

March 6, 2014

**Questions and Answers
2011 USPS/NALC National Agreement**

The attached jointly-developed document provides the mutual understanding of the national parties on issues related to the 2011 USPS/NALC National Agreement. It is separated in two sections: the first concerning city carrier assistants (CCAs) and the second section addresses other contractual provisions. This document fully replaces the May 22, 2013, Questions and Answers, 2011 USPS/NALC National Agreement. New questions and responses are identified by underscoring. This document may be updated if agreement is reached on additional matters concerning the new collective bargaining agreement.



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**City Carrier Assistants
Joint Questions and Answers**

1. What is the last date that transitional employees may be on the rolls?

April 10, 2013.

2. How will the provisions of Article 7.1.C be monitored for compliance?

The CCA caps will be monitored at the national level. The Postal Service will provide the national union with a report every other pay period that lists, by District, the number and type of CCA (Article 7.1.C.1 and 7.1.C.2) and the number of full-time regular city letter carriers. Any dispute over compliance with the CCA caps will be addressed at the national level.

3. Are transitional employees who were on their 5-day break on the effective date of the 2011 National Agreement (1/10/13) eligible for the higher Step AA hourly pay rate if hired to a CCA position?

Yes.

4. In determining CCA caps is the number of CCAs "rounded" for percentage purposes?

No. Under Article 7.1.C.1 of the 2011 USPS/NALC National Agreement the number of CCAs shall not exceed 15% of the total number of full-time career city letter carriers in each District. Regarding the 8,000 CCAs employed under Article 7.1.C.2, the number in an individual District can be no more than 8% of the full-time career city letter carriers in that District.

5. Are CCAs employed under Article 7.1.C.2 limited to sites directly affected by "fundamental changes in the business environment"?

No. However, the number of this type of CCA that may be employed is limited to 8,000 nationwide and no more than 8% of the number of full-time career city letter carriers in a District.

6. What are the occupational codes and designation activity codes for CCAs?

CCA occupational codes are as follows: CCAs employed under Article 7.1.C.1 of the National Agreement are either 2310-0045 (City Carrier Assistant 1, CC-01) or 2310-0047 (City Carrier Assistant Tech 1, CC-02). CCAs employed under Article 7.1.C.2 of the National Agreement are either 2310-0046 (City Carrier Assistant 2, CC-01) or 2310-0048 (City Carrier Assistant Tech 2, CC-02). The designation activity code for all city carrier assistants is 84-4.

7. Can city letter carrier transitional employees apply for CCA vacancies in installations other than their employing office?

Yes.

8. Which score is used if a city letter carrier transitional employee with an active test score retakes the exam?

The most recent test score is used.

9. What is a passing score on the postal exam?

70.

10. How long does a previous test score remain active for non-career employees?

6 Years.

11. Will reinstatement-eligible former career employees and veterans eligible for direct career appointment under VRA or because of their 30 percent or higher disability status be eligible for noncompetitive consideration for CCA employment?

Yes.

12. Does the five-day break between CCA 360-day appointments refer to five calendar or work days?

Five calendar days.

13. May a CCA employed under Article 7.1.C.1 or Article 7.1.C.2 be appointed to a term of less than 360 days?

No. The only exception is when a transitional employee is hired as a CCA after a one day break during implementation of the 2011 National Agreement. In such case, the total period between the beginning of the transitional employee appointment and the end of the initial CCA appointment is 360 calendar days.

14. Can a transitional employee turn down an offer to be hired as a CCA in one installation and remain eligible to be hired as a CCA in a different installation?

Yes, provided the employee applied for a position in the other installation(s).

15. May CCAs hold dual appointments?

No.

16. Must a CCA go through the normal pre-employment screening process (i.e. drug screen, background check, medical assessment, motor vehicle record check, etc.) when reappointed or hired immediately after a transitional employee appointment?

No.

17. May CCAs who have an on the job illness or injury be assigned to work in other crafts?

Only if the assignment to another craft is consistent with Section 546 of the Employee and Labor Relations Manual and relevant Department of Labor regulations.

18. If a transitional employee is deployed to active duty in the military during the period of testing, will he/she have the opportunity to be hired as a CCA upon return from active duty?

Yes, consistent with applicable laws and regulations.

19. Does the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act of 1994 (USERRA) apply to CCAs?

Yes.

20. How are CCAs considered when applying the Letter Carrier Paragraph?

CCAs are considered as auxiliary assistance. Accordingly, management must seek to use CCAs at either the straight-time or regular overtime rate prior to requiring letter carriers not on the overtime desired list or work assignment list to work overtime on their own route on a regularly scheduled day.

21. Is there a limit on the number of hours CCAs may be scheduled on a workday?

Yes, CCAs are covered by Section 432.32 of the Employee and Labor Relations Manual, which states: *Except as designated in labor agreements for bargaining unit employees or in emergency situations as determined by the PMG (or designee), employees may not be required to work more than 12 hours in 1 service day. In addition, the total hours of daily service, including scheduled work hours, overtime, and mealtime, may not be extended over a period longer than 12 consecutive hours. Postmasters, Postal Inspectors, and exempt employees are excluded from these provisions.*

22. Do CCAs receive Night Differential or Sunday Premium?

CCAs receive Night Differential as defined in Article 8.7 of the National Agreement. CCAs do not receive Sunday Premium.

23. Do CCAs have a work hour guarantee?

Yes, CCAs employed in post offices and facilities with 200 or more workyears of employment have a four hour work guarantee and CCAs employed in all other post offices have a two hour work guarantee.

24. Are there rules covering work hour guarantees for a CCA who has a gap between two periods of work?

Yes. If a CCA is notified prior to clocking out that he/she should return within two hours, it is considered a split shift and no new work hour guarantee applies. However, if a CCA is notified prior to clocking out that he/she is to return after two hours, the CCA must be given another work hour guarantee pursuant to Article 8.8 (two or four hours depending on office size).

25. Can CCAs be required to remain on "stand-by" or remain at home for a call-in on days they are not scheduled to work?

No.

26. May CCAs be permanently reassigned from one post office (installation) to another during their appointment?

Yes, provided the employee's current appointment is being voluntarily terminated. To avoid a break in service a permanent reassignment to a different installation must be effected on the first day of a pay period.

27. Is there a "lock-in" period that a CCA must meet before being reassigned to another installation?

There is no lock-in period a CCA must satisfy before becoming eligible to reassign to another installation. Eligibility to move between installations is generally intended to address situations where an individual CCA would like to be reassigned to another installation for personal reasons and there is an agreement between the "losing" and "gaining" installation heads.

28. 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.

29. May CCAs carry over leave from one appointment to another?

No. Currently any accrued annual leave is paid out at the end of a 360-day term. However, the national parties will explore appropriate options regarding current policies for paying terminal leave to CCAs.

30. Do separated transitional employees receive payment for accrued annual leave?

Yes, all transitional employees will receive terminal leave payment at the end of their appointment, including transitional employees who directly (after a one day break) receive CCA appointments. Payment will be at the transitional employee rate effective under the 2006 National Agreement.

31. Do CCAs that are converted to career status carry their annual leave balance over when hired?

No. Currently, CCAs receive a terminal leave payment for any leave balance at the end of the CCA appointment.

32. Are CCAs covered by the Memorandum of Understanding, *Re: Bereavement Leave?*

Yes, however, CCAs do not earn sick leave and therefore may only request annual leave or leave without pay for bereavement purposes.

33. Do leave provisions outlined in Article 10 of the National Agreement apply to CCAs?

No. Leave provisions for CCA employees are addressed on pages 18-19 of the January 10, 2013 Interest Arbitration Award (Das).

34. Does Article 30 of the National Agreement apply to CCAs?

No, except as provided in the Memorandum of Understanding, *Re: City Carrier Assistant (CCA) Leave*, on page 23 of the January 10, 2013 Interest Arbitration Award (Das).

35. Does a CCA who receives a career appointment go through a 90 calendar day probationary period as a career city letter carrier?

Yes, except in the following circumstances:

- The employee has successfully completed two successive 360-day appointments as a CCA, provided the career appointment directly follows a CCA appointment. See Memorandum of Understanding, *Re: Article 12.1 - Probationary Period*.
- The employee was a city carrier transitional employee placed into a CCA position following a one-day break in service in accordance with the January 31, 2013 Memorandum of Understanding, *Re: Break in Service*. The TE service does not apply, but completion of a total of 720 days as a CCA in successive appointments satisfies the two successive 360-day appointments required by the Memorandum of Understanding, *Re: Article 12.1 - Probationary Period*.
- When, during the term of the Memorandum of Understanding, *Re: Sunday Delivery - City Carrier Assistant Staffing*, the employee is converted to full-time career status and successfully served as a city carrier transitional employee directly before his/her initial CCA appointment.

36. Will CCAs have access to the grievance procedure if disciplined or removed?

A CCA who has completed 90 work or 120 calendar days of employment within the immediate preceding six months has access to the grievance procedure if disciplined or removed. A CCA who has previously satisfied the 90/120 day requirement either as a CCA or transitional employee (with an appointment made after September 29, 2007), will have access to the grievance procedure without regard to length of service as a CCA.

37. Can a CCA serve as a union steward?

Yes.

38. Will the union be allowed to address newly hired CCAs as part of the orientation process?

Yes. The provisions of Article 17.6 of the National Agreement apply to CCAs. Accordingly, the union is to be provided ample opportunity to address all newly hired CCAs as part of the hiring process.

39. Is the union provided an opportunity to discuss health insurance, pursuant to Article 17.6, when a CCA becomes a career employee?

Yes, the union will be provided time to address the NALC Health Benefit Plans that are available to career employees.

40. Do former transitional employees go through the full orientation process when hired as CCAs?

Only if the employee was not provided orientation when hired as a transitional employee. However, the union will be provided time, as defined in Article 17.6 of the National Agreement to address those CCAs that went through the full orientation process as transitional employees.

41. If a current transitional employee is a member of the union and they are hired as a CCA do they have to execute a new Form 1187 to remain a member of the union?

No.

42. Are CCAs allowed to participate in the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program?

The following applies until health benefits plan year 2014. After an initial appointment for a 360-day term and upon reappointment to another 360-day term, any eligible noncareer CCA who wants to pay health care premiums to participate in the Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) Program on a pre-tax basis will be required to make an election to do so in accordance with applicable procedures. A previous appointment as a transitional employee will count toward qualifying for participation in FEHB, in accordance with the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) regulations. The total cost of health insurance is the responsibility of the noncareer CCA. Health benefits available for CCAs beginning with health plan year 2014 are addressed at page 20 of the January 10, 2013 Interest Arbitration Award (Das).

43. To qualify for Health Benefits must a CCA serve the entire 360-day initial appointment before a second 360-day appointment?

To qualify for the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program, CCAs must first have completed one full year (365 days) of current continuous employment, including breaks of five days or less, regardless of when the five-day break occurs.

44. Do the provisions of Article 21.5 (Health Benefit Brochures) apply when a CCA becomes a career employee?

Yes.

45. Are CCAs entitled to higher level pay under Article 25 of the National Agreement?

No.

46. How does a CCA who is hired as a grade CC-01 receive proper compensation when assigned to a City Carrier Technician (grade CC-02) position?

In such case the CCA's PS Form 50 must be revised to reflect that he/she is assigned to a Carrier Technician position. This will require designation to the proper City Carrier Assistant Tech occupational code (either 2310-0047 or 2310-0048).

47. When does a CCA become eligible for a uniform allowance?

Upon completion of 90 work days or 120 calendar days of employment as a CCA, whichever comes first. CCAs who have previously satisfied the 90/120 day requirement as a transitional employee (with an appointment made after September 29, 2007), become eligible for a uniform allowance when they begin their first CCA appointment.

48. What defines the anniversary date for the purpose of annual uniform allowance eligibility for a CCA?

The calendar date the CCA initially becomes eligible for a uniform allowance.

49. How is the uniform anniversary date determined for a CCA who is converted to career status?

The employee retains the same anniversary date held as a CCA.

50. How is a uniform allowance provided to a CCA?

When a CCA becomes eligible for a uniform allowance, funds must be approved through an eBuy submission by local management. After approval, a Letter of Authorization form must be completed and provided to the employee within 14 days of the eligibility date. The CCA takes the completed form to a USPS authorized vendor to purchase uniform items. The Letter of Authorization can be located on the Uniform Program website on the Blue Page under Labor Relations.

51. How are uniform items purchased?

Uniform items can only be purchased from USPS licensed vendors. A list of all authorized Postal Service Uniform vendors is located under the Labor Relations website: *Uniform Program* from the Blue Page and also on Liteblue under *My HR*, and look for the link for *Uniform Program*.

52. How does a licensed uniform vendor receive payment for uniform items purchased by a CCA?

The licensed vendor creates an itemized invoice of the sale, provides a copy of the invoice to the CCA, and sends the original invoice for payment to the local manager identified on the Letter of Authorization. Upon receipt, the local manager certifies the invoice and pays the vendor using the office Smartpay card.

53. If a CCA does not use the full allowance before his/her appointment ends, does the allowance carry-over into the next appointment when the appointment begins before the next uniform anniversary date?

Yes, however, the CCA cannot purchase uniform items during his/her five calendar day break between appointments. If the full annual uniform allowance is not used before the next anniversary date, the remaining balance for that year is forfeited.

54. Does the annual uniform anniversary date change when a CCA is separated for lack of work and then rehired as a CCA after his/her anniversary date has passed?

Yes, in this situation a new anniversary date is established on the date of reappointment and the CCA is provided a full annual uniform allowance within 14 days of the new anniversary date.

55. What happens to the annual uniform allowance for a CCA that has an anniversary date, is separated for lack of work, and then rehired as a CCA before their next uniform anniversary date?

A CCA that is separated under this circumstance retains his/her anniversary date. If there is no uniform allowance balance remaining at the point of separation, the matter will be considered closed. If the CCA had any part of the annual uniform allowance available at the point of separation, the remaining balance will be redetermined upon reappointment as follows: If the period of separation exceeded 89 calendar days, the remaining balance will be reduced by 10 percent of the annual uniform allowance for the first 90 calendar days and then by 10 percent for each full 30 calendar days thereafter. In no event will such redetermination result in a negative balance for the employee.

56. Will CCAs receive the additional credit authorized under Article 26.2.B with their first uniform allowance following conversion to career status?

Yes.

57. 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.

58. How is placement on the relative standing roster determined when two or more CCAs have the same total time credited for relative standing?

First, the relative standing on the hiring list (appointment register) will be used to determine the CCA with higher relative standing (See Article 41.2.B.6.[a]). If a tie remains then the formula outlined in Article 41.2.B.7 is applied.

59. 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.

60. 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.

61. 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.

62. 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).

63. How is a tie addressed when more than one employee is placed in full-time career city letter carrier duty assignments in an installation on the same date through either transfer/reassignment or CCA conversion to full-time?

Placement on the seniority list is determined by the following:

- If two or more full-time career assignments in an individual installation are filled on the same date by only CCAs, placement on the career city letter carrier craft seniority list will be determined based on the relative standing in the installation.
- When two or more full-time career assignments in an individual installation are filled on the same date by only career employees through

reassignment/transfer, placement on the city carrier craft seniority list will be determined by application of Article 41.2.B.7 of the National Agreement, as appropriate.

- Current career employees will normally be placed ahead of CCAs on the seniority list when two or more full-time career assignments are being filled in an individual installation on the same date from both reassigned/transferred and CCA employees. An exception may occur when the CCA(s) with the highest relative standing has previous career service. In such case the CCA(s) will be placed ahead of the career employee only if he/she is determined to be senior to the transferred/reassigned employee by application of Article 41.2.B.7 of the National Agreement. In no case will a CCA with lower relative standing be placed on the seniority list ahead of a CCA with higher relative standing who is converted to career on the same date in the installation.

64. Will CCAs be allowed to opt on (hold-down) vacant duty assignments?

Yes, after April 10, 2013.

65. Is there a waiting period for a new CCA (no former experience as a career city letter carrier or city carrier transitional employee) before the employee can opt on a hold-down?

Yes, 60 calendar days from the date of appointment as a CCA. Once the CCA has met this requirement there is no additional waiting period for applying for/being awarded a hold-down when the employee is converted to career.

66. Is there a difference in the application of opting (hold-down) rules between part-time flexible city carriers and CCAs?

No.

67. Can a CCA be taken off an opt (hold-down) in order to provide a part-time flexible employee assigned to the same work location with 40 hours of straight-time work over the course of a service week (Article 7, Section 1.C)?

Yes, a CCA may be "bumped" from an opt if necessary to provide 40 hours of straight-time work over the course of a service week to part-time flexible letter carriers assigned to the same work location. In this situation the opt is not terminated. Rather, the CCA is temporarily taken off the assignment as necessary on a day-to-day basis.

68. What is the pecking order for awarding hold-down assignments?

Hold-down assignments are awarded to eligible career letter carriers by highest to lowest seniority first and then to eligible CCAs by highest to lowest relative standing in the installation.

69. Will the 5-day break in service between 360-day terms end an opt (hold-down)?

No.

70. Does the 5-day break at the end of a 360-day appointment create another opt (hold-down) opportunity?

Only where the break creates a vacancy of five work days. In such case the opt is for the five day period of the break.

71. Will CCAs be offered part-time regular city carrier vacancies?

While there is no prohibition against a CCA requesting a part-time regular vacancy, the Postal Service is under no obligation to offer or place a CCA into such vacancy.

72. When there is an opportunity for conversion to career status in an installation and that installation has both part-time flexible and CCA employees available for conversion, who is converted?

The part-time flexible employees are converted to full-time regular prior to offering conversion to CCAs.

73. When there is a career conversion opportunity for a CCA, how are CCA employees converted?

CCAs are offered conversion opportunities to full-time regular on a highest to lowest relative standing order basis within an installation.

74. May a CCA decline an opportunity for conversion to full-time regular?

Yes, rejection of a conversion offer does not impact the employee's relative standing as a CCA.

75. Will CCAs attend the carrier academy?

Newly hired CCAs in Districts that use the carrier academy program will attend the training.

76. Will transitional employees hired as CCAs attend the carrier academy?

If the transitional employee did not previously attend the carrier academy and the District uses the carrier academy program, the employee will attend the training.

77. May CCAs enter into City Carrier Transportation (Driveout) Agreements, as defined in Article 41.4 of the National Agreement?

No, Article 41.4 does not apply to CCAs. However, the Memorandum of Understanding, *Re: Use of Privately Owned Vehicles* applies to CCAs. In circumstances where the postmaster or station manager determines that use of a personal vehicle is necessary for business purposes, a CCA may voluntarily elect to use his/her vehicle. Such agreement must be made through PS Form 8048,

Commercial Emergency Vehicle Hire, with the daily rate for vehicle use mutually agreed to by the postmaster or station manager and the employee. The postmaster or station manager must then forward the completed form to the servicing Vehicle Maintenance Facility manager.

78. Will CCAs be assigned a Postal Service Employee Identification Number (EIN) and Personal Identification Number (PIN)?

Yes.

**Other Provisions
Joint Questions and Answers**

1. The Memorandum of Understanding, *Re: Part-Time Regular City Letter Carriers*, establishes a cap on city letter carrier part-time regular employees as the number employed on the effective date of the 2011 National Agreement. What is the cap?

682.

2. Is the limit of 682 part-time regular employees a national cap or is it limited to locations that employed part-time regular city letter carriers on the effective date of the 2011 National Agreement?

It is a national cap.

3. Under the terms of the August 30, 2013, Memorandum of Understanding, *Re: Residual Vacancies - City Letter Carrier Craft*, may part-time regular city letter carriers request reassignment to full-time residual vacancies?

Yes, part-time regular city letter carriers are considered in the same manner as transfer/reassignment requests from full-time city letter carriers.

4. How will the provisions of Article 7.3.A be monitored for compliance?

The Postal Service will provide the national union with a report every other pay period that lists the number of full-time city letter carrier routes defined in Article 41.1.A by category, the number of Carrier Technician positions, and total number of full-time city letter carriers.

5. How is the Article 7.3.A ratio of full-time regular city letter carriers per route determined?

The ratio is determined based on the number of full-time city letter carrier routes nationwide.

6. Will the part-time flexible employee classification be phased out?

Yes, as part-time flexible (PTF) employees are converted to full-time in accordance with existing contractual processes, the PTF classification shall be phased out. There shall be no new hiring of PTF employees.

7. When will the change to the annual uniform allowance be implemented for career city letter carriers?

It is anticipated that the change will be effective in April 2013.