

SORTING AND DELIVERY CENTERS

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With the Postmaster General's Delivering for America plan, the USPS created several new facilities, from Regional Processing Distribution Centers (RPDC's) to Local Processing Centers (LPC's) and the Sorting and Delivery Centers (S&DC's). Each has different functions with the S&DC's being the final leg of the mail process, the carrier station. As the name suggests, the Carrier Station is the facility where carriers prepare for the delivery of the mail and parcels. The S&DC's are either former carrier stations that are modernized with new machinery and cleaner aesthetics or the result of a consolidation of several carrier stations into one larger facility in some cases utilizing former Processing and Distribution Centers that are no longer active. The S&DC's include anywhere from 20 carrier routes to some well over 300 routes. The USPS is planning on creating more than 900 S&DC's over the next ten years, with over 100 already operating.

Many of the operations in the S&DC's should be performed by Mail Handlers. Previous determinations made through the RI-399 process make this clear, including unloading and loading trucks, processing empty equipment, the use of power equipment, and the spreading of the mail to the carriers. In addition, all S&DC's will have either the Automated Deliver Unit Sorter (ADUS) or the Small Deliver Unit Sorter (SDUS) installed. The national jurisdictional determination on both of these machines have work assigned to the Mail Handler craft. One of the other functions of the new S&DC will be acting as a transfer hub, which is a cross-dock operation to sort mail going to and from carrier stations that are not consolidated into the S&DC, again work assigned to the Mail Handler craft.

Many often ask why there aren't Mail Handlers in all of the current carrier stations if the work was assigned our craft.

The reason for this is that the RI-399 process contains a "Four Hours" rule, meaning that there must be 4 hours or more of continuous work in one or more operations designated to the primary craft for the work to be assigned to that craft. In many of the smaller Associated Offices (or carrier stations) there wasn't sufficient work — that is, there wasn't four or more hours of continuous Mail Handler work — to demonstrate the need for a Mail Handler. By contrast, we have been able to demonstrate 4 hours or more of continuous work in the larger offices, and, as a result, Mail Handlers have been staffed in those facilities for decades.

The NPMHU has been working with the Local Presidents to make sure our craft is assigned the work in these new S&DC buildings. In 2023, National President Paul Hogrogian created the S&DC Task Force, whose members are John Gibson Eastern Regional VP Local 308 President, Kelly Dickey Local 322 President, Nick Mosezar Local 318 President, Teresa Harmon Manager of Contract Administration and myself. The Task Force has had several meetings to discuss processes to ensure that when a new or consolidated S&DC is opened, Mail Handlers at the local level have the tools and the support to fight for our work. We have also done trainings at both the local and national level on these issues.

These efforts have been successful, as we have demonstrated that work at many S&DCs should be done by Mail Handlers. The APWU has, and will continue, to push back on our efforts, claiming that this work is Clerk work based on a false belief that all work in a station should be performed solely by their craft. This battle has been at every level of the RI-399 process, from the local level to the regional level and finally at the national level. The NPMHU will not back down and will continue to push for all work to be properly assigned to the Mail handler craft.