

2024 NC State Convention Questions and Answers:

Disclaimer: all questions are answered based on limited information provided on the index cards. For guidance regarding your specific issue and to ensure that all pertinent information is considered, please contact your Union Steward. All questions were typed as written.

TRAINING

Q. Can we go back to training new hires/subs the old way? Subs are taking DPS to the street delivering forwards, UBBM and misdelivering mail.

A. The Postal Service is the responsible party when determining training methods used. While the USPS and the NRLCA jointly develop Academy curriculum, in-office training is often left to the installation to determine where to use the new-hires training hours.

Q. What, if anything can be done about the lack of academy instructors?

A. The District Representative will contact the district to discuss hiring additional Academy Instructors.

STEWARD SYSTEM

Q. Can we investigate doing more Steward Training? They are super helpful to make local stewards more self-sufficient.

A. The National Office offers monthly Local Steward Training via Zoom. Check the National website (www.nrlca.org) for registration instructions and class details.

Q. Could we implement some sort of call list/phone tree for local stewards who need guidance? Area/ADR/DR are not often available at critical times, and it leaves locals in tough positions with management or for urgent matters.

A. Due to the structure of the Union and the Department of Labor guidelines, Local Stewards should not be asking other Local Stewards or Area Stewards for advice concerning the USPS/NRLCA contract. Please continue to call your ADR, or feel free to contact any other ADR or the DR if assistance is needed. We understand that sometimes we want immediate help, but in the event you are unable to locate the answer to your question on the Steward Reference guide on www.nrlca.org, then you will need to wait until an ADR or DR can return your call/email. Please TRY to look up your issue in the Steward Reference guide – it is a very thorough resource!

Q. What should a Steward do if a Postmaster asks them to speak to a Carrier, so he doesn't have to issue a Notice of Removal?

A. Please contact your ADR. While it is not the job of the Steward System to manage the Post Office, there are sometimes situations where we can assist. Based on the specifics of your situation, the ADR/DR will advise you on how to proceed.

Q. How can you be appointed to a Steward position higher than a local?

A. The National magazine as well as the National website posts applications for Area Stewards and PT ADR each month, and when needed, candidates are selected from these applications.

MAPPING

Q. What are mapping facilitators supposed to do when an issue in Mapping isn't resolved?

Example: a valid address and box is mapped 3 months in a row but still doesn't show up in next months mapping. Facilitator says she doesn't know how to fix it and signs off on the mapping anyway even though the carrier reports and error. What is the protocol for the facilitator in this situation?

A. When an issue arises that neither the carrier nor the facilitator can fix, the help desk should be contacted for additional support.

Q. On my mapping, it showed that I was not getting credit for the doors to my apartment. We corrected it. How long does it take to see a change in the route?

A. Remember that our compensation is based on the Evaluations set by the standard hours. A nominal change to your base hours may not cause an evaluation change. If your changes to your base hours cause your evaluation to increase, it should take no more than 2-3 pay periods for you to see it in your paycheck.

Q. What's included in stops? Lights? Signs? Boxes?

A. Stops are determined by the distance between the boxes. Traffic lights and signs should be plotted in LTM/DPM. Refer to your 4241-M for a breakdown of daily/monthly values.

Q. How do we manually change our 4003 in LTM/DPM in order to correct it? Management says they are unable to fix it, but that has our mileage messed up to due cellular dead zones.

A. Management was provided a PowerPoint presentation on LTM/DPM and Line of Travel Corrections. If management is unable to correct the issue with their provided resources, they should contact the Help Desk for assistance. There is also an LTM/DPM resource for Carriers on the National webpage (www.nrlca.org).

GRIEVANCES

Q. What do we do when management has no GATS access and has to go way out to get someone who can do the payout, missing the settlement deadline. How are they held accountable?

A. When a settlement is reached, the designated Management Representative is responsible for meeting the terms of the settlement. If management fails to comply with a settlement, then the Carrier should file a non-compliance grievance.

SCANNER

Q. Rumor has it that MLNA functions are cancelled because there is no verification after 30 days. Can this function still be used?

A. We are unaware of any changes to this function.

Q. When clocking in to your scanner, why can't the first thing you see when you clock in is the clock in option? Why am I reading the same screens everyday off the clock possibly making me clock in late?

A. Any messaging that is sent to the scanners when signing in comes directly from USPS Headquarters. Additionally, the 4240 is the official time keeping document per the PO-603. Ensure that you are recording your 'Reported to PO' time accurately on your 4240.

Q. SPM Scans – why is there discipline/ PDIs for scanning? The purpose of the scan is to measure how long it takes from point A to point B. If the mail is delayed for whatever reason, it should still be scanned.

A. Carriers should not be held accountable for the delay of mail in the distribution network. If a carrier is interviewed, they should request Union representation and answer the questions honestly. Any time a Carrier is disciplined, it is recommended that they immediately file a grievance.

Q. My scanner rarely clears in the afternoon. How can I be sure I'm being credited with all scans?

A. Provided management is agreeable, you can confirm with management that your scans have downloaded during your EOS (End of Shift) duties. If you are not allowed time to do this (it is NOT required), then the failure of the device to download is a management problem, not a carrier problem.

Q. If you forget to scan a box holder before the route, what can you do?

A. On the hamburger menu in the top right of the screen, hit 'show all activities,' and it gives you your options again to input a box holder.

Q. If the RRECS shows that a carrier entered 68 authorized dismounts in one shift and the carrier says they did not make that action, can it be proven that the RRECS system was faulty?

A. Please reach out to your Steward if this has happened to you. There are, from time to time, glitches that occur that would need to be escalated to the appropriate party for resolution.

CONTRACT

Q. How do we add/correct language in the contract for PTF's?

A. Language in the National Agreement is agreed to by the parties at the National Level. The NRLCA uses the resolution process at the National Convention to vote on submitted resolutions that could impact the contract. Any non-binding resolutions are used to create a wish-list, if you will, by the National Board during contract negotiations.

Q. Why does management not have GATS access when it is a vital part of the job and becomes a problem for the grievance process?

A. GATS access is easy to acquire – the manager simply needs to request access and complete a training module. A manager’s access to GATS, or lack thereof, should not have any bearing on the execution of a Grievance Settlement. The manager who agrees to the settlement should do whatever necessary to fulfill the terms of the settlement. If that means that they need to reach out to a high-level employee to process a settlement, then so be it.

Q. What are we doing about route evals, routes are only growing and busting but evaluations are dropping; what are we doing?

A. This is not a simple answer. While it is possible for a route to ‘bust’ without the evaluation reaching a 47K or 48K, it only can occur when the regular carrier who is assigned to the route does not or is not expected to meet the requirement to stay within the annual guarantee for the route. Per Article 9.2.C.8, a route is overburdened when the standard hours are outside of the Table of Evaluated Hours or when the circumstance above occurs. The NRLCA is working at the National Level to continue to fight for a fair days pay for fair days work. RRECS is a system that needs time to work out the kinks and is expected that extreme fluctuations with routes will settle out as the 12-month data set is not a full set, as opposed to previous MMS periods.

Q. I have a sub in my office that is on a hold down. Management is scheduling him on Sunday for Amazon and giving him a day off during the week. He has stated to management that he wants off on Sundays to attend church. With the Supreme court ruling against the USPS in the Sunday work case, what options does he have?

A. The Supreme Court decision strengthened language concerning what is considered a hardship for the employer when making a religious accommodation. The decision did not unilaterally grant anyone who requested to not work Sundays the right to be exempt from Sunday work. This employee should contact their ADR and if necessary, we can escalate their situation to the National Office for consideration.

Q. The Post Office should provide identifiers such as hats or shirts to provide a small level of safety as we walk in yards or porches. What can be done?

A. This would be something to introduce as a resolution at the state level, which if approved, would be submitted for consideration at the National Convention, since this would be a contractual issue that would need to be negotiated between the parties.

Q. Whose responsibility is it to make sure that all carriers know to enter ‘hold mail’ when delivered under ‘unscannable’ parcels?

A. It is always the responsibility of management to train employees on the employers’ rules and expectations. *(The question makes a statement that is not always true. Please contact your steward to learn how delivered hold mail should be credited)*

MAIL VOLUME

Q. Manager/PM says carrier is too slow – and further explains mail volume equates to 77 average deliveries per hour and continues to say ‘but you only delivered 72 average deliveries – that’s too slow! How to handle?

A. The Rural Carrier day is constructed using the Rural Carrier Compensation System as devised by a panel of Industrial engineers. The Rural evaluation is based on a complex system of formulas that have many variables. The use of average deliveries per hour as a benchmark for Rural Carriers is not necessarily an effective way to determine the efficiency of the carrier. If the carrier is working close to the WEEKLY EVALUATED hours on the route, then the carrier is doing their job. If management were to discipline someone over their failure to deliver on average 77 deliveries per hour, the carrier should grieve that discipline as there is no rule or magic number in this case that makes this an effective way to manage carriers.

Q. Why can’t we get the radar report (or any other reports) to continuously scroll on the screens/tv’s on the workroom floor – removing that from management’s control?

A. Simply put, there are very few delivery units that have TV Screens on the workroom floor. When something becomes a contractual requirement, the USPS would then be required to furnish TVs for every Rural delivery unit in the country, which would be extremely costly. Management is required to print the Radar reports daily and post them in the office.

CUSTOMER SERVICE

Q. We are confusing our customers, older and newer, with this 2-Step verification. Do we have a better way to inform the public of our new system?

A. This is a program that is fully designed and implemented by the USPS. The NRLCA does not have any way to influence the verification process for postal customers.

PAY ISSUES

Q. I have a grievance that supervisors agreed to settle and pay the wages. I was shorted due to HR glitch in payroll. It has not been paid and I am told that it’s on a desk at Eagan. Why is there no contact number or other method to contact Eagan? Why is Eagan not accountable for failing to do their job timely?

A. Unfortunately, we cannot answer why a specific department does not have publicized contact information. While we are aware that processing times at the Eagan facility are delayed, in some circumstances, management can flag a case that has been submitted for priority processing.

OVERBURDENED ROUTES/ROUTE ADJUSTMENTS

Q. I understand that 66% of carriers lost \$\$/hours with RRECS but 33% of us gained. My route is an 83 hr. 48K and has been grossly overburdened for 3+ years. We were not on the list to be cut in the foreseeable future. Eighteen of 19 routes in my office are overburdened. ‘Overburdened’ is supposed to be a temporary status. How is 3 years temporary?

A. Prior to the implementation of RRECS, the USPS and the NRLCA agreed to halt adjustments in an attempt to prevent an onslaught of sub-standard routes, as there was a fear that RRECS could drastically decrease route evaluations. Once RRECS was implemented, due to the extensive changes to our compensation system, the way that routes are evaluated and the coding that was needed to properly evaluate routes, the old adjustment system simply didn't work. As a result, the USPS needed to develop a new system to process adjustments, which is still imperfect. There is nothing that can be said to make the reality of an 83 hr. a week route acceptable, especially when we are so short-staffed that assistance is not possible. If your actual time serving the route exceeds 57 hours and 36 minutes weekly and you are not provided assistance, please contact your Union Steward to discuss your options.

Q. In recent memory, I don't remember a push for route adjustments. Why, all of a sudden, is the Post Office rolling this out?

A. An adjustment process has been unavailable until late Spring 2024.

Q. My Postmaster stated that we have limited input for this process. Aren't carriers entitled to know in advance, in writing, the changes to the route and voice their opinion?

A. Per Article 30.1.J, *the regular rural carrier assigned to the route shall be notified in advance of any route adjustments and afforded the opportunity to submit comments in writing. The comments will be considered as a factor when such adjustments are under consideration and before any decision is made. Substantial route adjustments must be approved at a level higher than the installation and, if requested in writing, will be reviewed at the district level, except for adjustments to avoid actual work hours in excess of 2,080 during the guarantee period.*

Q. Can Carriers get access to how routes are adjusted when overburdened?

A. there is an RRECS tab on the homepage of www.nrlca.org. This is packed with information regarding route adjustments.

WORKPLACE ENVIRONMENT

Q. We come and see and hear from the District Manager about communication and hurdles and the wonderful working culture that we should have – but none of this happens and the working culture is less than it should be – what can we do?

A. The first suggestion would be to file a grievance on workplace environment. This can be tough as it requires Carriers to be brave and provide specifics and be willing to go on record with their stories. If you do not feel that this is an option for you in your office, reach out to your Union Steward for assistance. Where we have issues with workplace environment/harassment, we may be able to address it either through the POOM or Labor. In circumstances where we have exhausted these avenues, MOU 25 may be invoked.

MAIL PROCESSING

Q. Forwarding mail is coming back in mail trays and going to 3M. Are we getting counted for this?

A. It depends on how the mail is presented upon its return to your office. All raw mail that comes back into the facility should be distributed to the route and counted during the Mini-Mail Survey. Additionally, the carrier should be measured prior to each MMS to ensure that the distance to the 3M/CFS/Throwbacks is accurate.

LEAVE

Q. If a relief carrier needs a Saturday off, their regular has to sign the slip and agree to work for them. Is this the same for PTFs? Would the entire string of regulars need to agree and sign?

A. This is not correct. A relief carrier (PTF, RCA) can request leave the same as a regular carrier, and the leave should be approved provided there is a Leave Replacement Available. Management must utilize the matrix and the RDWL to cover any routes impacted by leave. A Regular Carrier MAY sign the 3971 agreeing to work, which essentially only guarantees that the Relief Carrier will get the day off in question, per Article 9.2.C.5.j, The Regular Carrier IS NOT required to agree to work for a Leave Replacement in order for the Leave Replacement to get their leave approved. The Regular Carrier signing the leave slip essentially creates a situation where the Regular is not ONLY entitled to an X-day and is immediately scheduled by management.

COMPENSATION

Q. How are Regulars being paid/compensated for going over 9.6 hrs. per day/48 hrs. per week when there is no help?

A. Unfortunately, they are not (except during Christmas OT period). Per Article 9.2.A.1.i, Regular Rural Carriers are paid their evaluation until they exceed 12 hours in a day or 56 hours actual hours worked.

Q. I was rear-ended at the same mailbox in 2018 and again in 2021 on a blind hill with a 2 lane, no-passing zone. The posted speed limit is 55 mph, but normal speed is 65-70 mph. Can I get hazard pay?

A. There is not an avenue by which we can get hazard pay. However, the mailbox locations on this part of your route should immediately be inspected by the PM and District Safety to determine if any changes can either be made to the current set up, or if the boxes need to be moved to a safer location. Additionally, the Safety Department may be able to provide additional signage/strobe lights for the delivery vehicle in these high traffic/high speed, dangerous locations.

Q. Are RCAs entitled to waiting time?

A. Yes. Per the Step 4, G06R-4G-C 11295109, signed 3-26-13:

The parties agree that when a carrier is required to wait for mail due to late arriving transportation, appropriate compensation will be provided. Waiting time will not be compensated until all rural carrier duties are completed, to the extent possible, including the casing of all available mail.

When a carrier is required to wait for only DPS letter mail or other mail that does not require casing, including, but not limited to, parcels or box holders, has no other rural carrier duties to perform, including the strapping out of all cased mail; and is prepared to depart the office to effect delivery, the carrier will be compensated for the time the carrier is required to wait.

Compensation in both instances above would be in the form of auxiliary assistance equivalent to the waiting time, or by utilizing Form 8127 for regular rural carriers. Compensation for leave replacements would be made utilizing Form 1314-A, or by providing auxiliary assistance.

Q. What is 'being 2 steps behind' when found on your Form 50?

A. it is an error. If you are not at the proper step for your tenure on your Form 50, please contact your Steward.

Q. I am not on the Relief Day Work List, and I am mandated to work. I am paid a DACA 3 – am I able to schedule a mutually agreed day within 12 weeks or is management to schedule a day the following week?

A. Per Article 9.2.C.5.g: *...regular carriers not on the relief day work list who are required to work the relief day will receive compensation at 50% of the carrier's daily rate of pay, in addition to receiving an X-day within twelve (12) weeks as scheduled by the employer. To summarize, if you are not on the RDWL, your X-day is scheduled by your manager within 12 (so they can schedule you for the following week) weeks and is solely at the discretion of management.*

Q. What is considered appropriate second trip to get paid? Half of route then return to office? Just packages?

A. A second trip is for any mail (letters, flats, parcels) that arrived at the delivery unit after the carrier departed for the street or for parcels or mail that did not fit on the first trip. A second trip was never intended to be for when a carrier must serve a large chunk of the route (i.e., Re-run half or all of route for a saturation set or DPS). In this case the 'second trip' pay is most likely not adequate and should be discussed with your Steward. To better answer this question, please contact your steward with your specifics.

Q. In our office, we just got new hampers. We are being told we must wait until they are completely finished to touch them or load them in another hamper. If we wait is this 8127 time? If we load is that loading time?

A. We should not take the hampers until the Clerks have completed distribution. If we are waiting for distribution to be completed and no other work is available to us (Edit books, case labels, updating hold cards) then wait time may be warranted. This is a double-edged sword as it could result in management pushing back start times to avoid paying waiting time. Anytime you are loading mail into your vehicle, you should be on Loading Time.

Q. Pre-paid parcel lockers. What is the correct way to get credit?

A. This question is not clear. Parcel lockers should be entered in LTM/DPM.

BIDDING

Q. When submitting an eBid, does the system no longer confirm completion of the process with a confirmation #?

A. No, there is no longer a confirmation. You are encouraged to take a screenshot of it before and after submitting your bid. Should an issue arise, your proof will be your screenshots.

FORMULA OFFICES

Q. If days off are awarded by seniority, then why would the Union sign off on carriers that choose to change routes not be allowed to have the day off of our choosing? Days off for new carriers are being allowed to have better days off than carriers that are senior. That is not fair!

A. Relief days go with the route. They are posted with the route and are subject to change when the Formula is recalculated. When an RCA is awarded a regular route that has a Saturday relief day in a Formula office, management should immediately re-assign the relief day to a non-Saturday. When an existing regular is awarded a route with a Saturday relief day, the relief day is not touched until the recalculation deems it necessary.