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National Association of Letter Carriers

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8/18/2021

CARRIER FLASH

Enclosed in this Flash are: The New Branch By-laws, updated COLA information, Updated CVS Vaccination information and updated Back Pay information. The Branch will be having a meeting later this week with OPS on the upcoming Fall Route Inspection schedule. The outcome of these meetings will be passed on to the scheduled offices by weeks end.

Jerry McCarthy
President Branch #34

National Association of Letter Carriers

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Memorandum

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August 11, 2021

Contract COLA: 4th COLA Is \$1,934

The fourth regular COLA under the 2019-2023 National Agreement is \$1,934 annually.

On August 11, 2021 the Bureau of Labor Statistics announced that the CPI for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W, 1967=100) stood at 797.661 in July, 52.285 points above the base level of 745.376 in July 2019.

The fourth COLA is based on the increase in the CPI-W between the base index month and July 2021, less any previously calculated COLAs, and is payable the second full pay period following the release of the July 2021 index. The three COLAs that have been calculated under the 2019-2023 National Agreement, totaling 37 cents per hour, are as follows: 1st COLA, 8 cents per hour (\$166 annually), 2nd COLA, 9 cents per hour (\$188 annually), and the 3rd COLA, 20 cents per hour (\$416 annually).

2022 Retiree COLAs Projection: 5.7% as of July 2021

The 2022 COLAs for CSRS and FERS benefits are based on the increase in the average CPI-W between the 3rd quarter of 2020 (253.412) and the 3rd quarter of 2021 (TBA).

Based on the July 2021 CPI-W (1982-84) of 267.789 the 2022 CSRS and FERS COLAs are currently projected to be 5.7%. The 2022 retiree COLA calculation will be finalized in October 2021 with the release of the CPI-W for September 2021.

CSRS annuities receive full COLAs; COLAs for FERS annuities are payable for retirees 62 and older and may be reduced by up to one percentage point from the increase in the CPI.

2022 FECA COLA Projection: 5.4% as of July 2021

Based on the release of the July 2021 CPI-W (1982-84=100), the 2022 FECA COLA projection is 5.4%. The July 2021 CPI-W of 267.789 was 5.4% above the December 2020 base index (254.081). The 2022 FECA COLA calculation will be finalized when the December 2021 CPI-W is published during the month of January 2022.

FECA COLAs are applicable only in cases where death or disability occurred more than one year prior to the adjustment's effective date.

Eligible city letter carriers will receive retroactive pay pursuant to the 2019-2023 National Agreement on their August 20 paychecks.

Backpay has been calculated for all paid hours between November 23, 2019 (the date of the first general wage increase in the Agreement) and April 9, 2021 (the day before new pay rates were implemented as explained here <https://www.nalc.org/news/nalc-updates/new-pay-rates-implemented>). The following pay increases will be included in the retroactive pay from the effective date indicated for each:

For career city carriers:

- **1.1% General Wage Increase effective November 23, 2019**
- **\$166 Cost of Living Adjustment effective February 29, 2020**
- **\$188 Cost of Living Adjustment effective August 29, 2020**
- **1.1% General Wage Increase effective November 21, 2020**
- **\$416 Cost of Living Adjustment effective February 27, 2021**

***Cost of living increases referenced above are paid proportionally to city carriers in Table 2 in accordance with Article 9.3.E of the National Agreement.**

For City Carrier Assistants:

- **1.1% General Wage Increase and additional 1.0% increase effective November 23, 2019**
- **1.1% General Wage Increase and additional 1.0% increase effective November 21, 2020**

***City carrier assistants receive the additional 1.0% increases referenced above in lieu of cost of living adjustments pursuant to Article 9.7 of the National Agreement.**

Retired and separated employees that worked during the backpay period will be paid by check mailed to their last work location. Retroactive pay adjustments for now retired letter carriers may result in adjustments to annuities. The Office of Personnel Management will make any necessary annuity adjustments.

Fourth COLA is \$1,934

The fourth regular Cost of Living Adjustment under the 2019-2023 National Agreement will be \$1,934 annually for letter carriers at Step O of Tables 1 and 2. Cost of living increases are paid proportionally to city carriers in Table 2 in accordance with Article 9.3.E of the National Agreement. This adjustment will be effective August 28 and reflected in paychecks dated September 17.

City carrier assistants will receive additional 1.0% increases effective November 20, 2021 and November 19, 2022 in lieu of cost of living adjustments pursuant to Article 9.7 of the National Agreement.

COVID-19 vaccinations: Fast, Easy, & Free

COVID-19 vaccinations are available at locations across the country, mostly through state or local governments, medical facilities, and pharmacies. For example, CVS Caremark is now offering COVID-19 vaccinations in thousands of CVS pharmacy locations around the country. No matter where you live, there is likely a CVS pharmacy near you. Getting vaccinated at CVS is fast and free for all letter carriers.

At CVS, the vaccination will come at no cost to you regardless of what health insurance you plan you have, or even if you have no health insurance. To schedule a vaccination appointment at a CVS Pharmacy near you or for more information, click here (<https://www.cvs.com/immunizations/covid-19-vaccine?cid=redir-covidvaccine>).

You may also walk-in to CVS pharmacies to receive the vaccination without making an appointment. Please bring your insurance card or photo ID with you.

Through September 30, active letter carriers can use Employee Federal Emergency Leave (EFEL) to take off from work and get vaccinated. When requesting this leave, you need to submit a completed PS Form 3971, Request for or Notification of Absence and a COVID-19 Emergency Federal Employee Leave (EFEL) Employee Notification and Leave Request Form. You will also need to submit a signed Employee Agreement in Connection with Emergency Federal Employee Leave (EFEL) if this is your first use of EFEL. For more information on EFEL and for the forms mentioned above, click here (<https://www.nalc.org/news/nalc-updates/body/USPS-EFEL-Guidance.pdf>).

Vaccinations are proven to be the most effective defense against COVID-19. Scheduling an appointment or receiving the vaccination only takes a few minutes, is free to all letter carriers, and does not require you to use your personal leave. If you have specific questions about vaccinations related to your individual health circumstances, please consult a healthcare professional.