevail for the life of this memorandum.
- B. The use of telephones by authorized union officials and stewards for local calls relating to the administration of the National Agreement shall be consistent with the agreement.

C. The NALC will be informed concerning changes in existing regulation relating to the duties and functions of city letter carriers.

D. Wearing of Uniforms:

On or about November 15th each year the installation head and the representative of Merged Branch 86, N.A.L.C. will meet to discuss the change in seasonal uniform.

Also on or about March 15th, the same two parties will meet to establish the change date for the spring season.

Once the seasonal change has been made, all carriers in this installation will be expected to wear the proper uniform for that particular seasonal period.

E. A Labor-management meeting will be held once quarterly, if needed, or when requested by either party. The date and time will be mutually agreed to but no later than two (2) weeks from the date either party receives a request to hold such a meeting.



## **ITEM #22**

### **LOCAL IMPLEMENTATION OF THIS AGREEMENT RELATIVE TO SENIORITY, REASSIGNMENTS AND POSTING**

All notices of vacancy in assignments shall remain posted for ten (10) days except in the months of June, July and August during which time notices of vacancies shall remain posted for fifteen (15) days. Exceptions to the above may be made after consultation with the union. Posting and bidding for duty assignments shall be installation wide as eliminated in Item #18.

- A. Route regulars – work on the same established route each day, including non-scheduled days.
- B. Utility carriers – work on routes covering non-scheduled days by bid.
- C. Duration of absence – he/she shall work assignment for its duration (five (5) days or more) of absence.
- D. Scheduled absence of less than five (5) days – seniority must be used to the maximum extent possible in scheduling available hours of work for periods of less than five (5) days and in determining preferences for assignments when an individual has already been scheduled for leave.
- E. Swapping of bid positions among regulars is not permitted.

- F. Bids must be in the personnel office by the time and date stated on the bid notice. A union representative must review the bids within five (5) working days prior to the award; if not reviewed, the award will be posted.
- G. To withdraw a bid, the postmaster must be notified in writing prior to the closing time and date of the bids. To renew a bid that was withdrawn, a new bid must be submitted to the personnel section prior to the time and date of closing. Bids submitted will be acknowledged by a receipt.
- H. No carrier shall obtain a Position A & B unless he/she bids for it and they are the senior carrier bidding. In the event there is no bid for a vacancy, the junior full time carrier will be assigned to that vacancy as a permanent assignment until such time they are designated as a successful bidder. This assignment will not be considered as one of the employees five (5) bids.
- I. No assignments will be reposted unless an error was made in posting.
- J. Seniority shall be the date shown on the official seniority list issued by the personnel section. It is incumbent upon the employer to see that the date is correct.

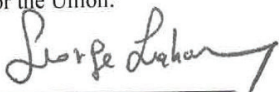
- K. Saturday off is a preferred day and is granted by seniority installation wide. Those carriers refusing of accepting Saturday off must notify the manager of delivery and collection when and if they do not want Saturday off. If a carrier refused Saturday off and wishes to reapply, he must notify the manager of delivery and collection in writing.
- L. A letter carrier's route may be posted for bid if there is a change of more than one hour (1) in the starting time for a letter carrier's route. The letter carrier will have the option of accepting the change in starting time or allowing the route to be posted for bid installation wide.
- M. When the regular route carrier is called in on his/her off day, they will work his/her own route, he bumps the utility carrier to one of the other four routes in his string of routes. To enable the utility to achieve the essence of his bid assignment, he will be allowed to displace an employee who has opted to cover an assignment under the provisions of Article 41, Section 283.4 and .5 as long as such route is one of the utility carrier's string of routes and if none of the other routes in his string is available.
- N. Letter carriers doing training of new employees or retraining of employees will receive higher level pay, Level 6 or higher, depending on training. This includes on-the-job trainers (OJT.)

- O. In the event a regular route letter carrier works his/her non-scheduled day, for route work, that carrier shall be assigned to his/her own assignment. Utility carriers working their non-scheduled work day, or “bumped” from their normal route assignment will be assigned at their preference to any route within their string not held down by a regular route carrier. If no route is available in the utility carrier’s string, the utility carrier shall be assigned outside the string in the same manner. Any part time flexible carrier “bumped” by a regular route carrier or utility carrier will be assigned to any vacant assignment.
- P. Management will post all assignments available to opt, of five (5) work days or more, immediately after they become available to opt. Vacancies in full-time grade one assignments are available for opting. Management will contact carrier(s) if the carrier(s) are not working in the time frame of the posting. (A phone log or a text will serve as acceptable means of contact.) Hold-down assignments are awarded to the eligible career letter carriers by highest to lowest seniority, first, and then to eligible CCAs by highest to lowest relative standing. The successful bidder will be awarded the hold-down two (2) work days in advance of the start of the opt, providing the time frame of the request allows for doing so. Once an available hold-down position is awarded, the opting employee shall work the duty assignment for its duration.

This Local Memorandum of Understanding is entered into on June 11, 2025 at the Stafford Springs Post Office between the representatives of the United States Postal Service and the National Association of Letter Carriers, Branch 86, pursuant to local implementation provision of the 2023-2026 National Agreement.

In witness thereof, the parties hereto affix their signatures below.

For the Union:



6.11.2025

George G. Laham, President

Date

N.A.L.C. Merged Branch 86, AFL-CIO

Hartford, Connecticut

For the United States Postal Service



6-11-25

Mark Colucci, Postmaster

Date

United States Postal Service

Stafford Springs, Connecticut 06076-9998

## NOTES



