



## OPM proposes retirement cuts

On May 4, Office of Personnel Management (OPM) Director Jeff Pon sent a letter to Speaker of the House Paul Ryan (R-WI) making four legislative recommendations that, if enacted, would require current and future federal employees to make larger pension contributions, and also would scale back retirement benefits for current retirees. The proposals would mainly affect Federal Employees' Retirement System (FERS) participants; Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS) employees would be affected to a lesser extent.

OPM's proposals reflect the White House's last two budget requests, which called for:

- **Increasing FERS federal employee pension contributions to 7.25 percent.** Currently, for the exact same level of FERS benefits, federal and postal employees contribute differing amounts each pay period, depending on when they were hired: Those hired before 2013 contribute 0.8 percent of pay; those hired in 2013 contribute 3.1 percent; and those hired in 2014 or after contribute 4.4 percent. This proposal calls for raising FERS pension contributions for all federal and postal workers, both current and future, by 1 percent more each year until all such employees are contributing 7.25 percent of their basic pay into the pension. These increases come without any corresponding pension increase, representing a significant pay cut for postal and federal employees.
- **Replacing the high-3 with the high-5 in the FERS annuity formula.** This would significantly cut the retirement annuity of postal and federal employees.
- **Eliminating or reducing the federal retiree cost-of-living adjustments (COLAs).** This proposal would eliminate the COLA for FERS participants and cut the COLA for CSRS participants, preventing postal and federal retiree pensions from keeping pace with inflation and slashing the future incomes of all federal annuitants.
- **Eliminating the FERS annuity supplement for employees who retire before qualifying for Social Security.** This proposal would take away the possibility for many postal and federal workers to retire before the age of 62. It also needlessly harms firefighters, law enforcement officers and others who must retire before age 62.

The White House has called on Congress to adopt these changes and, while it has yet to do so, these proposals can come up throughout the remainder of the 115th Congress, so letter carriers should be prepared.

"These drastic and unfair proposals are nothing but a blatant attack on postal and federal workers," NALC President Fredric Rolando said. "We will do everything in our power to prevent the administration and Congress from putting the burden of reducing the federal deficit they exploded last year on the backs of letter carriers, other federal employees and retirees."

## Contract implementation update

Since ratification of the 2016 National Agreement in August of last year, headquarters officers and staff have continued to work to implement the provisions of the Agreement. Notably, six wage increases have already been implemented for career letter carriers—two general wage increases and four cost-of-living adjustments (COLA) identified below.

- July 2016: COLA—\$21
- Nov. 26, 2016: General wage increase—1.2 percent
- Jan. 2017: COLA—\$333
- July 2017: COLA—\$270
- Nov. 25, 2017: General wage increase—1.3 percent
- Jan. 2018: COLA—\$520

City carrier assistants (CCAs) have received the general wage increases identified above as well an additional 1 percent general increase retroactive to Nov. 26, 2016, and an additional 1 percent increase on Nov. 25, 2017. CCAs also have received wage hikes of 50 cents per hour after 12 weeks of service and an additional 50-cent increase after another 40 weeks of service.

Most recently, the provisions of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) Re: Step Credit for Former Transitional Employees were implemented effective May 26. This MOU advanced certain CCAs who have been converted to career status and who served as transitional employees (TEs) after Sept. 29, 2007, in the city carrier pay scale as follows:

Length of creditable TE Service	No. of Additional Steps
2 years but less than 3 years	1
3 years but less than 4 years	2
4 years but less than 5 years	3
5 or more years	4

For those eligible CCA employees whose conversion to career occurs in the future, the one-time placement to a higher step will take effect on the conversion date. When placed in a higher step under the provisions of this MOU, former CCAs will retain current time-in-step credit.

For those who served five or more years as a TE, the four-step advancement will result in a wage increase of more than 11 percent.

The next potential wage increase for career letter carriers will come in the form of a COLA after the release of the July 2018 Consumer Price Index (CPI). Any COLA necessitated by the CPI will likely be payable in early September.

In November, all letter carriers will be upgraded pursuant to the MOU Re: Pay Schedule Consolidation. Effective Nov. 24, 2018, career and CCA letter carriers currently paid at Grade 1 will be moved to the equivalent step in the Grade 2 scale. The average pay increase will be about 2.1 percent. All letter carriers currently being paid at Grade 2 will receive additional compensation equivalent to 2.1 percent of their applicable hourly rate.

In addition to the upgrade for all letter carriers, CCAs will receive an additional 1 percent wage increase on Nov. 24. The final potential wage increases under the terms of the 2016 National Agreement will be in the form of COLAs paid to career carriers after the release of the January 2019 CPI and the July 2019 CPI.

## 'Stamp Out Hunger'® Food Drive Carriers deliver again —for the 26th time

Letter carriers in 10,000 cities and towns across the United States shouldered the load again for the 26th straight year, delivering compassion to the communities they serve by participating on May 12 in the Letter Carriers' Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive, the nation's largest one-day food collection effort.

"It is gratifying to see so many NALC members and other volunteers taking on the extra burden to make sure this humanitarian effort is such a success year after year," NALC President Fredric Rolando said. "I'm certain that the recipients of our efforts appreciate it."

Letter carriers had to do the extra work through blazing sunshine and heat in the southern United States, while a band of thunderstorms rolled across the North. But no matter the weather, nothing could put a dent in the enthusiasm among participating letter carriers and their family members, friends and countless volunteer food drive helpers.

This issue of the *NALC Bulletin* was heading to press just as many branch collection results forms were on their way to NALC Headquarters, even as other branches were simply swamped by the overwhelming generosity of postal customers. Coordinators in those places were busily calculating just how much non-perishable food had been donated.

As totals were being tabulated, local and regional food drive coordinators across the country were optimistic that the 2018 drive would continue the amazing results from recent years. Last year, the drive hauled in 75 million pounds of food. (From the national drive's beginning in 1992 through last year, the drive had collected 1.6 billion pounds of food.)

"It's too early to know what the results of this year's drive will be," Assistant to the President for Community Services Christina Davidson said, "but no matter the result, the food banks and pantries that receive these contributions will make the most out of every single pound."

None of this would have been possible without the assistance of the Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive's national partners. "These partners provide tangible support that helps to encourage the generous participation of our postal customers," Rolando said.

This year's partners were the U.S. Postal Service, the United Food and Commercial Workers International, the National Rural Letter Carriers' Association, Valpak, United Way Worldwide, the AFL-CIO and Valassis.

There were plenty of other helpers too, from American Postal Workers Union volunteers to local bag sponsors. Every little bit helped.

"It wasn't hard to find evidence that there was some sort of national charity effort underway on Saturday, May 12," Davidson said, "and in plenty of locales across the country, you could easily catch sight of Jeff Keane's 'Family Circus' food drive art in post offices and countless other venues."

Branch collection results forms are due at NALC Headquarters by June 9. A form was included with this mailing of the *NALC Bulletin*. A final national total for the drive is scheduled to be announced shortly after that; a detailed report on the drive, including branch-by-branch results, will appear in a future issue of *The Postal Record*.



Flushing, NY Branch 294



Florence, SC Branch 1416

## President Rolando makes Executive Council appointments

Brian Hellman, director of the NALC Health Benefit Plan, announced that he will retire after the 71st Biennial Convention in Detroit in July.

Hellman, a member of New York City Branch 36, was first elected health benefits director in 2010 during the 67th Biennial Convention in Anaheim, CA. He also served as NALC director of safety and health, director of life insurance and national business agent (NBA) for Region 15 (New York, northern New Jersey, western Connecticut, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands).

"Brian has served our union in so many ways, and his contributions have been invaluable," NALC President Fredric Rolando said. "We wish him all the best in his retirement."

Rolando will appoint Stephanie Stewart to fill the remainder of Hellman's term. Stewart is currently a regional administrative assistant (RAA) for Region 5 (Missouri, Iowa, Nebraska and Kansas).

A member of Central Iowa Merged Branch 352, Stewart began her letter carrier career in Des Moines, IA, in 1995. She served in many roles for the union, including Branch 352 president and Iowa State Association vice president, before Rolando appointed her as RAA in 2015. Stewart graduated from Leadership Academy Class 9 in May 2010.

"Join me in welcoming Stephanie to the NALC Health Benefit Plan," Rolando said. "Stephanie will continue the health plan's tradition of offering excellent benefits at reasonable costs."

Additionally, President Rolando appointed Javier Bernal as NBA for Region 10 (New Mexico and Texas) to fill the vacancy left by Kathy Baldwin, who retired.

After serving in the Navy from 1978 to 1982, Bernal joined the Postal Service as a clerk in 1983. He switched to the letter carrier craft in 1988 and became a steward in 1991.

In 2007, Bernal was certified as a member of the dispute resolution team (DRT) and became an arbitration advocate. He also served on the route count and inspection team for Houston-area offices.

Bernal graduated from Leadership Academy Class 7 in 2009. Later that year, when Baldwin was appointed to be Region 10 NBA, President Rolando appointed Bernal to replace her as RAA. He held this position until his appointment as NBA.

Also, President Rolando appointed Chicago Branch 11 President Mack I. Julion as a national trustee to fill the vacancy left by Randall Keller, who retired.

Julion joined the Postal Service as a letter carrier in 1997. He became a steward in 2001 and was elected sergeant-at-arms and auditor of Branch 11 in 2005. Julion also is an arbitration advocate and intervention specialist. He graduated from Leadership Academy's Class 2 in 2006.

In 2008, then-NALC president William H. Young appointed Julion to the post of RAA for Region 3 (Illinois). The next year, Branch 11 elected Julion as branch president.



Stephanie Stewart



Javier Bernal



Mack I. Julion



Below is information on the 71st Biennial Convention in Detroit, July 16-20. A schedule of workshops to be held at the convention and the proposed amendments to the *NALC Constitution* that will be considered are printed in the June issue of *The Postal Record*.

## Accommodations for disabled attendees

Convention attendees who may require assistance due to a disability can avail themselves of the following accommodations in adherence with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA):

### Wheelchair and scooter rental

Electric mobility scooters and wheelchairs are available for rent from Scootaround. For advance reservations or for more information, call 888-441-7575 or visit locations.scootaround.com/NALC.

### Oxygen

If you require oxygen refills while in Detroit, please check out NALC's convention web page at [nalc.org/convention](http://nalc.org/convention) for information on a local supplier.

### Parking

Handicapped parking spaces are available to individuals with valid disability parking permits in all Cobo Center parking lots.

### Deaf or hearing-impaired

General-session video presentations, including podium and floor action, will be open-captioned so hearing-impaired delegates can sit with their delegations. Delegates who need other special accommodations, including a signing interpreter in workshops, should contact Secretary-Treasurer Nicole Rhine at NALC Headquarters by June 22.

### Wheelchair lift vehicles

NALC is providing free shuttle bus service to/from the Cobo Center for hotels within the hotel block that are not within walking distance. (A complete list will be available on NALC's website soon.)

To comply with the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), a vehicle equipped with a wheelchair lift will be made available during all convention hours on an on-call basis. Requests for use of this service can be made directly by calling the operations manager on-site. The number will be listed on bus flyers available at the bell desks in all hotels for which shuttle service is provided.

## Veterans group project to assist local veterans

According to the Center for American Progress, veterans are disproportionately homeless in relation to other groups. The Center states that:

- Nearly 1 in 7 homeless adults are veterans, as of December 2011.
- More than 67,000 homeless veterans were counted on a given January night in America last year. More than 4 in 10 homeless veterans were found unsheltered.
- Almost half of homeless veterans were African American in 2008, despite the fact that only 11 percent of veterans overall are African American.
- About 1.5 million veterans are at risk of homelessness due to poverty, lack of support networks and dismal living conditions in crowded or substandard housing.

"The NALC Veterans Group is about veterans helping veterans," Assistant to the President for Community Services Christina Davidson said. "The group is 10,600 strong and growing. At the national convention in Detroit, I am asking our fellow letter carrier NALC Veterans Group members to join me in the Veterans Group Project."

The project will consist of assembling 2,000 homeless care kit bags to provide assistance to fellow veterans. Davidson is asking for NALC Veterans Group volunteers to join her on Tuesday, July 17, after the general session to assemble and distribute bags, which will provide assistance to those veterans in need.

"I hope letter carriers in the Veterans Group will volunteer for this project to support their fellow veterans in need and do their part to ensure that no one is left behind," Davidson said.

## Help deliver the cure in Detroit

A special commemorative pin will be available for sale at the MDA booth at the national convention in Detroit. The pin will highlight the partnership between NALC and the Muscular Dystrophy Association (MDA). Proceeds from the sale will go to MDA.

Additionally, the MDA booth will be selling raffle tickets. For each 1,000 raffle tickets sold, NALC will raffle off one \$3,000 travel voucher, allowing the winner to pick their destination. Tickets will be \$20 each. More information on the raffle is in the June issue of *The Postal Record*.

NALC would like to thank all of those who donated to the MDA Muscle Walk by President Rolando. The effort raised more than \$16,000 for MDA.

## Convention blood drive

NALC and the American Red Cross will be hosting a blood drive at the national convention in Detroit. Delegates to the convention are encouraged to schedule an appointment.

The need for blood is constant and only volunteer donors can fulfill that need for patients in every community. Nationwide, someone needs a unit of blood every 2 to 3 seconds and almost everyone will need blood in their lifetime.

The drive will be on Tuesday, July 17, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Go to [nalc.org/convention](http://nalc.org/convention) to make an appointment.

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