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Mr. Vincent R. Sombrotto
 President
 National Association of Letter Carriers,
 AFL-CIO
 100 Indiana Avenue, NW
 Washington, DC 20001-2197

SEP 7 2000

CONTRACT ADMINISTRATION UNIT
 N.A.L.C. WASHINGTON, D.C.

Re: Q98N-4Q-C 00116558
 Class Action
 Washington, DC 20260-4100

Dear Mr. Sombrotto:

On several occasions, I met with your representative to discuss the above-referenced grievance at the fourth step of our contractual grievance procedure.

The issue in this case is whether management violated the National Agreement by use of a PS Form 2488, Authorization for Medical Report, to obtain an employee's written authorization to obtain medical evidence from the employee's attending physician

After reviewing this matter, we mutually agreed that no national interpretive issue is fairly presented in these cases.

We also agreed to settle this case on the following basis:

Form CA -17 "Duty Status Report" is usually adequate to obtain medical information concerning an injured employee's job-related medical condition and work restrictions. If a medical provider will not release the Form CA -17, without a medical release, PS Form 2488 may be used to secure the release. Completion of PS Form 2488 by the injured employee is voluntary, and Section 10.506 of the regulations governing claims under the Federal Employees' Compensation Act sets forth the rules under which employing agencies may request medical reports from the attending physicians of injured employees.

Please sign and return the enclosed copy of this decision as your acknowledgment of agreement to settle this case and close it at this level.

Time limits were extended by mutual consent.

Sincerely,

Richard A. Murmer
 Labor Relations Specialist
 Labor Relations Policies
 And Programs

Vincent R. Sombrotto
 President
 National Association of Letter Carriers,
 AFL-CIO

Date: 9-13-2000

§ 10.505RETURN TO WORK—EMPLOYER'S
RESPONSIBILITIES**§ 10.505 What actions must the employer take?**

Upon authorizing medical care, the employer should advise the employee in writing as soon as possible of his or her obligation to return to work under § 10.210 and as defined in this subpart. The term "return to work" as used in this subpart is not limited to returning to work at the employee's normal worksite or usual position, but may include returning to work at other locations and in other positions. In general, the employer should make all reasonable efforts to place the employee in his or her former or an equivalent position, in accordance with 5 U.S.C. 8151(b)(2), if the employee has fully recovered after one year. The Office of Personnel Management (not OWCP) administers this provision.

(a) Where the employer has specific alternative positions available for partially disabled employees, the employer should advise the employee in writing of the specific duties and physical requirements of those positions.

(b) Where the employer has no specific alternative positions available for an employee who can perform restricted or limited duties, the employer should advise the employee of any accommodations the agency can make to accommodate the employee's limitations due to the injury.

§ 10.506 May the employer monitor the employee's medical care?

The employer may monitor the employee's medical progress and duty status by obtaining periodic medical reports. Form CA-17 is usually adequate for this purpose. To aid in returning an injured employee to suitable employment, the employer may also contact the employee's physician in writing concerning the work limitations imposed by the effects of the injury and possible job assignments. (However, the employer shall not contact the physician by telephone or through personal visit.) When such contact is made, the employer shall send a copy of any such correspondence to OWCP and the employee, as well as a copy of the physician's response when received. The em-

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ployer may also contact the employee at reasonable intervals to request periodic medical reports addressing his or her ability to return to work.

§ 10.507 How should the employer make an offer of suitable work?

Where the attending physician or OWCP notifies the employer in writing that the employee is partially disabled (that is, the employee can perform some work but not return to the position held at date of injury), the employer should act as follows:

(a) If the employee can perform in a specific alternative position available in the agency, and the employer has advised the employee in writing of the specific duties and physical requirements, the employer shall notify the employee in writing immediately of the date of availability.

(b) If the employee can perform restricted or limited duties, the employer should determine whether such duties are available or whether an existing job can be modified. If so, the employer shall advise the employee in writing of the duties, their physical requirements and availability.

(c) The employer must make any job offer in writing. However, the employer may make a job offer verbally as long as it provides the job offer to the employee in writing within two business days of the verbal job offer.

(d) The offer must include a description of the duties of the position, the physical requirements of those duties, and the date by which the employee is either to return to work or notify the employer of his or her decision to accept or refuse the job offer. The employer must send a complete copy of any job offer to OWCP when it is sent to the employee.

§ 10.508 May relocation expenses be paid for an employee who would need to move to accept an offer of reemployment?

If possible, the employer should offer suitable reemployment in the location where the employee currently resides. If this is not practical, the employer may offer suitable reemployment at the employee's former duty station or other location. Where the distance between the location of the offered job