



Region 5 NBA Report



February 2017	National Business Agent's Report	NALC Region 5
---------------	----------------------------------	---------------

High Turnover Rate Costs \$\$\$ – A recent Inspector General report shows that the Postal Service has a 42.7 percent annual turnover rate within its non-career workforce. In 2015, that turnover cost the Postal Service \$95 million. “These conditions occurred because the Postal Service does not have a recruitment and retention strategy to help reduce attrition rates to sustainable levels and to ensure all non-career crafts are appropriately mentored and trained,” the report said. Furthermore, a sampling of departed temp employees stated the top reason they left was that the supervisor did not treat people with respect and had poor management skill. It should be noted that the turnover rate with CCA’s is much higher than the 42.7 percent. It should be noted that letter carriers have long had to deal with managers who are inept, unqualified and incapable of managing.

Article 1 – We seem to have a number of postmasters and supervisors who believe they can carry mail and deliver parcels. This is especially true in smaller offices. This often times taints the route times and can negatively impact any type of route adjustment. Article 1.6.A and 1.6.B of the National Agreement states:

- A. Supervisors are prohibited from performing bargaining unit work at post offices with 100 or more bargaining unit employees, except: 1. in an emergency; 2. for the purpose of training or instruction of employees; 3. to assure the proper operation of equipment; 4. to protect the safety of employees; or 5. to protect the property of the USPS.*
- B. In an office with less than 100 bargaining unit employees, supervisors are prohibited from performing bargaining unit work except as enumerated in Section 6.A.1 through 5 above or when the duties are included in the supervisor’s position description.*

American Jobs – While the seemingly one sided trade agreements have been the cause of many jobs leaving the United States as Corporate America has chased lower labor costs, it certainly hasn’t been the only reason. Technology has and will continue to be the main threat and its expansion is increasing exponentially over time. All one has to do is look around and see the use of computers, robots and self-service kiosk’s that are supplementing or replacing workers. We’ve seen robots on the assembly lines; scanners that replace cashiers; books aren’t printed, they’re digitized onto your kindle; welders have been replaced by robots; wireless has replaced communication technicians; service representatives replaced by automated call centers; self-driving cars and trucks are just around the corner. Don’t think it can happen to you?

Telegraphs, phones, faxes and email have been just a few of the assaults letter carriers have had to adapt around. Is the future going to be a sky darkening fleet of drones (programmed and flying themselves)? When will the robots become mobile and artificial intelligent computers take over all the white collar jobs? Computers will make computers and program themselves. Why will we even need CEO's? Meanwhile, it also makes our lives easier and better. It's not going to stop. I believe that the future holds less jobs, not more. So, my question is... Is this the right time to start dismantling the social safety nets?

One thing that is certain, to survive and prosper we will have to adapt quickly and be willing to change. While the past few months were difficult, long hours and lots of parcels, you've adapted. What's next for letter carriers? Groceries...Pizza...Water...checking on the home-bound... only our imagination, shortsightedness and Congress can stop us. Be prepared to contact your legislators as needed.

Every day in the U.S. – 512.8 million - number of mail pieces are processed and delivered; 7,000 - number of letter carriers who deliver mail entirely on foot, walk outs; 113,531 address changes processed; 3,206 addresses added for delivery 3.9 million people visit usps.com; 17,029 passport applications accepted; 320,132 money orders issued.

NALC Trivia – The very first NALC Convention was held in 1890 at Boston. W. H. Wood presided as President of the NALC. The following cities within Region 5 have held conventions over the years: 1893 – Kansas City, MO; 1915 – Omaha, NE; 1921 – St. Louis, MO; 1937 – Kansas City, MO; 1992 – St. Louis, MO. If you're interested in hosting a National Convention, let me know. ☺

Michael J. Birkett
National Business Agent
NALC Region 5 (St. Louis)