



Negotiations continue; NALC to hold Collective-Bargaining Conference

NALC and the Postal Service have now completed nine weeks of negotiations for a new collective-bargaining agreement for city letter carriers. At this point, NALC has presented and discussed more than six dozen proposals on a multitude of subjects designed to improve wages, hours and working conditions.

NALC still has additional proposals to submit and will do so as the parties continue negotiations. Collective-bargaining subcommittees comprised of each member of NALC's Executive Council and Headquarters letter carrier staff helped create our proposals from the ideas we received from Rank-and-File Bargaining Committees, delegates at past national conventions who adopted our official bargaining positions, branch and state leaders at the 2025 national rap session, and members from all over the country who offered their feedback.

Although official negotiations with the Postal Service have only been taking place for the last nine weeks, the collective-bargaining subcommittees have been in place crafting proposals and ideas to achieve NALC's goals for the past eight months.

As we continue negotiating with the Postal Service to present and discuss the union's work rule and economic proposals, NALC is simultaneously preparing for interest arbitration in the event a negotiated agreement cannot be reached. If an agreement cannot be reached that rewards America's letter carriers for the hard work they do day in and day out, NALC will not hesitate to present our demands and argue our case in front of an arbitrator.

NALC to hold conference

A Collective-Bargaining Conference is set for June 1-3 at the Washington Hilton Hotel in Washington, DC. Due to space constraints, attendance at the conference is limited to one representative from each branch and state association. Only the branch or state president or their designee may attend.

A registration process has been created online through the Members Only portal on the NALC website. Branch and state presidents must go into the "Meetings Menu" tab and select "Meetings Registration by Officers," and then click "Collective-Bargaining Conference" to register themselves or their authorized designee.

The conference will begin with registration check-in from noon to 5 p.m., followed by an opening session and welcome reception at 5:30 p.m. on June 1. Sessions run all day, starting at 9 a.m. on June 2-3.

NALC has arranged a block of rooms at the Washington Hilton Hotel for June 1-4 at a rate of \$299/night plus tax for a single/double room. For reservations, go to the NALC website or call 202-483-3000 and mention Group Code 973. The deadline for making hotel reservations is May 11.

NALC participates in House field hearing on protecting mail-in ballots and democracy

On March 31, President Trump signed an executive order called the "Ensuring Citizenship Verification and Integrity in Federal Elections." While many experts believe the president lacks the authority to issue such an executive order, and litigation challenging the order is pending, this is the administration's attempt to reshape how elections are conducted. The executive order instructs the Department of Homeland Security to work with the Social Security Administration to create a list of all citizens age 18 and over who are confirmed to be U.S. citizens. This list would be sent to election officials in each state.

The order would require the Postal Service to send ballots only to individuals on the list, "ensuring that only eligible absentee or mail-in voters receive absentee or mail-in ballots." This order was issued as the SAVE America Act—legislation that imposes strict voting requirements such as proof of citizenship, photo ID requirements, and registration changes eliminating most online and mail-in registration methods—and is stalled in the Senate because of a Democratic filibuster. The president and many Republicans are pushing for including the SAVE America Act in their proposed upcoming reconciliation packages.

Following these ongoing unprecedented attacks, on April 9, Speaker Emerita Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) and House Committee on Administration Ranking Member Joe Morelle (D-NY) hosted a field hearing in San Francisco, CA, focused on protecting democracy, election security, voting rights and vote-by-mail.

NALC President Brian L. Renfroe was invited to participate as a panelist to share letter carriers' perspective on the recent attacks on mail-in ballots and how such drastic action could affect letter carriers' work.

President Renfroe began his remarks saying, "I want to be real clear about what the Postal Service's role is in our democracy. It is that we accept, transport, process and deliver mail, including ballots."

Despite extreme vote-by-mail surges in 2020, 2022 and 2024, the process remains extremely secure, and instances of fraudulent mail-in ballots are still exceedingly low.

"We continue to be committed to make the whole process better and better and better through what we do operationally with the Postal Service, as well as fighting back attempts that, at the end of the day, are designed to keep people from participating in our democracy," Renfroe said.

Other panelists included Dr. Barbara Simons, former chair of Verified Voting Foundation; Kevin Shelley, former California secretary of state; Brittany Stonesifer, voting rights and redistricting program manager at California Common Cause; professor Rory K. Little, UC Law San Francisco; and Gabriela Carcamo from The Arc San Francisco.

Reps. Mike Thompson (D-CA), Mark DeSaulnier (D-CA) and Kevin Mullin (D-CA) also attended the hearing.

"I appreciated the opportunity to bring NALC's voice to this panel as we continue fighting to protect America's access to mail-in ballots," Renfroe said following the hearing.



President Brian L. Renfroe testifies at the House field meeting.

USPS announces agency's temporary suspension of FERS contributions

On April 9, the Postal Service announced it will temporarily pause employer contributions to the defined benefit portion of the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS). The pause has no immediate impact on any current or future retired letter carriers.

The Postal Service is required to make two types of payments to its FERS account: normal cost payments, which cover the cost of the pension benefits earned by postal employees each year, and amortization payments, which pay down the agency's unfunded liability (the difference between what is owed to current and future retirees and the actual assets in the account).

As the Postal Service's financial condition has declined due to changes in mail volumes and significant financial constraints placed on the agency by Congress, USPS resorted to defaulting on most of its annual amortization payments in order to preserve cash to maintain operations and payroll. It continued to make all of its normal cost payments during this period.

However, the Postal Service now says its financial situation has deteriorated so much that it has become necessary not to make any of these payments. According to USPS, the two actions outlined below are necessary to prevent the agency from running out of cash as early as February 2027.

First, the USPS Board of Governors voted last month to allow the Postal Service to temporarily suspend its normal cost payments, which will allow the agency to retain about \$2.5 billion for operations. This suspension is effective April 10.

During the suspension, the Postal Service will continue to transmit postal employees' contributions to FERS. This suspension will not affect the Thrift Savings Plan (TSP). The Postal Service will continue to transmit USPS automatic contributions, employee contributions, and USPS matching contributions to TSP.

Second, the Postal Service petitioned its regulator, the Postal Regulatory Commission (PRC), to grant it a waiver lifting restrictions on how USPS may use some of its revenue. Under the current price cap system designed by the PRC, the Postal Service has been allowed to raise rates slightly higher than inflation, but it's been required that revenue is used to pay FERS amortization costs. As of April 9, the PRC has granted the Postal Service's request allowing the agency to use that revenue for operations instead, stating that it "expeditiously granted the waiver in the interest of the public and to provide the Postal Service some breathing room." The PRC estimates that this will free an additional \$2.4 billion for USPS operations this fiscal year, and potentially a total of \$15 billion through 2030.

These actions will not immediately have a detrimental impact on current or future retirees, but each missed payment increases the Postal Service's FERS unfunded liability. The two actions combined will result in about \$5 billion in additional past-due FERS contributions this year, bringing the Postal Service's total missed FERS payments to about \$17 billion since 2014.

"This move is necessitated by the Postal Service's current financial situation and is a direct result of continued inaction by Congress to fix the legislative constraints that inhibit the Postal Service's ability to invest in its infrastructure and modernize to meet the needs of its employees and the American people," Renfroe said.

"If Congress were to allow for a new investment strategy for USPS retiree health and pension funds, a fair recalculating of the agency's Civil Service Retirement System pension obligations, and an increase in the agency's borrowing authority, this pause in FERS contributions would not be necessary," he added.

President Renfroe appoints NBA

On April 20, NALC President Brian L. Renfroe appointed Allan Rios as national business agent (NBA) for Region 1 (California, Hawaii, Nevada and Guam) to fill the vacancy left by Keisha Lewis, who resigned the position when she won election as Garden Grove, CA Branch 1100 president. His appointment was effective immediately. Rios, a member of Branch 1100, joined the Postal Service in 1996 as an NTE casual employee delivering mail in Pomona, CA.

Rios began his advocacy for letter carriers when he became a shop steward in 2009, then served as area shop steward, local business agent and arbitration advocate, and in 2012 worked as a dispute resolution team representative. In 2015, President Fredric V. Rolando appointed him as a regional administrative assistant for Region 1, a position he held until his appointment as NBA. Rios is also a graduate of NALC Leadership Academy Class 16.

