

City delivery updates



Christopher Jackson

In this month's article, I would like to discuss a pilot program recently initiated by the Postal Service because of a law affecting many nursing mothers in the workplace. I also will provide an update on Next Generation Delivery Vehicles (NGDVs) and the ongoing Canoo LDV 190 vehicle pilot.

Lactation pods—On Dec. 29, 2022, President Joe Biden signed the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2023 into law. This law included the Providing Urgent Maternal Protections for Nursing Mothers Act (PUMP Act) providing nearly all Fair Labor Standards Act-covered employees the right to take needed time and

to access an appropriate space to express breast milk for a nursing child for up to one year after the child's birth.

In August of this year, NALC received notification that the Postal Service intends to pilot 10 lactation pods in several postal facilities for use by nursing mothers. USPS explains that the pilot program has been initiated to further enhance the organization's compliance with the PUMP Act.

The following Postal Service facilities have received special pods to provide privacy for employees who need to express milk: post offices in Allentown, PA, and Joliet, IL; the New Jersey Network Distribution Center; and the processing and distribution centers in Chicago, Detroit, Los Angeles, North Houston, Phoenix, and Royal Palm in Miami. USPS states that utilization of the pods in these facilities, and another facility yet to be determined, will be assessed during a period of six months following delivery of the pods.

I have spoken with NALC representatives at local and regional offices to confirm that a lactation pod has been delivered to the Allentown and Joliet post offices where city carriers are located. Early feedback regarding use of the pods has been

received from only a small number of carriers, since the pods have been delivered to only two post offices. The feedback received from those offices has been positive and constructive.

Next Generation Delivery Vehicle (NGDV)—Also in August, the Postal Service sent notification confirming that overall testing of the NGDV was completed, Vehicle Maintenance and Safety Drivers Instructor training has been finalized, and NGDVs are in the process of being delivered to offices in the field. With this notification, the Postal Service provided a deployment list for the NGDVs through October 2024. The list details USPS plans to deploy a total of 81 NGDVs (11 Battery Electric Vehicles and 70 Internal Combustion Engine vehicles) to offices in Georgia, Indiana, Texas, Washington, Pennsylvania, Florida, Michigan, Illinois and Colorado; however, the list was subject to change.

The Sorting and Delivery Center (S&DC) in Athens, GA, received the first delivery of the NGDV in June. Recently, I visited the Athens S&DC along with Special Assistant to the President Douglas Lape to observe carriers as they began to operate their new vehicles. First reactions by carriers using the NGDV have been very positive. For more information on the development of the NGDV, please see the Staff Report by Douglas Lape in the June edition of *The Postal Record*.

Canoo vehicle pilot program update—In the April edition of *The Postal Record*, I informed the membership of the Postal Service's intent to pilot test the use of the Canoo model Lifestyle Delivery Vehicle (LDV) 190 on carrier routes at the Athens S&DC. The Canoo LDV 190 is a battery electric commercial off-the-shelf vehicle with almost 172 cubic feet of cargo space. During my recent visit to the Athens S&DC, a few carriers involved in the pilot provided their feedback on the vehicle. Overall, the carriers like using the Canoo LDV 190. The vehicle's easy handling, modern camera views and air conditioning features (of course) received the highest approval ratings from the carriers. Struggles to fit large packages into the cargo area, carpet flooring, insufficient interior lighting and the inability to walk inside of the cargo area were some of the downsides shared by the carriers. Testing of the vehicle began in April and is expected



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Delivering a cure in Boston and beyond

America's letter carriers have been going the extra mile for MDA for more than 70 years, and this year is no exception. Last year, NALC raised \$1,129,800 for MDA through various events across the country. Branches support MDA through summer camp, muscle walks, bowlathons, satchel drives and other community events. NALC is on track to meet or exceed its 2023 fundraising total.

The passion for MDA was contagious at NALC's 73rd Biennial Convention in Boston over the summer. Letter carriers from around the country were raising money for MDA through T-shirt sales, multiple drawings, pin sales, and even homemade goodies. NALC Community Service Director Christina Vela Davidson joined in the fun and hosted a drawing for travel vouchers, raising \$48,000 for MDA, which was matched by NALC Headquarters.

"Raising money for a great cause is a no-brainer. We must those who cannot help themselves," Vela Davidson said.

MDA National Ambassador Leah Zelaya was welcomed with open arms and enjoyed spending a day thanking everyone and sharing her excitement for MDA summer camp.

NALC members are proud of the fundraising work they do all year to support research to one day deliver a cure and to continue making MDA Summer Camp possible. MDA is grateful for the longstanding partnership and can't wait to see how much money is raised for MDA families in 2024 and beyond.



MDA National Ambassador Leah Zelaya at the NALC Convention in Boston

"Thank you, NALC, for all your efforts to coordinate and raise funds for the Muscular Dystrophy Association," MDA announced. "Your dedication is second to none."

Please mail copies of any receipts or checks along with a copy of the NALC/MDA Allocation Form so your branch can be properly recognized. NALC/MDA allocation forms must be turned in in the same calendar year of the event (no later than Dec. 28) to qualify for the NALC Honor Roll for that year.

—Christina Vela Davidson

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to continue through October. I plan on reviewing the final results of this pilot program once it has ended.

I want to thank every carrier involved in these pilot programs and the development of the NGDV for their efforts and for taking the time to share their thoughts with me and NALC staff members. Your time and commitment have been beneficial to city letter carriers across the country. I will continue to update the membership on any impact these initiatives may have on city carriers. Be sure to read my article each month and visit nalc.org for updates.

FEGLI (continued)

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OPM has a handy FEGLI calculator on its website at opm.gov/retirement-center/calculators/fegli-calculator so that each person can weigh their current coverage and decide if they want to continue that coverage and which options to elect at retirement. Some find the premiums of FEGLI cost prohibitive as they retire and age. Some find the premiums of additional optional FEGLI cost prohibitive as they retire and age, and elect to keep only Basic (and Standard option, if they have it) in retirement. In addition, other programs such as the NALC Mutual Benefit Association, offer a wide range of policies, not just term life insurance.