

Voluntary transfers

Article 12 of the National Agreement provides guidelines for employees who wish to request voluntary reassignments to other postal installations. Employees begin the process by submitting a written request for a voluntary transfer in accordance with Article 12.6 (Section 6—Transfers), which states in relevant part:

A. Installation heads will consider requests for transfers submitted by employees from other installations.

B. Providing a written request for a voluntary transfer has been submitted, a written acknowledgment shall be given in a timely manner.

Along with making written requests, employees are able to electronically request reassignment by using “eReassign” on the USPS liteblue.usps.gov website. The eReassign link can be found on the front page of liteblue and/or on the My Life tab. In both cases, employees who wish to utilize this feature will need to scroll down to the bottom of both pages and look for the link in the right-hand margin.

According to eReassign, employees can “submit a reassignment request via the Internet, view the status of your request, and view offices and positions within each district.” The eReassign web page also states that “eReassign is still experiencing some problems with the correct population of data. The information displayed in the Change in Eligibility message may be inaccurate. Please continue to verify eligibility before determining that an employee may be ineligible to transfer.” It is important to note that eReassign does not supersede, or replace, the right of an employee to submit a written request for a voluntary transfer.

Once a request for voluntary transfer has been received, the request must be processed in accordance with the Transfer Memorandum (*et al.*) found in the National Agreement (page 174) and the *JCAM* (pages 12-38 through 12-41). This memorandum provides in part:

Transfer Memo 1.B B: Installation heads will afford full consideration to all reassignment requests from employees in other geographical areas within the Postal Service. The requests will be considered in the order received consistent with the vacancies being filled and type of positions requested. Such requests from qualified employees, consistent with the provisions of this memorandum, will not be unreasonably denied.... Except in the most unusual of circumstances, if there are suf-

ficient qualified applicants for reassignment, management must comply with the following minimums:

- In all offices of 100 or more work-years, at least one out of every four vacancies will be filled by granting requests for reassignment.
- In all offices of less than 100 work-years, at least one out of every six vacancies during the duration of the National Agreement will be filled by granting requests for reassignment.

The process for handling voluntary transfer requests is pretty straightforward. However, some installation heads have been filling all vacancies with transitional employees rather than accepting any voluntary transfers. This issue has been recently addressed by the parties in “Questions and Answers (27), NALC Transitional Employees” (M-01633):

15. Does the Memorandum of Understanding Re: Transfers still apply?

Yes, the Transfer Memorandum was not altered by either the revision to Article 7.1. of the National Agreement or the Memorandum of Understanding Re: Transitional Employees (Flat Sequencing System). Accordingly, unless hiring Transitional Employees to fill or back fill for residual assignments being withheld pursuant to Article 12 of the National Agreement, the “at least one in four” or “at least one in six” rules for reassignments remain in effect when hiring.

Any employees who feel that they have been denied a voluntary transfer should contact the union steward as soon as possible. According to the *JCAM*, pages 12-38:

The denial of a transfer request is a grievable matter. When the denial of a transfer request is grieved, the disputed decision is by the Postmaster of another installation. Nevertheless, any grievances concerning the denial of a transfer request must be filed with the aggrieved employee’s immediate supervisor as required by Article 15.2. Arbitrators from one region have the authority to order Postmasters in another region to accept a transfer request.

For more information, please read the executive vice president’s column in the April issue of *The Postal Record*. In addition, mutual exchanges are addressed in Article 41 and the *Employee Labor Relations Manual*. See *JCAM* 41-17 for more information. ☒