

New Employee Experience, Retention and Mentoring Program

July 15, 2025



Partnership for Improvement

- Co-created two pilot programs
 - New Employee Experience and Retention Program – April 15, 2021
 - New Employee Mentoring Program – August 23, 2021

- Tremendous pilot success
 - New employee retention in 30, 60, 80-day intervals through the first 50-weeks of employment
 - Analyzed feedback from employees in pilot locations



New Employee Experience Pilot Programs - The History

Began in May 2021

- 2 individual offices – Warren, MI and West Milwaukee, WI
- Since May 2021 – expanded in 5 phases

Phases 1 – 3

- Added various size offices/installations

Phase 4

- Combined New Employee Experience Retention Program (NEERP) and the New Employee Mentoring Program (NEMP) into any newly added test locations in June of 2022

Phase 5 – 1 district in each Postal Area

- Michigan 1, AZ-NM, Virginia, Tennessee
- After combining the MOUs, both programs were officially in 881 stations and offices throughout the country



Requirements – At Carrier Academy

Started on JULY 1

All newly hired city letter carriers will be informed of this program as part of the education they receive at the Carrier Academy.

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

- Contact information for their employing office, including their immediate supervisor's information, the office phone number, address of the delivery unit, building access information, and the employee's reporting date and time.
- An Employee Identification Number (EIN) and instructions for completing time reporting records.



Requirements – At Carrier Academy Defined Work Schedule

- A defined work schedule for their first week in the delivery unit. This schedule will include:
 - Anticipated reporting start and end times,
 - Daily hours of work,
 - Scheduled day(s) off, and
 - 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.



Requirements – First Day in the Employing Office

- 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.



Requirements – Guaranteed Day Off

All City Carrier Assistant (CCA) and Part-Time Flexible (PTF)

- Guaranteed a minimum of one nonscheduled day each service week
- Except during the 4-week penalty overtime exclusion period (i.e., most of December)
 - The exception does not apply to carriers in journey weeks 1-8

Week 9 and beyond:

- May **volunteer** to work the 7th day



MOU Workhour Requirements

Following completion of the Carrier Academy, workhours and work locations 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.

Note: CCAs and PTFs are unavailable beyond the hours specified.



MOU Workhour Requirements

Effective beginning:

Weeks 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.

Week 12 and beyond

- 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.

Additional Scheduling Requirements

- All CCAs and PTFs will receive a defined work schedule, identifying anticipated non-scheduled days, start and end times, and route assignments.
- The 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.



Additional Requirements

- Progress reviews 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.



Additional Requirements

- New employees are prohibited from performing work outside of the city carrier letter craft during their first 90 work days or 120 calendar days, whichever comes first.
- 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.



Additional Requirements

- 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.



Joint Retention Teams

- May be established by mutual consent of NBA and DM
- One union and one management representative
 - Selected by NBA and DM or their Designee
- Educate, assist and monitor compliance with MOU requirements
- Gather feedback from new employees
- Encourage communication/engagement ideas
- Review route books, maps, updated edit books
- Offer suggestions for overcoming obstacles
- Build relationships



Mentoring Program

Mentoring

Research has shown mentoring programs...

- Increase retention rates
- Help employees adapt to new workplaces
- Create greater job satisfaction
- Help eliminate obstacles, difficulties, and stumbling blocks new employees may encounter
- Provide opportunities to freely ask questions and gain information necessary to effectively perform their jobs
- Help build effective and diverse organizations



Mentoring Program Requirements

Mentors

- Jointly selected by NBA and DM
- Those interested may submit their name to branch president and postmaster
- Sufficient understanding of USPS policies, rules, and regulations
- Ability to convey a positive image and attitude
- Demonstrate good communication skills, safe working practices, and regular attendance



Mentoring Program Requirements

Mentors

- 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



Mentoring Program Requirements

Mentors and mentees

- When practicable, the mentor will participate in the mentee's tour of the delivery unit.
- The mentor and mentee should meet regularly, as needed. 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.



Mentoring Program Requirements

Mentors and mentees

- 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 should be shared with the mentor.

Note: The new employee may choose to not have this information shared with the mentor.



Mentoring Program Requirements

Mentors and mentees

- Mentor and mentee participation in this program is voluntary.
- The parties have a joint expectation that mentoring relationships will last for a period of four calendar months, but 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.



Regular Meetings

Discuss the mentee's experiences and address any work-related concerns or issues

This could look like:

- Five minutes a day in the morning during the carriers initial learning period
- A short meeting once or twice a week as the carrier begins to gain mastery of their new skills
- A three-minute phone call around handling a street issue

Regular meetings do not mean:

- ***A required number of minutes each day***
- ***A required number of times to meet each week***
- ***A required day or time to meet***

Separations

Prior to voluntary separation

Let's have a conversation...

Are there underlying issues?

Are there possible alternatives or resolutions to the underlying issues?

Is there something that can be done to help this new employee?



Separations

Prior to involuntary separation

Have a conversation with employee's mentor.

Does this employee fully understand their responsibilities?

Has employee received enough training?

Could some minor adjustments make a great employee?

Questions and Answers
New Employee Experience, Retention and Mentoring Program

The attached jointly-developed document provides the mutual understanding of the national parties on issues related to the New Employee Experience Retention and Mentoring Program (NEERMP). This document will be updated if agreement is reached on additional matters related to NEERMP.



Michael J. Elston
Vice President, Labor Relations
United States Postal Service

Date July 7, 2025



Brian Renfroe
President
National Association of Letter
Carriers, AFL-CIO

Date July 7, 2025

Joint Questions and Answers



Joint Questions and Answers
New Employee Experience, Retention and Mentoring Program

First Day/Shadow Day/Onboarding Training/OJI

1. Are their work limits on "shadow" day?

This program does not alter shadow day. The employee is restricted to 11.5 workhours (consistent with Employee and Labor Relations Manual Section 432.32). The program's workhour restrictions begin week 1, which is defined as the week the employee begins OJI training.

2. The program requires a new employee to stay in their employing office for their first 8 weeks. Can a new employee train in another office because their office does not have an OJI?

Yes. The employee will report back to their employing office after completion of OJI.

3. When does week 1 start?

Journey week 1 begins the week the new employee starts on-the-job instructor (OJI) training.

Schedule/Hour Restrictions/OT

4. Can the non-scheduled day for CCAs/PTFs be moved?

Yes. The schedule must provide the anticipated non-scheduled day; however, the non-scheduled day can be moved to a later day in the week if a situation arises which requires the movement, and the employee receives proper notice; however, changes during the week to the scheduled day off should be an exception. Management should make every effort to adhere to the originally posted nonscheduled day.

5. Can CCAs/PTFs be worked beyond their workhour limits to provide auxiliary assistance to a full-time regular not on the Overtime Desired List or Work Assignment List (i.e., the Letter Carrier Paragraph)?

No. CCAs/PTFs that reach their workhour limits are unavailable to work.

6. When will the CCA/PTF schedule be posted?

The schedule for CCAs/PTFs must be posted no later than close of business on Wednesday of the preceding week.

7. Can a new employee's first day in their employing office, after Carrier Academy be on a Sunday?

No.

8. When can CCAs/PTFs be worked in a Sunday hub office other than their duty station?

Joint Questions and Answers



Beginning in week 9. The MOU restricts the new employee to working only within their employing office for weeks 1 to 8.

9. Do the weekly work hour limits include Holiday pay and annual leave?

No. The MOU work hour limits refer to actual hours worked, but do not include any type of leave, paid or unpaid (e.g., annual, holiday, LWOP).

10. When can CCAs and PTFs work seven days in a service week?

Beginning week 9, there are two situations in which a CCA and a PTF may work seven days in a service week.

- 1. CCAs and PTFs may volunteer to work a seventh day in a service week.**
- 2. CCAs and PTFs are not guaranteed a non-scheduled day during the "penalty overtime exclusion period".**

11. May CCAs/PTFs volunteer to work beyond the work hour limits?

No.

12. May the non-scheduled day of a CCA or PTF be on a holiday?

Yes, this would satisfy the requirement of the employee being guaranteed a non-scheduled day each week.

13. Do the scheduling requirements apply to CCAs and PTFs who were hired prior to July 1, 2025, the day the program was implemented nationwide?

Yes, those employees who were hired prior to that date would be slotted into the program based on which journey week they were in on July 1, 2025.

14. If a CCA or PTF is converted to full-time status prior to reaching journey week 12, do the workhour restrictions of the program still apply to them?

No, the program only applies to CCAs and PTFs. Once a letter carrier becomes a full-time employee, they have other rights afforded to them within the collective bargaining agreement.

15. If a previously employed CCA or PTF city letter carrier is rehired, do they start over at week 1 of the program?

The only time a rehired former city letter carrier would start over at week 1 of the program is if they are required to reattend Carrier Academy. Otherwise, they would be slotted into the program at the journey week in which they were formerly at when they were previously employed.

Joint Retention Teams (JRT)

16. How are Joint Retention Teams created?

JRTs may be established by mutual agreement of the USPS District Manager and NALC National Business Agent, or designees. JRTs are

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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.

17. What do Joint Retention Teams do?

Joint Retention Teams will educate, assist, and monitor compliance with the program at installations with city letter carriers. JRTs assist in communication with stations to facilitate best practices. These team(s) may be responsible for:

- Periodic on-site station visits to review scheduling, route books and maps, etc.
- Meeting with management teams and stewards to provide support and answer questions regarding the program
- Meeting with new employees to ensure they have received a welcome kit, introductions, and facility tour, are being communicated to, and working within the restrictions established by the MOU
- Reporting back to District Manager and the National Business Agent or their designee
- Conducting follow-up audits

Mentor

18. Can a CCA or PTF be selected to serve as a mentor?

Yes, if they meet the requirements of being a mentor as outlined in the program.

19. What if a new employee doesn't want a mentor?

Mentor and mentee participation in this program is 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.

20. What is the definition of regular meetings between the mentor and mentee?

The intent regarding regular meetings is not to set a specific schedule or number of minutes per day/week. Rather, the intent is to maintain regular face-to-face meetings between the mentor and mentee sufficient to support the new employee and gauge their development. This can look like:

- Five minutes a day in the morning during the carriers initial learning period.
- A short meeting once or twice a week as the carrier begins to gain mastery of their new skills.
- A three-minute phone call around handling a street issue.

Meeting time and frequency should be adjusted based on the individual's

Joint Questions and Answers

development. A new carrier who acclimates more quickly may need shorter and/or less frequent conversations than someone who is struggling with mastering the skillset.

Regular meetings do not mean:

- A required number of minutes each day (reasonable times of a few minutes per day appropriate for your situation are acceptable).
- A required number of times to meet each week.
- A required day or time to meet (this does not preclude setting a meeting schedule that is mutually agreeable).

General

21. Will new employees receive progress reviews?

Progress reviews for newly hired city letter carriers will be conducted at 30-, 60-, and 80-days 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.

22. What are the requirements for Sunday training?

The new employee must be shown the Sunday delivery process, including vehicle loading, turn by turn and any local Sunday specific procedures by a carrier experienced with Sunday delivery. There is no requirement that the Sunday trainer is a certified OJI. There is no set number of hours for training.

Training may be considered complete when the new employee and trainer agree that all Sunday delivery requirements have been demonstrated and understood.

Joint Questions and Answers



Questions
Comments
Concerns

Open Discussion