



M-01010

UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE  
475 L'Enfant Plaza, SW  
Washington, DC 20260

October 26, 1979

Mr. Vincent R. Sombrotto, President  
National Association of Letter  
Carriers, AFL-CIO  
100 Indiana Avenue, N. W.  
Washington, D. C. 20001

Re: Grievance No. N8-NAT-003

Dear Mr. Sombrotto:

On July 24, 1979, and several subsequent occasions, we conducted pre-arbitration discussions relative to the above-captioned grievance.

Pursuant to these discussions, the Postal Service prepared, and forwarded to you, proposed new language for inclusion in Part 546.14 of the Employee and Labor Relations Manual. The proposed new language is as follows:

New Part 546.14, E&LR Manual

.14 DISABILITY PARTIALLY OVERCOME.

.141 Current Employees.

When an employee has partially overcome a compensable disability, the USPS must make every effort toward assigning the employee to limited duty consistent with the employee's medically defined work limitation tolerances (see 546.32). In assigning such limited duty the USPS should minimize any adverse or disruptive impact on the employee. The following considerations must be made in effecting such limited duty assignments:

- a. To the extent that there is adequate work available within the employee's work limitation tolerances within the employee's craft, in the work facility to which the employee is regularly assigned, and during the hours when the employee regularly works, that work shall constitute the limited duty to which the employee is assigned.

- b. If adequate duties are not available within the employee's work limitation tolerances in the craft and work facility to which the employee is regularly assigned, within the employee's regular hours of duty, other work may be assigned within that facility.
- c. If adequate work is not available at the facility within the employee's regular hours of duty, work outside the employee's regular schedule may be assigned as limited duty. However, all reasonable efforts shall be made to assign the employee to limited duty within the employee's craft and to keep the hours of limited duty as close as possible to the employee's regular schedule.
- d. An employee may be assigned limited duty outside of the work facility to which the employee is normally assigned only if there is not adequate work available within the employee's work limitation tolerances at the employee's facility. In such instances every effort will be made to assign the employee to work within the employee's craft, within the employee's regular schedule and as near as possible to the regular work facility to which normally assigned.

.142 When a former employee has partially recovered from a compensable injury or disability, the USPS must make every effort toward reemployment consistent with medically defined work limitation tolerances. Such an employee may be returned to any position for which qualified, including a lower grade position than that held when compensation began.


This language, to which you indicated you and other Unions with whom you discussed it are amenable, incorporates procedures relative to the assignment of employees to limited duty that you proposed. Subchapter 540 of the Employee and Labor Relations Manual was published on October 22, 1979, as a Special Postal Bulletin. It is the intent of the Postal Service to publish Part 546.14 with the language set forth in this letter, separately, after transmitting it to the Unions under Article XIX of the National Agreement. Part 546.14 subsequently will be published along with the rest of Subchapter 540 in the Employee and Labor Relations Manual.

With regard to individual grievances which arise in connection with implementation of these procedures, the parties agree that such grievances must be filed at Step 2 of the Grievance-Arbitration Procedure within five (5) days of the effective date of the limited duty assignment. The parties further agree that, if such a grievance remains unresolved through Step 3 of the Grievance-Arbitration Procedure, the grievance may be appealed to Expedited Arbitration under Article XV, Section 4 C, of the National Agreement.

In view of the foregoing, the issue raised by this grievance relative to the assignment of letter carriers who incur job related injuries is resolved as the Postal Service, in accordance with the assignment procedures set forth above, may assign letter carriers who have partially recovered from job related disabilities to limited duty assignments outside of their regular work schedules and/or their regularly assigned work facilities. The grievance can, therefore, be considered closed.

Sincerely,

*for*   
William E. Henry, Jr.  
General Manager  
Grievance Division  
Labor Relations Department

  
Vincent R. Sombrotto,  
President  
National Association of Letter  
Carriers, AFL-CIO