

A special note about the November issue

In the November issue of *The Postal Record*, we will name all of the members of the Veterans Group to thank them for their service.

To make sure that your name is included, take action now and join at nalc.org/veterans. If you are a member of the group and wish not to have your name listed, please email your request to veteransgroup@nalc.org.

Veterans Group

For more information, go to nalc.org/veterans



NALC veterans' guide

NALC created the NALC Veterans Group to provide access to information and tools specific to veterans' rights and benefits within the Postal Service. It seeks to provide all NALC military veterans, both active and retired, with resources, information and a sense of camaraderie. More information regarding the NALC Veterans Group is available on the NALC website at nalc.org/veterans.

With this in mind, NALC is developing a veterans' guide as a quick reference with valuable information relating to military service and the Postal Service. This article gives a preview of some of the subjects the guide will cover.

Military buy-back

The process of paying the costs to obtain credit for military service is called "making deposit for" or "buying back" military time. The amount of the deposit (and the resulting retirement annuity increase) depends on whether the employee is covered under the Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS) or the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS), in addition to years of military service and the employee's earnings during their service in the armed forces.

This chapter of the guide gives a detailed explanation of this process. It explains how the cost is calculated as well as the retirement benefit to the employee upon retirement.

Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act of 1994 (USERRA)

USERRA protects the job rights of individuals who voluntarily or involuntarily leave employment positions to undertake military service or certain types of service in the National Disaster Medical System. USERRA also prohibits employers from discriminating against past and present members of the uniformed services.

This chapter explains letter carriers'

rights when their employment with the Postal Service is interrupted by military service. It also explains the relevant contractual provisions that apply when a letter carrier is serving on active duty in the armed forces.

Annual leave accrual

Letter carriers earn annual leave based on their years of service as a career employee. Employees with less than three years of service earn a maximum of four hours per pay period. Employees with more than three years but less than 15 years of career service earn up to six hours per pay period. After 15 years, career letter carriers earn up to eight hours per pay period.

Under certain conditions, military veterans receive additional creditable years of service toward annual leave accrual. This chapter explains how military service is counted when determining the amount of annual leave a veteran accrues per year.

On-the-job injuries

Many veterans have service-connected disabilities and still enjoy long, injury-free careers as letter carriers. The physical nature of letter carrier work, however, may aggravate previous service-connected disabilities. Veterans should understand their rights under federal law to compensation and other benefits for postal work-related injuries.

This chapter explains the differences between coverage for service-connected disabilities through the Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA) and the Office of Workers' Compensation Programs (OWCP). It also details how these programs work in conjunction when an on-the-job injury aggravates a service-connected disability.

Paid Military Leave

Letter carriers who are military veterans often continue to serve their country in the Reserve or National Guard. Career

letter carriers may receive up to 15 days per fiscal year of Paid Military Leave to cover all or part of absences related to their service. This category of leave enables letter carriers to receive pay from the Postal Service while they fulfill certain military obligations, rather than depleting their annual leave balances or using Leave Without Pay (LWOP).

This chapter covers the rules and regulations governing this type of leave, including the employee's responsibilities when an absence occurs due to temporary active duty service in the reserve components of the armed forces.

NALC is proud of the members who have dedicated their life to serving this country and swapped their military uniform for a letter carrier one. The goal of this guide is to ensure letter carriers who are veterans, as well as their union representatives, have an easy-to-use reference when questions arise regarding their rights.

Letter carriers should download the NALC Member App on their Apple or Android device so they can be notified once the guide is available. Instructions for downloading the app are available on the NALC website at nalc.org/app.

Join the NALC Veterans Group

The NALC Veterans Group is designed to provide NALC members—both active and retired letter carriers—who are also military veterans the ability to connect with fellow NALC veterans and stay informed on issues of importance to letter carrier veterans. It is free to join.

Members receive a pin as a symbol of gratitude for your military service and membership in NALC.

If you are interested in joining the group, complete the sign-up card at nalc.org/veterans.