



# NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF POSTAL SUPERVISORS

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## **July Consultative Meeting Agenda July 20, 2021 via Zoom**

### US Postal Service Headquarters

Bruce Nicholson, USPS Labor Relations  
James Timmons, USPS Labor Relations

### National Association of Postal Supervisors

Brian Wagner, NAPS President  
Ivan Butts, NAPS Executive VP  
Chuck Mulidore, NAPS Secretary Treasurer

0721-01 NAPS continuously receives concerns on the issue of the VER process. People were offered the VER but the deadline to accept the VER is before the RIF deadline.

Impacted EAS are not being afforded an additional VER offer and must decide before they find out if they get jobs or not.

NAPS is requesting a 4<sup>th</sup> VER be offered with an effective date of October 8, 2021.

Response: The VER is offered to impacted and non-impacted individuals at headquarters, area and district office areas and can provide potential landing spots for impacted employees. There are only two VER effective dates, April 30 and July 30, 2021. The Postal Service must request Voluntary Early Retirement Authority and receive approval from the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) before making an offer of early retirement to its employees. The approval from OPM will stipulate a period of time during which the option will remain available. As discussed in our March consultative meeting, OPM approved USPS VERA for our non-bargaining population on 9/16/2020 for the period of 10/1/2020 to 9/30/2021. The Postal Service does not intend to administer another VER offering during this approved period or make another request to OPM for additional VERA. The Postal Service will keep NAPS's request in consideration and continue to meet with NAPS's during the RIF avoidance period.

0721-02 NAPS has received numerous reports of questions being submitted by RIF impacted, which have gone unanswered by the USPS leadership.

NAPS is submitting these questions in this consultative format to assist EAS, who believe they must operate blindly in making life-impacting decisions before the October 9, 2021, RIF date.

Response: Numerous communication materials were prepared and made available to NAPS and employees concerning the Voluntary Early Retirement (VER) offering and the Reduction In Force (RIF). There have been multiple support events offered to employees to assist with the restructure and organizational changes. This information has been provided in many formats that include:

- The USPS Liteblue – Preparing for Change with links to information and FAQs
- Mailed to employee’s home addresses
- Emailed to employees work email addresses
- Consultative and briefing meetings with NAPS
- Webinars
- Town Hall meetings
- Career Fairs
- Training events

Questions are:

1. What are the penalties if the RIF impacted EAS go early?

Response: To be considered for Discontinued Service Retirement (DSR), you must have received a **Reduction-In-Force (RIF) Notice** indicating there is no reassignment offer, **or** the reassignment offer is outside of your commuting area (as deemed reasonable by your local area),

- Have at least five (5) years of creditable civilian service
- Be age 50 with at least 20 years of creditable service **or** any age with at least 25 years of creditable service as of the effective date of your involuntary separation
- Your accrued and unused annual leave or donated leave may be used to meet either the age or service-years requirement to qualify for a DSR
- You may be placed on approved annual leave beyond the effective date of the involuntary separation notice so that you may use enough leave to satisfy the age or service-years requirement.
- Your remaining annual leave balance, if any, will be paid in a terminal leave payment
- You may not use sick leave to meet minimum age and service requirements
- There is no reduction in your annuity if you retire before age 55. However, if a portion of your annuity is based on a benefit that you accrued and retain under CSRS frozen service, then that portion of your annuity is subject to the reduction for CSRS and CSRS Offset employees.

2. If impacted EAS stay and don’t take the VER are they ineligible for their retirement?

Response: See response provided in questions #1.

3. What will happen to RIF impacted EAS healthcare benefits if they get RIF’d? Do they lose those benefits?

Response: Yes, those that do not secure a new position, once they are removed from the rolls, they are no longer USPS employees and do not qualify for FEHB. They can apply for Continuation of Health Coverage (Cobra)

4. What is the process for receiving severance pay at the end of October 2021? Does this apply to all RIF impacted EAS?

Response: The policy for Severance Pay is found in ELM 435.12 and applies to all RIF impacted employees if meeting eligibility within the ELM provision.

0721-03 Below is a previously submitted question outside of the consultative awaiting a response.

NAPS needs some clarification on some recent moves out of IA, NE, SD. They originally were in Western Area and then placed under Central. But when the RIF time came, they fell under Western again, or so it was thought. The HR group is being put in positions throughout the Western Area, but the OPS groups are being placed in the Central Area. Why the difference? Some fall under Central, and some fall under Western. How can that be?

[Response: This question was provided outside of the consultative agenda and therefore a response will be provided outside of this meeting.](#)

0721-04 On June 17, 2021, NAPS received a list of headquarters vacancies posted in eCareer.

NAPS notes that this list contained 39 HQ Supv Vehicle Maintenance EAS-17 positions, indicated as "Domicile will not be considered." What is the operational need for 39 Supv Vehicle Maintenance at USPS HQ?

NAPS also noted that of these 39 Supv Vehicle Maintenance EAS positions listed:

- Four persons are double entries. Three of the four persons that have double entries have different position numbers listed.
- Two persons are triple entries. All have different job position numbers.
- One person is a quadruple entry. All with different job position numbers.

NAPS would like to know what the reasoning is for listing positions up to four times? Is this an illustration of a lack of preparation to conduct this Organizational Change with minimum disruption to impacted EAS?

[Response: The multiple entries that NAPS is referring to is because the Selecting Official will make decisions on multiple position postings. Utilizing the same Selecting Official on multiple postings is not unusual such as one MPOO named as the Selecting Official on multiple job postings for Postmaster jobs under the MPOOs authority. The vacancy report that was provided to NAPS contains two tabs, headquarters vacancies and field vacancies. Supervisor, VMF positions are within the headquarters postings. Actual job postings did not specify "Domicile will not be considered". It's only on the vacancy file and each posting included a specific facility location. 5 examples of the job postings are provided.](#)

0721-05 NAPS has been made aware that LAC 1b posting listed Washington DC as the work location on the postings. This was later changed. This action has served to disenfranchise RIF impacted EAS in applying for a position or declining to apply for positions due to the omission of critical data from postings.

NAPS contends that this action causes the ongoing disruption in the lives of RIF impacted EAS attempting to make life decisions that will impact themselves and their families.

NAPS contends that problems being reported such as this one demonstrates the USPS not properly preparing for this Organizational Change to minimize disruption to RIF impacted EAS.

NAPS is requesting that this Organizational Change be stopped, re-evaluated, prepared and rolled out when properly prepared.

Response: The Reduction in Force (RIF) does not go into effect until October 9 and repositioning tactics and RIF-avoidance activities are ongoing. Employees were informed of the upcoming RIF well in advance of the required 60-day notice. The organization planned for the RIF more than one year in advance and was prepared to implement. Obviously, the size of this restructure would have greater disruption than relocation of a single facility. As with job postings, if an issue/error is identified, the organization is responsive to it. We will continue to be responsive to issues, will continue to provide updates to NAPS of activities and including updates of remaining impacted employees through October 9.

0721-06 NAPS has been informed that EAS, who were moved from TACS05 to TACS03, did not receive paychecks.

NAPS would like to know how many pay periods has this error happened?

NAPS would like to know how many EAS were impacted by this payroll error caused by the Organizational Change?

Response: Changing a TACS location does not trigger an error with an employee's paycheck. Processing reassignments after day 10 of a pay period can trigger errors with paychecks. When employees move to different assignments, they are notified of a position change and to verify accesses in eaccess. Employees should verify that they have the correct accesses and locations, including TACS.

0721-07 NAPS has been made aware that RIF impacted EAS who have been RIF reassigned are seeking to "swap" with other RIF impacted EAS.

NAPS is requesting to know why the "Algorithm" used did not consider scenarios of job swaps to minimize disruption to employee work and family lives?

NAPS would like to know what action is the USPS taking to assist RIF impacted EAS in this "swap" process is?

Response: If a RIF impacted employee is interested in swapping an assignment with another employee, the manager over those employees should be contacted for discussion. An "algorithm" cannot detect jobs that individuals are interested in swapping. Also, job placements were made in accordance with RIF policy and the "swapping" of jobs could be outside the individual's competitive area and in conflict with RIF policy.

0721-08 NAPS has been informed that there are issues with scheduling retirement counseling?

NAPS was made aware that an individual selected a retirement date of September 30. No retirement counseling date was available prior to October. The person then tried scheduling in October. October was not available to schedule retirement counseling.

NAPS would like to know how RIF impacted EAS will be assisted by the USPS in considering these life-changing decisions facing them in the Organizational Change?

Response: Employees have a 60-day window to schedule their retirement counseling. For example, if an employee has interest in retiring on September 30<sup>th</sup>, a retirement session cannot be provided prior to July 30. NAPS's example was outside of that 60-day window. The HRSSC confirmed that there are no delays with retirement counseling. Other retirement seminars, annuity statements and information can be found on the blue page for all employees eligible to retire.

0721-09 NAPS has been made aware that on June 16, 2021, the Postal Inspection Service facilitated an Active Shooter Training at the Jacksonville P&DC campus. The USPIS states that active shooter incidents are often unpredictable and evolve quickly. In the midst of the chaos, anyone can play an integral role in mitigating the impacts of an active shooter incident. This training will enhance your preparedness to help you prepare for and respond to an active shooter incident.

NAPS believes that with the VER impacting so many EAS employees, the pandemic impacting so many employees' lives, the current state of our organization, it would be a good idea to see if this class can be offered across the organization.

NAPS further contends and requests that this should be mandatory training due to all the active shootings going on in the country.

Response: The Active Shooter training at the Jacksonville P&DC that NAPS refers to was requested by the district. During the Florida 1 District monthly threat assessment meeting with the Inspection Service the district inquired if the Inspection Service had had any material concerning Active Shooter. The Inspection Service responded that there was a video regarding Active Shooter that they could share. The local Postal Inspector worked with the district to show the video to offices within the district that included the Jacksonville P&DC.

The HERO platform contains multiple training courses available to supervisors on Active Shooter. Safety talks are available on the blue page and the Safety Toolkit. This request will be shared with the Inspection Service for consideration.

The Postal Service has created multiple webinars on the org changes, job fairs, town hall meetings and will continue to emphasize the ability of the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) to all employees.

0721-10 NAPS has received a request from the field to clarify the VOMA position at the station level.

NAPS would like to know the minimum number of vehicles to have a VOMA in a Post Office/Station/Branch?

NAPS would also like to know how many vehicles do we need to service to get a second VOMA person?

[Response: This agenda item is related to bargaining unit employees. This question can be provided to NAPS's outside of this consultative meeting.](#)

**NAPS Response: NAPS is still waiting for that information.**

0721-11 USPS Handbook EL 312.743.11 identifies four moments for consideration of Noncompetitive applications. EL 312.743.11 states;

- 743.11 When to Consider Noncompetitive Applications

Management may consider qualified employees eligible for a noncompetitive voluntary lateral reassignment or change to a lower level at any of the following times:

- a. When applications are received.
- b. Before the competitive announcement process begins.
- c. During the competitive announcement process.
- d. After the applications have been assessed.

Individuals with a saved grade are considered noncompetitively for positions up to the level of their former position.

Employees seeking noncompetitive placement into a position at the same or lower level may submit a written request to the selecting official for consideration, or, if an employee with a disability seeks reasonable accommodation by reassignment to a position at the same or lower level, the employee works with the appropriate reasonable accommodation committee at the district, area, or headquarters level.

NAPS notes that this policy does not disenfranchise employees from requesting to be considered for a Noncompetitive lateral, but lists the time for those applications to be considered.

NAPS would like to know why the USPS has taken action to eliminate lateral opportunities, and further disrupt the lives of RIF impacted EAS in this Organizational Change?

[Response: Requests for lateral reassignments has not been eliminated. In fact, lateral reassignments have been encouraged.](#)

0721-12

NAPS has received a request from an Executive Board member that Postal Headquarters setup a zoom meeting with the Executive Board. The purpose of this zoom meeting would be to updated the NAPS Executive Board on the VER and RIF process as well as any other HR related information.

NAPS also requests to receive an update by State on how we are coming with getting people placed or finding them jobs.

Response: Updates have been provided to NAPS in regards to job placements. Once all RIF inquiries are addressed, we can meet with NAPS to address further questions. The irrevocable date for VER has passed.

After another briefing is provided to the resident officers on the restructure, the parties can discuss whether a meeting with NAPS's Executive Board is beneficial, then we can accommodate with a briefing.