



# PRIORITY TRANSFERS

BY TOM RUTHER, NATIONAL CAD REPRESENTATIVE



One of the worst things in an employee's career is when a facility is having an excessing event. What is excessing? It is the need by the Postal Service to decrease the number of employees within a section or facility. The manner that this is done is regulated by Article 12 of our National Agreement, specifically Articles 12.5 and 12.6. The main principle of reassignments through excessing is to keep the dislocation and inconvenience to a minimum. Due to this principle the USPS and NPMHU have signed many Memoranda of Understanding (MOU). One such MOU concerns "Excessing Issues." Its sole purpose was to lessen the inconvenience when Mail Handler employees are being involuntarily reassigned into Mail Handler vacancies in another installation. Specifically, it requires the USPS to excess by strict seniority rather than by level, sets forth an eligible employee's veteran preference rights, lays out the required notices to be provided by the Postal Service, and it gives the Mail Handlers from the impacted facility who wish to transfer "Priority Consideration".

When the USPS deems it necessary to decrease the number or in some cases close a facility completely, they must send notification to the Regional Director of all the Unions involved and to the impacted employees. The Postal Service must provide at least 30 days notice when the excessing will not cause relocation benefits and 60 days if it does,

please see CAD Manager Teresa Harmon's article where she discussed relocation benefits. This notification is to include a list of potential vacancies for reassignment. Once this notification is received the losing facilities' employees will be given what is called "Priority Consideration" to transfer. Priority Consideration is only for employees where there is an event causing Mail Handlers to be excessed from a facility and all Mail Handlers in the losing facility will be given this consideration.

Under the Priority Consideration, a Mail Handler requesting a voluntary transfer will be placed at the top of the transfer list for that facility, and management will have to accept the employee without any review including attendance, discipline, or safety record. It is important to note that the Mail handler will have to reapply for any transfers that they may have requested prior to the event. Management won't change an existing transfer to priority consideration. This is also not a guarantee of a transfer, as the other regular transfer rules will continue to apply, including those in the MOU "Filling of Residual Vacancies". There must be a residual to transfer into, and it has to be compliant with the 4-1 ratio on conversions and transfers. Once an employee receives a voluntary transfer through eReassign, they will not receive relocation benefits, retreat rights, and they will receive a new seniority date.