

Summary of Changes

The *Employee and Labor Relations Manual* (ELM), Issue 18, constitutes a revision of the ELM 17, including modifications to chapters 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, and 9, and the addition of an index.

The Specific Revisions section below summarizes subchapter changes. The changes are organized by section number and in the text of the manual by a revision bar. Language has been added, changed, or rearranged to promote clarity. In addition, language or sections have been deleted and the sections have been renumbered and references changed accordingly.

Specific Revisions

This chapter, subchapter, part, or section...	titled...	was updated to...
Chapter 3 Employment and Placement		
355	Light Duty Assignments	restore part 355, mistakenly omitted from ELM 17, to provide policy on light duty assignments.
Chapter 4 Pay Administration		
412.1	Career Appointment	reflect changes in determining differential rate for Executive and Administrative Schedule employees.
413.21	EAS Employees	reflect changes in determining differential rate for Executive and Administrative Schedule employees.
414.21	Nonbargaining Unit Employees	reflect changes in determining differential rate for Executive and Administrative Schedule employees.
Exhibit 418.1	Equivalent Grades	recognize the city letter carrier position upgrades necessitated by the Fleischli Arbitration Award of September 19, 1999.
420	Wage Administration Policy for Bargaining Unit Employees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ recodify and format to include a broad structure and numbering scheme to encompass all current salary schedules. It is modified throughout to update the names of bargaining unit categories, schedule acronyms, and grade ranges. ■ change references to “area supply centers” to “material distribution center.” References to the bargaining unit “Mail Equipment Shops” are changed to “Material Distribution Center.” ■ change “salary” to “wage” when the compensation term is either preceded by “basic” or “setting” or followed by “rate,” “adjustment,” “increase,” or “level.” The changes are made to increase technical accuracy when discussing an employee’s compensation expressed as an hourly rate rather than as an annualized salary equivalent. ■ adapt references as necessary. In addition, minor editorial revisions are made for clarity and consistency.

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Chapter 4 Pay Administration		
421.41	Appointments	add language to 421.41a to clarify that transfers to or from the rural carrier craft require a new career appointment.
421.42	Assignments	add language to 421.42b(2) to clarify that rural craft employees are paid based on route evaluated hours or route mileage and add language to 421.42c to clarify that the provision applies to up to three positions.
421.44	Terms	add four new terms for clarity and completeness: "promotion," repromotion," "interim promotion," and "reduction in grade."
421.45	Wage Increases	give a new title and revised in item b to clarify both the definition of step increase and the most prevalent step identification procedure.
421.514	Termination	add language to 421.514c to clarify how a protected rate is currently terminated under certain promotion circumstances.
421.521	Explanation	add 421.521c to indicate that saved rate applies to an employee who accepts a job offer based on limitations due to an injury on duty.
421.524	Termination	add language to 421.524c to clarify how a saved rate is currently terminated under certain promotion circumstances.
421.525	Effect on Promotion	clarify the impact of saved rate special pay status on promotion actions.
421.7	Rate Schedule Summary and References	update the names of bargaining unit categories, schedule acronyms, grade ranges, and references.
Exhibit 421.81	Higher Level Pay	hold in reserve pending further revisions necessitated by the October 1, 1999, MOU between the USPS and the APWU resolving the "promotion pay anomaly."
Exhibit 421.82	Promotion Increases	update the names of bargaining unit categories, schedule acronyms, and grade ranges. It is also modified to include revisions necessitated by the October 1, 1999, MOU between the USPS and the APWU resolving the "promotion pay anomaly."
422.111	Salary Schedule	note at 422.111b that the Mail Equipment Shop/Material Distribution Center Schedule has 11 grades following the Goldberg Arbitration Award of December 18, 2001.
422.121	Career Appointment	modify 422.121a, Reinstatement, to conform to current practice and add 422.121e, Hiring Into the Rural Carrier Craft, to explain current practices more fully. The procedures for hiring into the PS and MESC Schedule 2 are also clarified in 422.121f.

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Chapter 4 Pay Administration		
422.123	Promotion Rules	include revisions necessitated by the October 1, 1999, MOU between the USPS and the APWU resolving the “promotion pay anomaly.” In 422.123b(6), the rule choice provision regarding wage rules now requires decisions regarding deviation from standard practice to be made by the district Human Resources manager rather than by the installation head. To conform to actual pay practices and maintain consistency with 422.144b, it is also modified in 422.123b(7) to delete from the list of exclusions reference to temporary promotions and higher level assignments.
Exhibit 422.123a	Promotion Chart — PS Schedule 1 to PS Schedule 2	include revisions necessitated by the October 1, 1999, MOU between the USPS and the APWU resolving the “promotion pay anomaly.” It is also revised to incorporate the newly created APWU Grade 11, necessitated by the Goldberg Arbitration Award of December 18, 2001.
Exhibit 422.123b	Promotion Chart — PS Schedule 2 to PS Schedule 2	include revisions necessitated by the October 1, 1999, MOU between the USPS and the APWU resolving the “promotion pay anomaly.” It is also revised to incorporate the newly created APWU Grade 11, necessitated by the Goldberg Arbitration Award of December 18, 2001.
422.124	Reassignment Rules	add 422.124d to clarify reassignments for PS and MESC employees.
422.125	Reductions in Grade	add 425b(3) to clarify reduction in grade for PS and MESC employees.
Exhibit 422.13	Bargaining Unit Step Increase Waiting Periods	show the addition of Step Q in the IT/ASC Schedule necessitated by the Collins Arbitration Award of April 26, 2000.
422.223	Promotion Rules	include the material previously found in 422.123 and incorporated by reference. It is also modified to include revisions necessitated by the October 1, 1999, MOU between the USPS and the APWU resolving the “promotion pay anomaly.”
422.323	Promotion Rules	include the material previously found in 422.123 and incorporated by reference. It is also modified to include revisions necessitated by the October 1, 1999, MOU between the USPS and the APWU resolving the “promotion pay anomaly.”
422.415	Employee Classification	add text to 422.415a to show both regular and part-time flexible rural carriers.
422.421	Career Appointment	modify at 422.421a(3) the reference to part-time flexible rural carriers as described further in the Rural Carrier labor contract at Article 7.A.2.
422.422	Promotion Rules	include the material previously found in 422.123 and incorporated by reference. It is also modified to include revisions necessitated by the October 1, 1999, MOU between the USPS and the APWU resolving the “promotion pay anomaly.”

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Chapter 4 Pay Administration		
422.523	Promotion Rules	include the material previously found in 422.123 and incorporated by reference. It is also modified to include revisions necessitated by the October 1, 1999, MOU between the USPS and the APWU resolving the "promotion pay anomaly."
422.622	Promotion Rules	include the material previously found in 422.123 and incorporated by reference. It is also modified to include revisions necessitated by the October 1, 1999, MOU between the USPS and the APWU resolving the "promotion pay anomaly."
422.723	Promotion Rules	include the material previously found in 422.123 and incorporated by reference. It is also modified to include revisions necessitated by the October 1, 1999, MOU between the USPS and the APWU resolving the "promotion pay anomaly."
422.823	Promotion Rules	include the material previously found in 422.123 and incorporated by reference. It is also modified to include revisions necessitated by the October 1, 1999, MOU between the USPS and the APWU resolving the "promotion pay anomaly."
422.9	Tool and Die Shop Schedule	reflect the reconstitution of the Tool and Die Shop bargaining unit January 31, 1997. It incorporates provisions previously found in ELM 12 and subsequent changes.
422.923	Promotion Rules	include the material previously found in 422.123 and incorporated by reference. It is also modified to include revisions necessitated by the October 1, 1999, MOU between the USPS and the APWU resolving the "promotion pay anomaly."
424.3	Step Increase	remove the performance requirements for eligibility for step increases for rural carriers.
425	Postal Nurses Schedule	divide into subsections, give titles to the subsections, number accordingly, and provide information on the Postal Nurses Schedule previously given in part 424.
428	Postal Police Officers Schedule	divide into subsections, give titles to the subsections, number accordingly, and provide information on the Postal Police Officers Schedule previously given in part 424.
430	Basic and Special Pay Provisions	replace the term "guarantee" with "guaranteed" throughout the subchapter, and to restore in 434.3 the substantive provisions affecting Sunday premium pay that were in place in ELM 15, before revisions of May 2000.
433.5	Reemployed Annuitant	reflect current practice in obtaining annuitant services under contract.
434.4	Holiday Leave Pay	improve clarity and to notify eligible employees that they may elect to receive annual leave in lieu of holiday leave pay.

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Chapter 4 Pay Administration		
Exhibit 434.8	Pyramiding of Premiums	re-implement the substantive provisions of ELM 15 and so allow payment of Sunday premium to eligible employees who are on continuation of pay status or on military or court leave.
436.61	Purpose	clarify the general obligation the Postal Service has in paying interest on back pay claims.
436.62	Availability of Interest	clarify under what circumstances the Postal Service is required to pay interest on a back pay claim.
436.63	Determination of Rate of Interest	clarify how the Accounting Service Center (ASC) determines the rate of interest to be paid on a back pay claim.
Exhibit 436.63a	Interest on Back Pay Decisions	clarify how the ASC determines the rate of interest for an adjustment on a back pay award issued by a court, arbitration, or federal agency decision.
Exhibit 436.63b	Interest on Back Pay Settlements	clarify how the ASC determines the rate of interest for an adjustment on a back pay award issued by a court, prearbitration, or federal agency settlement.
452.11	Establishment of Accounts Receivable	delete reference to an obsolete form.
452.4	Exceptions to Procedures Found in sections 452.2 and 452.3	give a new title and revise to incorporate the statutory provision in section 31001(h) of the Debt Collection Improvement Act of 1996, codified at 5 U.S.C. section 5514(a)(3), that excludes certain routine intra-agency adjustments of pay from the provisions of section 5514(a)(2).
462.11	Establishment of Accounts Receivable	delete reference to an obsolete form.
470	Recognition and Awards	<p>give a new title and revise to provide greater flexibility in granting cash and noncash awards. The revisions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Clarifying the definitions of <i>Service Award</i>, <i>Informal Award</i>, <i>Formal Award</i>, and <i>Special Award</i>, and identifying the employee group eligible for each award. ■ Clarifying the definitions of <i>noncash award</i>, <i>cash equivalent award</i>, and <i>cash award</i>. ■ Clarifying the tax implications of awards. ■ Revising the budget limit for all awards to one half of one percent (0.005%) of the total end of fiscal year salary budget and directing that administration of this budgeted amount be on a performance cluster level. ■ Revising the procedures for requesting 50-year service pins. ■ Updating sample letters of appreciation. ■ Updating eAWARDS payment procedures. ■ Combining award categories, expanding the pool of employees eligible, and increasing the maximum dollar value of cash and cash equivalent awards that may be issued each fiscal year.

Summary of Changes

This chapter, sub-chapter, part, or section...	titled...	was updated to...
Chapter 4 Pay Administration		
474.241	Comparison to Regular Within-Grade Increases	clarify the determination of the step and next step date for a quality step increase action.
Chapter 5 Employee Benefits		
512.633	Nonbargaining Unit Annual Leave Exchange	provide a general statement regarding the exchange of annual leave for cash rather than to indicate the exact number of hours allowed.
516.41	General	change the policy regarding what payments a juror may keep when on court leave.
519.6	Nonbargaining Unit Personal Absence	add 519.6 through 519.652.
520	Health Benefits Program	edit throughout for consistency of presentation and conformance to Postal Service editorial style.
521.411	Responsibility of Employing Office	delete the second paragraph, which was redundant.
521.423	Foster Children	modify the "Note" to indicate that a sample certification form is found in Exhibit 521.423, Certification of Foster Children. Exhibit 521.423 is revised to elaborate on the certification requirements per OPM guidance.
521.621	Eligible for Coverage	indicate that RI 70-5, <i>Guide to Federal Employee Health Benefit Plans for TCC and Former Spouse Enrollees</i> , is sent to an eligible former spouse.
521.711	Eligible for Coverage	modify item d to show that former spouses awaiting approval or disapproval from OPM are among those who are eligible for temporary continuation of coverage.
523	Enrollment	reflect a new title.
523.6	Enrollment by a Former Spouse	reflect a new title.
523.61	Enrollment Form	indicate that all former spouse SFs 2809, <i>Employee Health Benefits Election Form — Federal Employees Health Benefits Program (FEHB)</i> , are forwarded to the National Finance Center (NFC) rather than to the Eagan Retirement Branch. The title of the section is also revised.
523.632	Contents of File	restructure text under item f which becomes items 1 through 6 and "Payroll's" is replaced by "NFC's."
523.634	Disposition of File	indicate that it is the NFC that maintains the file and to clarify the terms under which the personnel office maintains records.
524.529	Change to Self Only	elaborate on circumstances considered "qualified life status changes."
524.531	Change in Marital Status	include at item a(1) common law marriage under the criteria for change in status and at item c to clarify the provision for new spouse enrollment.
524.62	Change to Self Only	clarify change to Self Only depending on whether premiums are paid on a pretax basis or an after-tax basis.
524.773	Application for Conversion	clarify the time frame within which application for conversion can be made.

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Chapter 5 Employee Benefits		
524.774	Late Conversion	clarify the steps to be taken when an application for conversion is belated. Subsequent sections are renumbered 524.775 and 524.776, respectively.
524.831	Tax Benefits	delete obsolete information indicating that a pre-tax benefit is not available under FEHB.
524.832	Career Employees	add occurrence of a qualified life status change as an opportunity for waiver of pretax basis for payment of premiums.
524.833	Certain Noncareer and Transitional Employees	add occurrence of a qualified life status change as an opportunity to elect payment of premiums on a pretax basis.
524.84	Health Benefits Schedule	indicate that Publication 12, <i>Health Benefits Open Season Administrative and Processing Information</i> , is available on the Postal Service intranet and to eliminate reference to cost information.
524.921	New Enrollment	clarify the effective date of a new enrollment.
524.922	Change in Enrollment	replace "employing office" with "NFC."
524.93	Payment of Premiums	replace "Eagan ASC" with "NFC."
524.95	Cancellation of Enrollment	replace "employing office" with "NFC."
524.965	Former Spouse Responsibility	replace "employing office" with "NFC."
524.966	National Finance Center Responsibility	show in the title and in the text the role of the NFC in terminating health coverage for former spouses.
525.141	Reporting to OWCP	clarify that injury compensation personnel annotate OWCP Form CA-7/20, <i>Claim for Compensation on Account of Traumatic Injury or Occupational Disease/Attending Physician's Report</i> .
525.146	On LWOP Ten Months, But Enrollment Not Transferred	show in the title and in item a that the time period is 10 months rather than 8 months in accordance with OPM guidance.
525.222	Procedures to Be Followed by Employing Office	indicate at item e that enrollment is continued for an employee entering nonpay status who fails to respond to notice of his or her option to continue or terminate health benefits and that the employee is expected to pay his or her portion of the premiums due.
525.52	Enrollment Eligibility Both as a Employee and as a Survivor	clarify terms under which a surviving spouse may apply for reinstatement of annuitant- or survivor-acquired health benefits enrollment.
533.224	Birthdays and Pay Periods	clarify policy on birthdays and pay periods for optional insurance purposes.
Chapter 6 Employee Relations		
634.31	Amounts	specify policy about ideas implemented locally.
635	Records	reflect the addition of eIDEAS to the Ideas Program.
Exhibit 636.1	Idea Proposal Processing Summary	indicate the electronic process for submitting idea proposals.
636.2	Payment	show that technology, specifically eAwards, is used to process payments.
Chapter 6 Employee Relations		

Summary of Changes

This chapter, sub-chapter, part, or section...	titled...	was updated to...
651	Disciplinary and Emergency Procedures	add new subsections and renumber.
651.2	Representation	clarify representation prohibitions and add an employee's right for representation during disciplinary investigative questioning.
651.3	Nondisciplinary Corrective Measures	add language to reinforce managers' and supervisors' responsibilities for subordinate employees' performance improvement.
651.4	Emergency Placement in Off-Duty Status	add alcohol/drug impairment language and a provision for dealing with behavior potentially injurious to self or other employees.
651.5	Letters of Warning	add retention timeframe.
651.6	Letters of Warning in Lieu of Time-Off Suspensions	incorporate applicable parts of Management Instruction (MI) EL-650-96-3.
651.61	Policy	incorporate applicable parts of MI EL-650-96-3.
651.62	Implementation	incorporate applicable parts of MI EL-650-96-3.
651.63	Notice	incorporate applicable parts of MI EL-650-96-3.
651.64	Response	incorporate applicable parts of MI EL-650-96-3.
651.65	Decision	incorporate applicable parts of MI EL-650-96-3 and add a 30-calendar-day timeframe for the deciding official to render a decision.
651.66	Retention	incorporate applicable parts of MI EL-650-96-3 and change the retention period of Letters of Warning in Lieu of Time-Off Suspensions from 3 years to 2 years.
651.7	Adverse Actions	incorporate material previously given in 651.6.
651.71	Definition	provide material previously given in 651.61.
651.72	Policy	provide material previously given in 651.62.
651.73	Notice	provide material previously given in 651.63.
651.74	Response	provide material previously given in 651.64 and add new language.
651.75	Decision	provide material previously given in 651.65 and include a 60-calendar-day time limit for a deciding official to render a decision in an adverse action.
651.76	Duty Status	provide material previously given in 651.66 and explain disposition of a case.
651.77	Exceptions to Thirty-Day Notice	to add material previously in 651.67.
652	Appeal Procedures	give new title and renumber.
652.1	Scope	replace the word "grievance" with the word "appeal."
652.21	Coverage	delete reference to 14 day or less suspensions because they are not adverse actions.
652.22	Exclusion	provide material previously given in 652.212.
652.23	Appeal to Step 1	renumber.

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Chapter 6 Employee Relations		
652.231	Field Employees	provide material previously given in 652.221 and make the Headquarters vice president of Labor Relations or designee the Step 1 official for adverse actions instead of the area vice president.
652.232	Headquarters, Headquarters Field Units, Inspection Service, and Office of Inspector General Employees	provide material previously given in 656.222.
652.233	Exceptions	provide material previously given in 656.223.
652.241	Action If No Hearing Requested	include instruction for the Step 1 official to issue a final decision within 21 calendar days; previously was 652.231.
652.242	Action When Hearing Requested	provide for the assignment of a neutral hearing officer within 10 calendar days of a hearing request and for a hearing to be held no later than 75 calendar days after a neutral hearing officer is assigned; and to provide employee at least 14 calendar days' notice of a hearing schedule versus 7 calendar days; previously was 652.232.
652.243	Management Obligation for Witnesses	add a provision for witnesses to testify via alternative means when unable to attend a hearing in person; previously was 652.233.
652.244	Workhours Compensation	add clarification for who gets compensated at a hearing; previously was 652.234.
652.245	Noninterference Rule	provide material previously given in 652.235.
652.246	Transcript	provide material previously given in 652.236 and reword for clarity.
652.247	Attorney Fees	clarify that attorney fees are not applicable to appeals covered in 650.
652.25	Post Hearing	add subsections 652.251, Hearing Officer Action, and 652.252, Step 1 Official Action, to provide for a proposed decision (vs. a finding of fact) by the neutral hearing officer prior to the Step 1 official's final decision; and to add processing timeframes.
652.3	Appeal of Letters of Warning in Lieu of Time-off Suspensions and/or Time-off Suspensions for Office of Inspector General Employees	incorporate appeals provisions from MI EL-650-96-3.
652.4	Other Appealable Actions	delete the word "grievance" and replace it with "appeal(s)" and include OIG coverage.
652.41	Coverage	change EAS levels to conform to recent level increases; previously was 652.31.
652.42	Step A	renumber; previously was 652.32.
652.43	Step B	renumber; previously was 652.33.
652.44	Review	renumber; previously was 652.34.
652.5	Alternative Dispute Resolution	include provisions for mediation for letters of warning in lieu of time-off suspensions and for adverse actions.
Chapter 8 Safety and Health		

Summary of Changes

This chapter, sub-chapter, part, or section...	titled...	was updated to...
870	Employee Assistance Program	reflect policy changes to the Employee Assistance Program.
Chapter 9 Labor Relations		
931.13	Types of Clothing	revise item b to replace “window” with “retail.”
931.261	Appearance	add a new sentence to end of section.
932.11	Regular Uniforms	add new item h and re-order other items.
932.13	Work Clothes	reflect a change to a job title.
932.21	New, Part-Time, and Casual Employees	revise the first sentence.
932.31	Specifications	delete “Natick, MA.”
932.32	Quality Control Certification	delete “U.S. Army Natick Laboratories, Natick, MA.”
933.1	Type 1 Uniforms	reflect current uniform requirements.
933.12	Type 1 Combinations	replace the word “window” with “retail” in footnote 6.
933.21	Type 2 Items	replace the table “Items for Men” and the table “Items for Women” to reflect new uniform options.
933.22	Type 2 Combinations	replace the table to reflect new uniform options.
933.4	Type 4 Uniform Items	reflect updates to uniforms worn by security force police officers.
933.72	Other Insignia	replace the word “window” with “retail.”
934.2	Cold Weather Items (Does not apply to Type 2 Uniforms)	give a new title for 934.2.
934.3	Warm Weather Items (Does not apply to Type 2 Uniforms)	give a new title for 934.3.
934.4	Seasonal Changes of Uniform	reflect uniform policy for retail employees.
934.5	Employees in Nonuniform Categories	replace “window” with “retail.”