



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF POSTAL SUPERVISORS

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March :

All NAPS Members,

The Postal Service has announced a major restructuring that will include the closing of several District offices and the reduction of positions in all remaining District offices. The following is a text of that announcement:

"Postmaster General Pat Donahoe on Wednesday, March 23, 2011, announced a newly redesigned Postal Service, one that is better positioned for growth, reflects further alignment within the organization to achieve core business strategies and, when fully implemented, by March 2012, will eliminate almost \$750 million in costs to the organization.

"Over the past 8 weeks, we have been taking a careful look at our internal structure — the way we position our people — and determining the best way to align the organization to succeed in a more competitive world," said Donahoe. "We also have been making some tough but necessary decisions that will enable us to better meet the needs of our employees, our customers and the American public."

Donahoe said a strong plan has been developed that will result in a leaner, less bureaucratic structure that creates greater efficiencies among managerial and administrative functions.

The announced redesign reduces administrative layers and achieves a 20 percent reduction in Postmaster General Pat Donahoe on Wednesday, March 23, 2011, announced a newly authorized administrative office complement and Postal Career Executive Service (PCES) positions.

Seven districts will be closing. A general announcement identifying the districts will be made March 24, after employees in those districts are notified.

Voluntary Early Retirement (VER) and financial incentive programs will be offered to eligible career non-bargaining employees in targeted groups at Headquarters, Headquarters-related Field Units, Area Offices and Customer Service District Offices (Administrative).

** The incentive program is \$20,000 and is offered on a first come, first-served basis to eligible employees who choose to leave on the May 31, 2011, effective date through a VER, optional retirement or voluntary resignation. The incentive will be paid in two equal payments of \$10,000 distributed in November 2011 and November 2012.*

** To be eligible for the incentive, employees must begin the optional retirement process or submit voluntary resignation by the deadline of April 25, 2011. The same date, April 25, also is the irrevocability date for employees who accept the VERA offer.*

** Disability retirements and Federal Transfers are not eligible for the incentive. Employees in a probationary status as of March 23, 2011, are not eligible.*

** Employees already in progress as of March 23, 2011, for optional retirement or voluntary resignation with a scheduled retirement or separation date on or before May 31, 2011, will be permitted to retire or separate on the scheduled date and be eligible for the incentive.*

** Further details of the VERA and incentive programs will be available on the Organizational Change website.*

Donahoe said employees will be given comprehensive information to help them make the best decisions about their future. "I know change can be challenging," he said. "I thank all of our employees for their continued dedication and focus on continuing to provide high levels of customer service while the organizational redesign proceeds."

Efforts in the coming weeks and months will help the Postal Service become a leaner, faster and smarter organization, Donahoe said. "The redesign will improve our financial situation, ensure that we are better able to compete for customers, and provide greater value and service to the American public."

The following timeline has been established for the restructuring process:

2/24/11	PMG announces final structure
4/25/11	VERA Deadline Irrevocable Deadline
4/28/11	General RIF Notice Issued
5/25/11	Specific RIF Notice Issued
5/31/11	VERA Effective Date Early Out
6/14/11	RIF Process Vacancies Posted and Selections in E- Career
to 9/18/11	
9/09/11	RIF Effective Date

What If I Am Told That I Am Impacted?

Should you have become an impacted employee as a result of this announcement, the following information has been developed to assist you in knowing what the process of a restructuring entails. Becoming an impacted employee is a shocking experience that is going to bring significant anxiety, nervousness, sleeplessness, and a general feeling of depression and hopelessness.

NAPS has previously been assured by the Postal Service that we will be provided listings of all vacancies that exist in each of the remaining Districts and positions that will remain in the field that were related to the eliminated Districts. Your NAPS Area Vice President will be a valuable resource for you as we expect that all of our field officers will have been provided with a listing of all vacancies that will be available in your District or within a commuting distance of your current location.

NAPS has developed this information to assist all of our members in understanding more about the current restructuring and what you should do if you are impacted by either an Area or District closing or a reduction of District staffing that causes you to be an impacted employee.

Once you have dealt with the initial shock of the fact that your position has been eliminated, you have to get to the next step in the process; what are you going to do?

If you are eligible to retire, or you are considering taking a Voluntary Early Retirement (VERA), review your options and contact Shared Services to get information on what your annuity will be should you decide to leave the Postal Service. If you are unable to retire or take a VERA, then you have to start looking for an available position within the Postal Service.

The first step that you should take when you are advised that you are impacted is to read everything you can in the Employee and Labor Relations Manual related to RIF, specifically, ELM 354. The entire text of ELM 354 is located at the end of this document.

What's Involved in a District Closing?

In the event that your District is eliminated, by virtue of the fact that all positions have been eliminated your competitive area has also been eliminated. When a District is eliminated, both veterans and non-veterans are treated in the same manner and have to openly compete for available positions that are either within or outside of your local commuting area located at other postal facilities.

Here's the definition of a Competitive Area:

ELM 354.217, 3, a:

- a. Competitive areas – organizational units that have separate management authority and geographical boundaries under which employees compete during a RIF. As an example, the Center for Employee Development in Norman, Oklahoma, is a Headquarters-related field unit; however, it is a separate competitive area because it has its own management authority and geographical boundary. Generally, a competitive area should be in effect for at least 90 days before the effective date of a RIF. The manager of Selection, Evaluation, and Recognition publishes a list of competitive areas in the Postal Bulletin at least annually.*

When a District is eliminated, the competitive area is also eliminated. There may be some positions that formerly reported to the District that was eliminated that will remain in the geographical area, but will report to the gaining District. These positions may include: Labor Relations, Operations and In-Plant Support, Post Office Operations and other support functions.

A decision will be made by the gaining District whether any positions will remain domiciled in the former District geographical location or the jobs may be assigned to the gaining District's offices.

What's Involved in a District Consolidation?

In a District consolidation, certain positions are eliminated while other positions remain in the District office. Individuals who lose their positions as identified by USPS headquarters will have to apply for other positions. Individual's with Veterans Preference will have the opportunity to "bump" another EAS employee if they are not successful in applying for a position should their position be eliminated. If your position is not impacted, you are safe unless there is a veteran who is impacted and could be assigned to your position, that is; if you are the lowest person listed on the retention register (see ELM 354.217).

In the instance of a District consolidation, if there is a veteran who is impacted (loses their position) every EAS employee in the District will receive a General RIF Notice. Here's the ELM section that describes a General RIF Notice:

354.251 Issuing General RIF Notices

A RIF situation exists if a preference eligible employee in the competitive area undergoing a potential RIF is matched to a lower-grade position or is unplaced following the preliminary placement procedures in [354.23](#). The manager of Selection, Evaluation, and Recognition issues a general RIF notice to all employees within the competitive area. The general RIF notice advises employees that a RIF exists within their competitive area and provides the following information:

- a. The business reasons for the RIF.
- b. The position titles, grade levels, and organizational functions that will be directly impacted by the RIF.
- c. The RIF effective date is established no less than 60 days after anticipated receipt of specific RIF notices. Generally, the RIF effective date is established at the close of business on the last Friday of a pay period.
- d. When a competitive area is eliminated such as through a District closing, all employees from that District are impacted. Veteran's in a competitive area that has been eliminated do not maintain "bumping" rights as bumping rights for Veteran's can only occur within a competitive area.

A District is a competitive area unto itself. If your District is eliminated, or suffers reductions in positions, there are surrounding post offices and stations as well as processing facilities remain in operation and vacancies in these operations may well provide you with an opportunity to be assigned to a vacancy in one of these other operations.

An important thing to keep in mind; while being impacted can make you feel very negative about the Postal Service and the upheaval that they have caused your personal life, many of the managers and leaders of the units that may be overseeing the job that you will need to get placed into will be looking to see the candidates who are not expressing their anger and disappointment towards the Postal Service through negative statements.

Remember, you are attempting to succeed in getting a new job! Why would someone want to hire you to work for them if you are negative about your situation?

What Happens to Veterans and How Can I be impacted by a Veteran?

In preparation for a possible RIF, all EAS employees are identified to determine if there are impacted employees who are covered by Veteran's Preference Status:

Here is information on Veteran's Preference from ELM 354.215:

354.215 Veterans' Preference Status

Entitlement to veterans' preference for RIF purposes is based on the Veterans' Preference Act of 1944, as amended, and is codified in various provisions of Title 5, U.S.C. Detailed instructions for adjudicating veterans' preference claims are contained in chapter 7 of the Guide to Processing Personnel Actions, an operating manual issued by OPM. Employees who are eligible for veterans' preference for purposes of initial appointment are also eligible for veterans' preference for RIF, except for employees who are retired members of the uniformed services.

Employees who retired from the military must meet one of several special conditions before they can be granted veterans' preference for RIF purposes.

The conditions differ and depend on whether the employees retired below, at, or above the rank of major. [Exhibit 354.215a](#) shows the conditions that must be met by retired members of the uniformed services before veterans' preference for RIF is granted. [Exhibit 354.215b](#) shows the pay grades and titles (ranks) of officers of the uniformed services as defined by 5 U.S.C. 2101.

In the instance where a District is eliminated, the entire competitive area is eliminated so a veteran does not have the opportunity to "bump" a non-veteran to maintain a position. In cases where there is a consolidation in a District, once again the USPS identifies the individual(s) who are entitled to veteran's preference.

Veterans apply for positions in the same manner that non-veterans would and must apply competitively for the position. The USPS may withhold a vacant position within the local commuting area in order to place the veteran. If the veteran does not apply for positions and remained impacted, the Postal Service may assign the veteran to a position that is at their current level or no more than two levels below their current position level.

Should a "bumping" event occur, the most junior person on the Retention Register would be impacted by the assignment of a veteran who was not selected for a position that he/she applied for or they did not apply for any position during the RIF process. The veteran does not get to select the job that he/she wants if bumping is implemented. Instead, they are assigned to the position of the most junior person on the Retention Register for a position that the veteran is qualified to perform.

Competing for a New Position

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Remember, you are attempting to succeed in getting a new job! Why would someone want to hire you to work for them if you are negative about your situation?

Here are some key points to remember if you are impacted:

- Attend all town hall meetings or information sharing meetings to get all information available about the changes
- Don't be negative about the changes. Complaining to others or outbursts in meetings can only diminish your ability to be successful in getting a new position
- If you are having problems dealing with the changes, contact your local EAP Counselor
- Prepare the general information on eCareer on the USPS Blue Page. If you are not familiar with using eCareer, there should be several workshops held at your District to familiarize you with using the eCareer program
- Determine if someone you know has a good working knowledge of the eCareer program and have them work with you to develop your application

- Polish your image! Don't let the stress of looking for a job cause you to look less than professional. Make sure that you maintain yourself and think positively
- If you need to brush up on skills you used to have, ask for a detail to an assignment that is the same as the position that you will be applying for
- Get access to a listing of all of the vacancies that are available to you
- Visit the locations where the vacancy exists and speak with the manager and other supervisors about the work location to familiarize yourself with the operation in case you get an interview for a position in that office/facility
- Review operational data from the work location where you are seeking a position. Know what they do well and where they can make improvements. Should you get a job interview, speak about what you have seen in your reviews of the office or your review of the facility's performance indicators
- Review how your experience on your last job relates to the job that you are seeking. Also, be ready to discuss your past experiences that may be related to the job you are seeking
- Remain positive about your situation. After all, you have years of experience that can be an asset to a manager who may select you to work in their location

Restructurings are stressful but you can get through the process. You need to identify your personal value to the Postal Service and relate that value to selecting officials. Your NAPS officers are here to assist you in getting through this process and to make sure that all of the rules that are associated with a restructuring are followed.

The NAPS organization is ready to provide you with any assistance you may need during these difficult times. NAPS headquarters will be monitoring all aspects of the restructuring and will coordinate our assistance to members in the field through our regional and area vice presidents. Our 21 national officers in the field will be working with local branch officers to ensure that your rights under provisions of the Employee and Labor Relations Manual are followed.

Sincerely yours,

NAPS Headquarters

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