



Settlement reached on national NRP grievance

The NALC and Postal Service have settled a national-level grievance filed on the Postal Service's application of its National Reassessment Process (NRP). NRP is a management program that was devised to reassess all current limited-duty job offers and to reassess how future limited-duty job offers are made. The NALC, from the very outset of this dispute, has maintained that NRP cannot compromise injured employees' rights under 546 of the *ELM*.

As a result of many months of tough negotiations between your national officers and postal management, the parties' three-part settlement addresses all of the NALC's contentions in this grievance and solidifies the contractual rights of affected letter carriers.

The NALC contended that management, through NRP, was attempting to redefine the provisions of 546 of the *ELM*. The parties agreed that NRP does not change management's obligation to provide limited duty to injured employees and it does not change the provisions of *ELM* 546. In this regard, the resolution contained the following language:

1. The NRP has not redefined or changed the Postal Service's obligation to provide limited duty or rehabilitation assignments for injured employees. The *ELM* 546 has not been amended and remains applicable to all pending grievances.

The NALC also contended that management was applying new criteria for selecting employees who received limited duty. The parties also agreed that NRP does not create new criteria for assigning limited duty. In this regard, the resolution contained the following language:

2. The Postal Service has not developed new criteria for assigning limited duty. Injured employees will continue to be assigned limited duty, in accordance with the requirements of *ELM* 546 and 5 C.F.R., Part 353.

The last part of the resolution addresses how light-duty employees may have been impacted by NRP. The settlement states that light-duty carriers will not normally be displaced solely to make new limited-duty or rehabilitation assignments unless required by law. In this regard, the resolution contained the following language:

3. Employees on existing non-workers' compensation light duty assignments made pursuant to Article 13 of the National Agreement will not normally be displaced

solely to make new limited duty or rehabilitation assignments unless required by law or regulation. The foregoing sentence does not establish any guarantee of daily work hours for employees in a light duty assignment.

The resolution of these issues has cleared away many obstacles that impeded the NALC's ability to move forward with grievances on the local and regional levels. The settlement will now allow for the continued processing of those grievances that have been held in abeyance pending the outcome of this national case. For more information, contact your National Business Agent.

The resolution of this national grievance does *not* put an end to NRP, and because of this, the NALC will continue to monitor this process and will continue to require contractual compliance as management moves forward. Local representatives are encouraged to diligently monitor NRP in their area and report as needed to their NBA. A copy of the settlement is available at nalc.org on the Contract Administration page.

Claimant Query System (CQS) is now available

The Affiliated Computer Services (ACS) Web Bill Processing Portal website has been expanded in a major way with a new feature called Claimant Query System (CQS) for FECA claimants and their representatives.

The new CQS provides much more information for injured workers, with 24-hour Internet access to their case file status, accepted conditions, address of record, and compensation payments and tracking. CQS offers essentially the same information that was previously only available on a very limited basis to injury compensation specialists. The ACS web portal also provides claimants and their representatives with access to other claim-related information, which includes medical bill status and medical authorizations.

The ACS web address is <http://owcp.dol.acs-inc.com/portal/main.do>. To access claimant information, you must have a claim number, date of injury and claimant's date of birth. Once logged in, the CQS link is on the left side of the page.

The Compensation Department would like to extend best wishes to President Young for a happy and healthy retirement. ✉