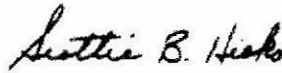


5. At the Step 3 discussion of a grievance, the Union representative and the USFS representative each have an obligation to inform the other of the existence of a companion MSPB appeal.



Joseph J. Mahon, Jr.  
Vice President  
Labor Relations  
U.S. Postal Service



Scottie B. Hicks  
President  
National Rural Letter  
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**6. MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING  
BETWEEN THE  
UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE  
AND THE  
NATIONAL RURAL LETTER CARRIERS' ASSOCIATION**

It is agreed that when, as a result of a job-related illness or injury, a regular rural carrier, except when assigned work pursuant to the Memorandum of Understanding concerning Accommodation for Qualified Regular Rural Carriers with Disabilities, is unable to perform all the duties of his or her assigned rural route for a period of two years, or has submitted medical certification that he or she will be unable to perform all the duties of the assigned rural route for a period of two years, the employee must relinquish his or her route and such route will be posted for bid in accordance with Article 12.3. The Employer may choose not to have the regular carrier relinquish the route, if the Employer determines, after review of the medical documentation, that the carrier, with reasonable assistance, is able to care and deliver his or her entire route. If after providing such assistance, the Employer subsequently chooses to no longer provide the assistance to the carrier and the carrier is unable to perform all the duties of his or her assigned rural route, the carrier must relinquish his or her route. The Employer's decision to

have the carrier relinquish or not relinquish his/her route is not a grievable matter under the National Agreement.

Prior to posting a route relinquished after the two year period, the Employer will request that the employee provide medical certification indicating whether the employee is, at that time, able to fully perform the duties of the assigned rural route. If the employee fails to provide such certification within 30 days of notification to do so, or if the medical certification reflects that the employee is unable to perform the full duties of the assignment, the route shall be posted, and the employee shall not be permitted to exercise his or her bid rights as to that posting.

The parties agree that the period of two years is considered uninterrupted unless the regular rural carrier is able to perform all the duties of his or her assigned rural route for a period of six or more consecutive months.

When a regular rural carrier relinquishes his or her route as a result of the above circumstances, has not yet been placed in a modified job assignment, and is working a limited duty assignment, the employee will become an unassigned regular rural carrier. Rural routes numbers 960 through 979 may be created as needed, and the carrier will be assigned to one of these routes. The employee will continue to perform the current limited duty assignment until the appropriate action is taken to have the carrier reassigned to a modified job. Management will continue to make every effort to assign this employee to a modified job.

If the carrier becomes able to perform all the duties of the rural carrier position while unassigned, and a vacancy exists in the office, the carrier will be allowed to bid on the vacancy. Should the carrier fail to bid on the vacancy, and there is a residual vacancy resulting from the posting, the carrier will be assigned to the residual vacancy.

However, should a residual vacancy not occur as a result of the posting or a vacancy does not exist in the office, the carrier will be treated as the excessed junior regular rural carrier, and reas

signed in accordance with Article 12.5.A.1. Pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 8101(4), until the employee's reassignment is completed, the employee will continue to receive the same rate of pay received on the date of injury, the date disability begins, or the date of a qualifying recurrence, whichever is greater.

When a regular rural carrier relinquishes his or her route as a result of the above circumstances, has not yet been placed in a modified job assignment, and is in an injured on duty/leave without pay (IOD/LWOP) status, rural routes 980 through 989 may be created and the carrier assigned accordingly. Only those employees who are in an IOD/LWOP status may be placed on rural routes 980 through 989 because salary payments will not generate from these routes.

When creating both the 960-979 and the 980-989 routes, the route data for the newly created route must reflect the route data of the route to which the employee was assigned on the date the compensable illness or injury occurred.



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Andrea B. Wilson  
Manager  
Labor Relations  
U.S. Postal Service



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Gus Baffa  
President  
National Rural Letter  
Carriers' Association