

# Collection box reassignment



**Christopher Jackson**

In late November 2024, NALC received notification that the Postal Service would be reviewing the assignment of collection boxes across the country. The review would begin in December 2024 and continue into 2025. According to the Postal Service, the focus of this review was to reassign collection boxes to carrier routes within the appropriate line of travel.

The notice from the Postal Service did not provide any details on how this review would be conducted, nor did it reveal the steps that would be taken to reassign collection boxes. To get

a complete understanding of their plans, I scheduled a meeting with the Postal Service. In this month's column, I will share the details from our discussion, which I believe every carrier should be mindful of since this action could have a massive impact on our city carrier craft.

On Dec. 16, 2024, NALC met with the Postal Service to discuss the collection box review. USPS explained that the review had already been completed and the effort to reassign collection boxes stemmed from a recent Collection Point Density Test where collectors were asked to report mail volumes taken from collection points between September and October. After conducting the density test and the collection box "review," USPS determined that many collection boxes were underutilized.

Based on this determination, USPS has developed a plan to accomplish two objectives. The first is to reduce the number of collection boxes on the street. Examples of collection boxes or collection points that are being considered for removal are those that are found inside of some office or residential buildings, "duplicate collection boxes" on the street that are within a block of one another or lined up outside of retail lobbies, and snorkel boxes. The Postal Service's second objective is to reassign all other collection boxes to carrier delivery routes.

USPS plans to complete their objectives in two phases. The first phase is to be executed in all offices scheduled for route count and inspections (RCI) during the

spring of 2025 (contact your national business agent's office to find out if your office is involved in the spring RCI). It is the goal of the Postal Service to have all collection boxes in these offices reassigned or removed prior to the start of the inspections. The second phase will be executed later in all other offices.

During the meeting, NALC explained that executing this plan without adhering to postal handbooks and manuals would have an impact on city carriers, beginning with those currently assigned to collection and combination routes. Unfortunately, our discussion with Postal Service management did not change their intentions of following through with this action.

After our meeting with the Postal Service, I am convinced that they have failed to show how these changes are being made in accordance with applicable handbooks and manuals, specifically Chapter 2 of *Handbook M-39, Management of Delivery Services*.

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The Postal Service is obligated to complete a route evaluation and collect current inspection data prior to reassigning boxes from the collection and combination routes to delivery routes. It's clear from our discussion that the Postal Service intends to make these changes before the spring RCIs and without conducting any studies on the affected routes in accordance with *Handbook M-39*.

It's important that every union officer, and letter carrier in general, monitors any movement or reassignment of collection boxes in their units and on their routes. Any movement or reassignment of collection boxes should be thoroughly investigated and grieved, if appropriate, at the local level. I have provided additional information to every national business agent's office to help address any contractual violations regarding this action.

I will continue to monitor this action and provide updates to the membership. Be sure to read my article each month and visit [nalc.org](http://nalc.org) for updates.