

420 Wage Administration Policy for Bargaining Unit Employees

Revision Note:

Subchapter 420 is currently under major revision. When it is completed and appropriate advance notice obligations are fulfilled with the unions, changes will be published in the *Postal Bulletin*, incorporated in the ELM on the Postal Service Corporate intranet, and included in the next hard copy issue of the ELM.

421 General Principles and Terms

421.1 Scope

This subchapter establishes the conditions and procedures for setting the salaries for Postal Service employees who are covered by collective bargaining agreements. Note that:

- a. *Consistency With Agreements.* It is not the intent of these instructions to in any way amend or conflict with the provisions of the collective bargaining agreements negotiated between the Postal Service and officially recognized employee organizations. The applicable provisions of a collective bargaining agreement controls in the event of any conflict with this subchapter.
- b. *Categorization of Bargaining Units.* Exhibit 421.7 provides a categorization of bargaining unit employees.
- c. *Employee Classifications.* Employee classifications for bargaining unit employees appear in 432.111.

421.2 Objectives

The principal objectives of the wage administration policy are:

- a. To provide uniform compensation rules and practices that are consistent with the provisions of the bargaining unit agreements for the establishment of wage rates for employment, reassignment, promotion, and other changes in the pay status of bargaining unit employees.
- b. To provide for effective administration of salary expenditures.

421.3 Responsibilities

421.31 Assigning Positions to Salary Schedules

The executive vice president of Human Resources is responsible for determining the appropriate salary schedule for each position covered in 420. Note that:

- a. A position is the aggregate of all the current duties and responsibilities contained in a work assignment made by a supervisor to an employee

to be performed during an employee's full working schedule and is reflected in the authorized position description.

- b. The procedures for authorizing and ranking bargaining unit positions appear in 230 and 240.
- c. Each bargaining unit position is assigned to one of the authorized salary schedules based upon the established categories listed in Exhibit 421.7.

421.32 **Setting Salaries**

The appointing official has primary responsibility for setting the salary of an employee according to the guidelines for the appropriate salary schedule (see 422.2). Higher level approval is required when appropriate or when specified (see 425a(3) and 427.14).

421.4 **Definitions**

421.41 **Appointments**

The types of appointments are as follows:

- a. *Career appointment* — a new hire for an appointment without time limit requiring the completion of a probationary period that confers full employee benefits and privileges. The term applies (a) to new employees, (b) former employees who are being reinstated, (c) employees transferring from federal agencies, and (d) in certain cases, employees transferring from one collective bargaining unit to another.
- b. *Temporary/casual appointment* — a new hire for a time-limited appointment; does not apply to bargaining unit employees.
- c. *Appointment to additional position* — applies to cases of dual employment, as described in 422.5, when an existing employee is appointed to one or two additional positions.

421.42 **Assignments**

The types of assignments are as follows:

- a. *Permanent assignment* — simply called *assignment*; a set of specific duties at a specified location in a specified schedule related to an employee's position description. For postal police officers, an individual preferred schedule consists of a desired tour and nonscheduled days at a work facility.
- b. *Temporary assignment* — the assignment of an employee for a short period of time to perform duties and responsibilities other than those specifically contained in her or his position description when a formal personnel action is not required.
 - (1) Employees assigned to higher level duties may receive higher level pay (see 422.4).
 - (2) Employees assigned to lower level duties continue to receive their regular pay.
 - (3) For postal police officers, temporary assignment is a transfer to another schedule (tour and days off) or work facility.

421.43 **Change Actions**

The types of change actions are as follows:

- a. *Promotion* — the permanent assignment of an employee (a) to an established position having a higher grade than the position to which the employee was previously assigned in the same schedule or (b) to a position with a higher than equivalent grade (see [Exhibit 418.1](#)) in another schedule.
- b. *Reassignment* — the permanent assignment or relocation of an employee (a) to another established position with the same grade in the same schedule or (b) to a position with an equivalent grade (see [Exhibit 418.1](#)) in another schedule, also called *lateral assignment* or simply *lateral*. For postal police officers, reassignment is a permanent transfer to another work facility.
- c. *Demotion* — the permanent assignment due to unsatisfactory performance of an employee (a) to an established position with a lower grade in the same schedule or (b) to a position with a lower than equivalent grade (see [Exhibit 418.1](#)) in another schedule, also called *disciplinary reduction*.
- d. *Voluntary reduction* — the permanent assignment at the request of the employee (a) to an established position with a lower grade in the same schedule or (b) to a position with a lower than equivalent grade (see [Exhibit 418.1](#)) in another schedule.
- e. *Management action reduction* — the permanent, nondisciplinary, and involuntary assignment of an employee for reasons such as changes in job ranking criteria and job elimination (a) to an established position with a lower grade in the same schedule or (b) to a position with a lower than equivalent grade (see [Exhibit 418.1](#)) in another schedule. Rate retention provisions apply in cases of this type of reduction (see 421.5).

421.44 **Salary Terms**

The salary terms are as follows:

- a. *Basic salary* — the annual, daily, or hourly rate of pay provided by the applicable salary schedule for the employee's assigned position.
- b. *Compensation* — the same as an employee's basic salary plus special pay.
- c. *Special pay* — pay and allowances for additional and premium hours. See 430 for special pay provisions, which include the following:
 - (1) Overtime pay (see 434.1).
 - (2) Night differential (see 434.2).
 - (3) Sunday premium (see 434.3).
 - (4) Holiday worked pay (see 434.5).
 - (5) Out-of-schedule overtime (see 434.6).
 - (6) Information service center on-call pay (see collective bargaining agreement).
 - (7) Territorial cost-of-living allowance — TCOLA (see 439).

- d. *Grade* — the numerical salary standing and salary range in the salary schedule assigned to a position; also called *salary grade*.
- e. *Equivalent grade* — the grade in one salary schedule that is most similar in salary range to the grade in another salary schedule whether bargaining or nonbargaining (see [Exhibit 418.1](#)). See 418 for salary adjustment rules for assignments to a different salary schedule.
- f. *Step* — the number or letter assigned to specific salary rates within a grade of a salary schedule. Maximum step is the highest schedule step for a position.
- g. *Salary standing* — the step rate or percentile with respect to the appropriate salary schedule.
- h. *Red-circle amount* — the dollar portion of an employee's salary that is in excess of the maximum salary of the grade and that results from the saved rate provisions described in 421.52.

421.45 **Salary Increases**

The types of salary increases are as follows:

- a. *General increase* — an across-the-board wage increase in the step rate or salary range that applies to all employees within the specified category.
- b. *Step increase* — an advancement from one step to the next within a specific grade of a position dependent on satisfying certain waiting period criteria (see 422.3); also called periodic step increase. For rural carriers, postal nurses, and postal police officers, step increases are also dependent on satisfying certain performance criteria (see 424.3, 425c, and 428.3). Most prevalent step is the most frequently occurring incremental amount between steps within a grade level's salary range. When two amounts occur the same number of times and more frequently than other amounts, the higher of the two amounts is the most prevalent step.
- c. *Equivalent increase* — any increase other than a general increase, a quality step increase, or an incentive award that results in a total increase equal to or greater than the most prevalent step in the salary range for the employee's position and grade. The following is applicable:
 - (1) When moving between salary schedules, there may be an equivalent increase if the total amount of an increase exceeds the most prevalent step in the salary range for the employee's former position.
 - (2) A new waiting period begins on the effective date of an equivalent increase, except as described in 422.232a for repromotions and in 422.25 for reduction in grade.
- d. *Quality step increase* — an increase in addition to a periodic step increase granted on or before expiration of required waiting periods in recognition of extra competence (see 474).

- e. *Cost-of-living adjustment (COLA)* — a general increase based on increases in the consumer price index (CPI) over a base month as specified by collective bargaining agreements.

421.5 Rate Retention Provisions

421.51 Protected Rate

421.511 Explanation

An individual employee who is assigned to a lower grade position has a protected rate (i.e., continues to be paid the salary he or she received in the previous higher grade position, as detailed in 421.512, augmented by any general increases granted (see also 422.13), for a specified period of 2 calendar years provided all of the following conditions are satisfied:

- a. The employee is serving under a career appointment.
- b. Reduction in salary standing is not disciplinary (for personal cause) or voluntary (at the request of the employee).
- c. The employee served for 2 continuous years immediately preceding the effective date of reduction in a position with a salary standing higher than that to which reduced.
- d. Salary in the higher salary standing was not derived from a temporary appointment or temporary assignment.
- e. Reduction in salary standing is not caused by a reduction in force due to lack of funds imposed on the Postal Service by outside authority or curtailment of work. For this purpose, curtailment of work does not include reduction in revenue unit category of any Post Office or reduction in route mileage on a rural route.
- f. Employee's performance of work was satisfactory at all times during such period of 2 calendar years.

421.512 Rate Determination

The basic salary of an employee entitled to a protected rate is *the lowest* of the following:

- a. The employee's basic salary at the time of reduction.
- b. An amount that is 25 percent more than the maximum basic salary for the new grade (i.e., the grade to which reduced).
- c. The basic salary in the *lowest* salary standing that the employee held during the 2 years immediately preceding reduction in salary standing, augmented by each step increase he or she would have earned in such salary standing.

Note: For rural carriers serving evaluated routes, the existing basic salary includes additional heavy duty compensation up to 40 hours.

421.513 Duration

An employee who is entitled to a protected rate retains the protected rate, augmented by general increases, for 2 calendar years from the effective date

of the protected rate. If, before the 2 years expires, the employee is again reduced in salary standing, the following applies:

- a. A new protected rate period of 2 calendar years begins.
- b. The new protected rate is redetermined according to the rule in 421.512 in relation to the salary standing following the latest reduction.

421.514 Termination

Rate protection ceases at the beginning of the pay period following a determination that an employee is no longer entitled to protection for any one of the following reasons:

- a. A break in service of 1 workday or more.
- b. Reduction to a lower salary standing (1) for disciplinary reasons or (2) at employee's own request.
- c. Promotion or other advancement of employee to a higher grade or salary range in the same schedule, or to a position with a higher than equivalent grade in another schedule, above the protected rate.
- d. Compensation of the employee is changed for any reason, other than by a general increase, to a basic salary equal to or higher than the protected rate.

421.515 Effect on Other Compensation

Rate protection affects other compensation as follows:

- a. *Promotion Rules.* In applying the promotion rules, the former basic salary is the basic salary the employee would have received except for the protected rate.
- b. *Rural Routes.* Equipment maintenance allowances on rural routes are paid in relation to the documented route to which the carrier is assigned.

421.516 Documentation

PS Form 50, *Notification of Personnel Action*, is used to notify an employee who is changed to a lower grade or salary standing of entitlement to rate retention. It contains a reference under the remarks section to 421.5 as authority for the amount and duration of the rate retention. The PS Form 50 also is used to notify an employee of the expiration of a rate retention status.

421.517 Step Increases

An employee with a protected rate continues to receive step increases in the grade to which the employee is reduced. However, under no circumstances can receipt of these step increases cause the employee's salary to exceed the maximum step of the lower grade.

421.52 Saved Rate

421.521 Explanation

Employees with a saved rate will continue to be paid the salary they received in the previous higher grade position, augmented by any general increases occurring while the saved rate is in effect. A saved rate differs from a protected rate in that it continues for an indefinite period, subject to the

conditions explained below (see 421.522 through 421.526) and occurs in several different circumstances, as follows:

- a. An employee is given a *permanent, nondisciplinary, and involuntary* assignment to a lower grade due to a management action such as a change in job ranking criteria affecting more than one position under the same job description. In this case, saved rate means that the employee continues to receive the salary of the higher grade position.
- b. Management action effects a general increase that, when added to an employee's salary, produces a salary above the maximum rate for the grade. In this case, *saved rate* means that the amount of the general increase is added to the employee's salary and the employee continues to receive the new salary even though it is above the maximum for the grade.

421.522 Red-Circle Amount

The *red-circle amount* is the dollar portion of an employee's salary that is in excess of the maximum salary of the grade. An employee continues to receive a red-circle amount as long as he or she is in saved rate status. Note the following:

- a. Red-circle amount results from saved rate only. It does *not* result from protected rate.
- b. If an employee who receives a red-circle amount (under section C, Special Rule, Pay System for Employees, covered by the collective bargaining agreement of November 18, 1970) is subsequently promoted and later returned to the former position, the red-circle amount is restored.

421.523 Duration

Employees retain the saved rate for as long as they hold a position in the same or higher grade for which the maximum schedule rate is below the saved rate.

421.524 Termination

Saved rate is terminated for any of the following reasons:

- a. A break in service of 1 workday or more.
- b. Demotion or voluntary reduction.
- c. Promotion resulting in a salary equal to or above the saved rate.

421.525 Effect on Promotion

If the employee has a saved rate due to assignment to a lower grade position and is assigned to a different position, the assignment is not a promotion for purposes of pay adjustment, unless the assignment is to a position with a grade higher than the grade on which the saved rate was established.

421.526 Documentation

PS Form 50, *Notification of Personnel Action*, is used to notify an employee of a saved rate status.

421.53 Saved Grade**421.531 Explanation**

Saved grade provisions can be invoked only in accordance with the applicable collective bargaining agreement. Decisions to disapprove saved grade are subject to review through the grievance and arbitration process. Saved grade must be approved by area Human Resources managers or their designees. Saved grade applies to all bargaining unit employees *except* the following:

- a. Employees in Operating Services Division at Headquarters and the Merrifield Engineering Support Center (APWU) (see 427.2).
- b. Employees under the National Postal Professional Nurses' (NPPN) Agreement (see 425).
- c. Employees under the Fraternal Order of Police, National Labor Council (FOP-NLC) Agreement (see 428).

421.532 Duration and Termination

The saved grade will be in effect for an indefinite period of time subject to the conditions below:

- a. To continue to receive a saved grade, an employee must bid or apply for all vacant jobs in the saved grade for which he or she is qualified.
- b. If the employee fails to bid or apply, the employee loses the saved grade status immediately.
- c. The Information Service Centers collective bargaining agreement requires that, in order to retain the saved grade, employees bid or apply for reassignment to their former grade or to any position at a grade between that of their former grade and present grade.

421.533 Step Increases

An employee with a saved grade continues to receive step increases in the saved grade. However, under no circumstances, can these step increases exceed the maximum step of the saved grade (see 421.45b).

421.6 Changes in Compensation Following Review or Audit

A change in compensation required after review or audit of a position is made at the beginning of the pay period following the date of the decision to change the evaluation of the position or its identification.

421.7 Reference Table

[Exhibit 421.7, Reference Table](#), outlines the categories and subcategories of bargaining unit employees, their salary schedules, and rate schedule codes and provides references to appropriate exhibits and explanations.

Exhibit 421.7

Reference Table

Category	Schedule Acronym	Range	Rate Schedule Code	Part 420 Reference
a. Postal Service Schedule	PS	Grades 1–10	P	422
b. Mail Equipment Shops and Material Distribution Centers Schedule	MEDC	Grades 1–10	C	422
c. Mail Handlers Schedule	MH	Grades 4–6	M	423
d. Rural Carrier Schedules				
(1) Evaluated Schedules	RC	Hours 12–48	R	424
(2) Mileage Schedule	RCS	Miles 6–140	R	424
(3) Rural Auxiliary Schedule	RAUX	Grade 5	B	424
e. Information Service Centers Schedule	ISC	Grades 6–23	N	426
f. Postal Nurses Schedule	PNS	Grade 1	G	425
g. Operating Services Division Schedule	OSD	Grades 1–9	K	427
h. Postal Police Officers Schedule	PPO	Grade 6	Y	428
i. Tool and Die Shop Schedule	TDS	Grades 4–11	T	429
j. City Carriers Schedule	CC	Grades 5–6	Q	422

421.8 Calculation Methods**421.81 [Exhibit 421.81, Higher Level Pay](#)**

[Exhibit 421.81, Higher Level Pay](#), provides calculation methods to use in computing higher level pay.

421.82 [Exhibit 421.82, Promotional Increases](#)

[Exhibit 421.82, Promotional Increases](#), provides calculation methods to use in computing promotional increases.

422 Postal Service, City Carrier, and the Mail Equipment Shops and Material Distribution Centers Salary Schedules**422.1 Salary System****422.11 Salary Schedules**

The relevant salary schedules are as follows:

- a. The Postal Service (PS) salary schedule applies to clerks, vehicle service drivers, and Post Office maintenance service and vehicle maintenance employees. The PS schedule consists of PS grades 1–10.
- b. The City Carrier (CC) salary schedule applies to city carriers and consists of grades 5 and 6.
- c. The Mail Equipment Shops and Material Distribution Centers (MEDC) salary schedule applies to bargaining unit employees in the mail equipment shops and material distribution centers. The MEDC schedule consists of MEDC grades 1–10.

422.12 Basis of Rates**422.121 Annual Rates for Full-Time Employees**

The basic annual salaries for the grades and steps of the schedule are established for full-time employees on the basis of a work schedule of 2,080 hours per annum.

422.122 Hourly Rates for Part-Time Employees

The basic hourly rates of the schedule are determined as follows:

- a. For part-time regular schedule employees, divide the appropriate annual rate by 2,080 hours.
- b. For part-time flexible schedule employees, divide the appropriate annual rate by 2,000 hours.

422.13 Cost-of-Living Adjustment

Bargaining unit employees receive cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) as specified by their applicable collective bargaining agreement (see 421.45e).

Pay Administration
Wage Administration Policy for Bargaining Unit Employees

422.13

Exhibit 421.81

Higher Level Pay

From Rate Schedule	To Rate Schedule									
	C – Mail Equip. Shops & Mat'l Distribution Ctrs.	G – Nurses	K – HQ Operating Services	M – Mail Handlers	N – Information Service Centers	P – PS	Q – City Carriers	R – Rural Carriers	T – Tool & Die	Y – Postal Police Officers
C – Mail Equipment Shops & Material Distribution Centers	—	1	1	1	1	1	1	—	1	1
E – EAS	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	—	2	2
F – A–E Postmasters	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	—	2	2
G – Nurses	1	—	1	1	1	1	1	—	1	1
K – HQ Operating Services	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	—	1	1
M – Mail Handlers	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	—	1	1
N – Information Service Centers	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	—	1	1
P – PS	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	—	1	1
Q – City Carriers	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	—	1	1
R – Rural Carriers*	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	—	1	1
T – Tool & Die	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	—	1	1
Y – Postal Police Officers	1	—	1	—	1	1	1	—	1	—

* Rural Carriers who are detailed into a different salary schedule are converted at the beginning pay period following the first 30 days to the salary for a 40-hour evaluated route, attained step, before applying the higher level increase. Pay is then adjusted in accordance with salary rules for that salary schedule.

SALARY ADJUSTMENT CALCULATIONS — To use the chart:

Step 1. In the vertical list on the left, locate the rate schedule of the employee's position before the change action.

Step 2. Cross over to the rate schedule of the position into which the employee is being assigned.

Step 3. Use the number found in that cell to choose from the following:

No. In

Cell Calculation Method to Use

- 1 To the current full-time salary, add 2 times the most prevalent step increment of the current grade (add 3 times for a detail to a position three or more grades higher). If the salary is between two steps, advance this amount to the next higher salary step in the new grade. The new salary may not be below the minimum or exceed the maximum for the new grade. However, if the employee's current salary already exceeds the maximum, it is continued without any adjustment.
- 2 To the current full-time salary, add 5 percent. The new salary may not be below the minimum or exceed the maximum for the new grade. However, if the employee's current salary already exceeds the maximum, it is continued without any adjustment.

422.13

Pay Administration
Wage Administration Policy for Bargaining Unit Employees

Exhibit 421.82

Promotional Increase

From Rate Schedule	To Rate Schedule									
	C – Mail Equip. Shops & Mat'l Distribution Ctrs.	G – Nurses	K – HQ Operating Services	M – Mail Handlers	N – Information Service Centers	P – PS	Q – City Carriers	R – Rural Carriers	T – Tool & Die Shop	Y – Postal Police Officers
C – Mail Equipment Shops & Material Distribution Centers	—	1	1	1	1	1	1	3	1	1
E – EAS	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	3	2	2
F – A–E Postmasters	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	3	2	2
G – Nurses	1	—	1	1	1	1	1	—	1	1
K – HQ Operating Services	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	3	1	1
M – Mail Handlers	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	3	1	1
N – Information Service Centers	1	—	—	1	1	1	1	3	1	1
P – PS	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	3	1	1
Q – City Carriers	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	3	1	1
R – Rural Carriers*	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	—	1	1
T – Tool & Die Shop	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	3	1	1
Y – Postal Police Officers	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	—	1	1

* Rural carriers who are promoted into a different salary schedule are converted first to the salary for a 40-hour evaluated route, attained step, before applying the promotion increase.

SALARY ADJUSTMENT CALCULATIONS — To use the chart:

Step 1. In the vertical list on the left, locate the rate schedule of the employee's position before the change action.

Step 2. Cross over to the rate schedule of the position into which the employee is being assigned.

Step 3. Use the number found in that cell to choose from the following:

No. In**Cell Calculation Method to Use**

- 1 To the current full-time salary, add 2 times the most prevalent step increment of the current grade (add 3 times for a promotion of three or more grades). Advance this amount to the next higher salary step in the new grade if between two steps. If the employee is promoted to a bargaining unit grade previously held, place the salary and next step date the same as if the employee had remained in that grade.
- 2 To the current full-time salary, add 5 percent. Advance this amount to the next higher salary step in the new grade if between two steps. If the employee is promoted to a bargaining unit grade previously held, place the salary and next step date the same as if the employee had remained in that grade.
- 3 Place at step A all new regular rural carriers appointed from other schedules unless they were on Postal Service rolls before August 7, 1991. In that case, place at step C. Place substitute rural carriers at the lower of step 8 or their existing step.

Note: The new salary may not be below the minimum or exceed the maximum for the new grade.

422.14 **Setting Salaries**

The appointing officer has primary responsibility for setting salaries of employees according to the guidelines in 422.

422.15 **Employee Classifications**

The bargaining unit classifications in 432.111 that apply are:

- a. Full-time regular.
- b. Part-time regular.
- c. Part-time flexible.

422.2 **Change Action Pay Rules**

422.21 **Career Appointment**

An employee new to the Postal Service hired with a career appointment is to be paid the rate for the first step of the grade of the position for which hired, except as specified below:

- a. *Reinstatement.* A former postal employee is to be paid the rate for the first step of the grade of the position for which hired. However, for exceptional circumstances, as authorized by the installation head, a former postal employee may be placed in the first step that is less than one full step above the highest former basic salary (augmented by any general increases since the date of separation) — provided the new basic salary does not exceed the maximum step of the grade.
- b. *Congressional Service.* A new employee who has 2 or more years of service in the legislative branch and was paid by either house of Congress may be placed in the first step that does not exceed the highest previous basic salary (augmented by statutory pay increases).
- c. *Transfer of Function.* If a postal installation assumes the function of a federal agency, the employee who performed the function may be transferred with the function. If so, the employee is placed in the first step that is less than one full step above the pretransfer basic salary — provided the basic salary does not exceed the maximum of the grade.
- d. *Veterans' Preference Eligible.* An employee whose service seniority is established pursuant to the appropriate entrance register standing (i.e., a veterans' preference eligible) is placed in the step attained by the lower eligible with the same anniversary date for step increases as the lower eligible.

422.22 **Additional Appointment**

If an employee is appointed to an additional position, the compensation for the position is determined according to the rules for career appointment in 422.21. (See 422.5 for additional information about dual employment.)

422.23 Promotion Within the PS Schedule**422.231 Basic Rules**

The basic rules are as follows:

- a. If the new grade is one or two grades above the former grade, the employee receives a promotional increase equal to two times the most prevalent step in the former grade. If the total of the promotional increase plus the employee's former basic salary falls between two steps of the new grade, the promotional increase is enhanced to the next higher step in the new grade. This promotion constitutes an equivalent increase and the employee will therefore serve the contractually specified step waiting period for the assigned step unless it is a repromotion as defined below.
- b. If the new grade is more than two grades above the former grade, the employee receives a promotional increase equal to three times the most prevalent step in the former grade. If the total of the promotional increase plus the employee's former basic salary falls between two steps of the new grade, the promotional increase is enhanced to the next higher step in the new grade. This promotion constitutes an equivalent increase and the employee therefore serves the contractually specified step waiting period for the assigned step unless it is a repromotion as defined below.
- c. No employee is at any time compensated less as a consequence of a promotion than that employee would have been if the employee had not been promoted but, instead, advanced in step increments in the lower grade by fulfilling the waiting time requirements necessary for step increases. This rule includes employees who were promoted to a higher grade and subsequently reassigned to their former grade. If, during any pay period following the promotion, the employee's basic salary is less than the employee would have received for that pay period if the employee had not been promoted, the difference is paid to the employee in a lump sum payment.

422.232 Supplemental Rules

The supplemental rules are as follows:

- a. *Repromotion.* An employee repromoted to a previously held grade is assigned the step the employee would have attained with credit toward the next step date as if the employee had remained continuously in that previously held higher grade.
- b. *Maximum Step.* An employee is placed in maximum step for new grade if there is no other step below the maximum that provides the increases specified in 422.231.
- c. *Above Maximum Step.* An employee's existing basic salary is retained if it exceeds the maximum step of the new grade.
- d. *Protected Rate.* In applying the rules in 422.231 to an employee whose salary is protected under the provisions of 421.51, the employee's former basic salary is the salary the employee would be receiving except for rate protection.

- e. *Saved Rate.* An employee with a saved rate, based on a grade above the new grade in accordance with 421.52, receives the increase in 422.231; and the new salary is a saved rate if it is above the maximum rate of the new grade.
- f. *Saved Grade.* An employee with a saved grade, established in accordance with 421.53, does not receive a promotional increase — unless the promotion is to a position with a grade higher than the saved grade.
- g. *Rule Choice.* The installation head may determine an employee's salary under rules for appointment in 422.21, instead of under rules for promotion increase when the salary would be more favorable to the employee.
- h. *Exclusions.* Salary received under limited appointments, temporary promotions, or as compensation for service while temporarily assigned to a higher level position cannot be used as the *highest previous salary* when determining the employee's new salary.

422.24 **Reassignment**

An employee's step and salary are not changed as a result of reassignment. (See 421.43b for definition of *reassignment*.) The following provisions apply:

- a. A change from a *part-time position* (flexible or regular) to a *full-time position* (or reverse) in the same grade is a reassignment — not a promotion; the employee retains the step attained and the existing basic annual salary including any red-circle amount.
- b. A part-time regular employee must be converted to a part-time flexible before becoming a full-time regular unless that bargaining unit craft does not have an employee classification of part-time flexible.
- c. For reassignments to equivalent grades in another bargaining unit (see [Exhibit 418.1](#)), the following provisions apply:
 - (1) *When an employee is reassigned to an equivalent grade not formerly held (e.g., from a PS-04 to a MH-04),* the employee's current salary is moved to the equivalent grade in the new schedule. If the current salary falls between two steps of the new grade, the new salary is set at the higher of the two steps. However, the new salary may not be set below the minimum nor above the maximum of the new grade.
 - (2) *When an employee is reassigned to a salary schedule and grade formerly held (e.g., from a PS-04 to a MH-04 and subsequently to a PS-04),* the employee is returned to the formerly held grade as if service had been uninterrupted since the last time held.
 - (3) Career Postal Service employees reassigned to a rural carrier position are assigned to the appropriate step in the Rural Carrier schedule in accordance with Article 9 of the USPS–NRLCA National Agreement.
 - (4) Creditable service in the former position is maintained toward a step increase unless the employee's salary is increased with this reassignment by at least one most prevalent step in the former

grade. When a most prevalent step is received, a new step waiting period commences on the effective date of the reassignment.

422.25 **Reductions in Grade**

422.251 **General**

Reductions in grade include voluntary changes to lower level, management-initiated changes to lower level, and demotions.

422.252 **Step and Step Date Assignment**

The following provisions apply:

- a. *To Former Lower Grade.* The employee is assigned to the step and next step date as if service had been uninterrupted in the lower grade.
- b. *To New Lower Grade.* The employee is assigned (1) to the step and next step date in the lower grade as if all postal service had been in the lower grade or (2) to any higher step in the lower grade that is less than one full step above the basic salary the employee held in the higher grade, provided compensation does not exceed the maximum for the grade. In the latter case, partial credit toward the next step increase earned since the date of the last equivalent increase is retained.

422.253 **Rate Retention**

Rate retention provisions do *not* apply to changes to a lower grade that are voluntary or disciplinary. However, they do apply in nondisciplinary management reductions, as follows (also see 421.511 and 421.512 for application):

- a. *Protected Rate.* The employee continues to receive the salary he or she received in the higher grade for 2 calendar years (1) if the grade of the position is reduced due to a management action such as a change in job ranking criteria that affects the grade of *only one* position and (2) if the employee occupied the position at the higher grade for 2 consecutive years preceding the effective date of the reduction. (See also 421.51.)
- b. *Saved Rate.*
 - (1) An employee has a saved rate resulting in a red-circle amount if the grade of his or her position is reduced due to a management action such as a change in job ranking criteria that affects the grade of *more than one* position under the same job description.
 - (2) If an employee who receives a red-circle amount is subsequently promoted and later returned to the former position through no fault of his or her own, the red-circle amount is restored. (See also 421.52.)
- c. *Saved Grade.* A bargaining unit employee is entitled to saved grade if he or she is assigned to a lower grade position because of a management action that eliminates the position (e.g., job elimination due to technological and mechanization changes). (See also 421.53.)

422.3 Step Increases**422.31 Eligibility Requirements**

Eligibility for a *periodic* step increase is based on three conditions. An employee must have:

- a. Received and currently be serving under a career appointment.
- b. Not received an equivalent increase (see 421.45c) during the waiting period.
- c. Completed the required waiting period according to the step increase waiting period table, (see [Exhibit 422.3](#)).

In addition to the periodic step increase, employees may be considered for a quality step increase (see 474.2).

422.32 Creditable Service**422.321 Postal Service**

Except as provided in this section, credit for advancement for step increases may be earned only by career employees in pay status on the rolls of the Postal Service. For computing creditable service, the following applies:

- a. *Service Week*. In computing the required waiting period, each full service week beginning at 12:01 a.m. Saturday and ending at 12 midnight the following Friday is creditable.
- b. *LWOP*. Periods of LWOP of less than 13 weeks for which no step deferment is made are included with paid service in computing the waiting period of service (see 422.33).
- c. *Prior Service*. Employees reinstated or reemployed to a career position within 52 weeks of separation are allowed credit (not in excess of 52 weeks) for prior service provided:
 - (1) An equivalent increase was not received at the time of reinstatement or reemployment.
 - (2) The prior service was not under a casual or temporary appointment.

422.322 Military Duty

An employee who returns to postal duty following a separation or leave for military duty receives credit for the period of military duty as if duty with the Postal Service had been continuous (see 517).

422.323 Injury Compensation

An employee on official absence due to an injury compensable under rules of the Office of Workers' Compensation Programs (OWCP) receives credit for the period of absence as if duty with the Postal Service had been continuous.

422.324 Union Officials

Employees on LWOP to devote full or part-time to a union signatory to a collective bargaining agreement with the Postal Service are to be credited with step increases as if they had been in a pay status (see 514).

422.324

Pay Administration
Wage Administration Policy for Bargaining Unit Employees

Exhibit 422.3 (p. 1)

Bargaining Unit Step Increase Waiting Periods

(All waiting periods shown are expressed in weeks.)

RSC P	Postal Service (PS) Schedule															
Steps (From-To)	AA-A	A-B	B-C	C-D	D-E	E-F	F-G	G-H	H-I	I-J	J-K	K-L	L-M	M-N	N-O	Total Weeks
Grades 1-3	96	96	88	88	44	44	44	44	44	44	34	34	26	26	24	776
Grades 4-7	...	96	96	44	44	44	44	44	44	44	34	34	26	26	24	644
Grades 8-10	...	...	...	52	44	44	44	44	44	44	34	34	26	26	24	460

RSC M	Mail Handlers (MH) Schedule														
Steps (From–To)	A–B	B–C	C–D	D–E	E–F	F–G	G–H	H–I	I–J	J–K	K–L	L–M	M–N	N–O	Total Weeks
Grades 4–6	96	96	44	44	44	44	44	44	44	34	34	26	26	24	644

RSC R & B	Rural Carriers (RC) Schedules*														
Steps (From-To)	A-B	B-C	C-1	1-2	2-3	3-4	4-5	5-6	6-7	7-8	8-9	9-10	10-11	11-12	Total Weeks
Hours/Miles	96	96	44	44	44	44	44	44	44	34	34	26	26	24	644

* **Note:** These step increase waiting periods apply to all hours on the Rural Carrier Evaluated Schedule, all miles on the Rural Mileage Schedule, and Grade 5 of the Rural Auxiliary Schedule.

RSC Y	Postal Police Officers (PPO) Schedule																		
Steps (From–To)	1–2	2–3	3–4	4–5	5–6	6–7	7–8	8–9	9–10	10–11	11–12	12–13	13–14	14–15	15–16	16–17	17–18	18–19	Total Weeks
Grade 6	96	52	44	44	44	44	44	44	44	44	34	34	34	34	34	34	34	34	772

RSC G	Postal Nurses Schedule (PNS)														
Steps (From–To)	1–2	2–3	3–4	4–5	5–6	6–7	7–8	8–9	9–10	10–11	11–12	12–13	13–14	14–15	Total Weeks
Grade 1	52	44	44	44	44	44	44	44	44	44	44	44	44	44	624

RSC K	Operating Services Division, Headquarters, & Facilities Services Section, Merrifield, VA (OSD) Schedule															
Steps (From-To)	AA-A	A-B	B-C	C-D	D-E	E-F	F-G	G-H	H-I	I-J	J-K	K-L	L-M	M-N	N-O	Total Weeks
Grades 1-3	96	96	88	88	44	44	44	44	44	44	34	34	26	26	24	776
Grade 4	...	96	96	88	44	44	44	44	44	44	34	34	26	26	24	688
Grades 5-7	...	96	96	44	44	44	44	44	44	44	34	34	26	26	24	644
Grades 8-9	...	...	...	52	44	44	44	44	44	44	34	34	26	26	24	460

Pay Administration
Wage Administration Policy for Bargaining Unit Employees

422.324

Exhibit 422.3 (p. 2)

Bargaining Unit Step Increase Waiting Periods

(All waiting periods shown are expressed in weeks.)

RSC N	Information Service Centers (ISC) Schedule															
Steps (From-To)	A-B	B-C	C-D	D-E	E-F	F-G	G-H	H-I	I-J	J-K	K-L	L-M	M-N	N-O	O-P	Total Weeks
Grades 6-10	96	96	44	52	52	52	52	52	52	52	...	...	...	...	...	600
Grade 11	...	96	44	52	52	52	52	52	52	52	...	...	...	...	...	504
Grade 12	52	52	52	52	52	52	52	52	...	...	...	...	416
Grade 13	52	52	52	52	52	52	52	52	52	...	...	...	468
Grades 14-16	52	52	52	52	52	52	52	52	52	52	...	...	520
Grades 17-23	52	52	52	52	52	52	52	52	52	52	52	52	624

RSC C (APWU)	Mail Equipment Shops & Material Distribution Centers (MEDC) Schedule															
Steps (From-To)	AA-A	A-B	B-C	C-D	D-E	E-F	F-G	G-H	H-I	I-J	J-K	K-L	L-M	M-N	N-O	Total Weeks
Grades 1-3	96	96	88	88	44	44	44	44	44	44	34	34	26	26	24	776
Grades 4-7	...	96	96	44	44	44	44	44	44	44	34	34	26	26	24	644
Grades 8-10	...	...	...	52	44	44	44	44	44	44	34	34	26	26	24	460

RSC Q (NALC)	City Carriers (CC) Schedule														
Steps (From-To)	A-B	B-C	C-D	D-E	E-F	F-G	G-H	H-I	I-J	J-K	K-L	L-M	M-N	N-O	Total Weeks
Grades 5-6	96	96	44	44	44	44	44	44	44	34	34	26	26	24	644

422.33 Leave Without Pay

The following provisions apply:

- a. When an employee has been on LWOP for 13 weeks or more during the waiting period for receipt of a periodic step increase and has not been on military furlough, on the rolls of the OWCP, or on official union business, the scheduled date for the employee's next step increase is deferred as follows:

Total Weeks LWOP	Pay Periods Deferred
0 to less than 13	No deferment
13 to less than 26	7
26 to less than 40	13
40 to less than 52	20
52	26
More than 52	One pay period for each 2 weeks of LWOP

- b. For periods of LWOP that encompass an entire pay period, the full charge of 80 hours is applied. For partial pay periods, absence from scheduled service on a day is counted as 1 calendar day. Only whole days of LWOP are counted. Fractional days on which the employee has work hours or paid leave and takes LWOP are not counted in calculating the total LWOP.

422.34 Simultaneous Personnel Actions

If an employee is eligible for a step increase in the assigned position and is being reassigned or promoted to another position on the same date:

- a. The actions are effected simultaneously in a manner that provides maximum benefit to the employee.
- b. If the assignment change involves an increase in compensation that is greater than the increase an employee could obtain by a step increase in the former position, the employee is given the step increase before compensation is adjusted to the appropriate step in the new position.

422.4 Higher Level Assignments**422.41 Definitions**

A *higher level assignment* is a temporary assignment to a ranked higher grade position, whether or not such position has been authorized at the installation. The subcategories of such an assignment are:

- a. *Short-term temporary assignment* — an assignment in which an employee has been on a temporary assignment to a higher level position for a period of 29 consecutive workdays or less at the time he or she takes any annual or sick leave. The temporary assignment must be resumed upon return to work. All short-term assignments are

automatically canceled if replacements are required for employees temporarily assigned to higher level positions.

- b. *Long-term temporary assignment* — an assignment in which an employee has been on temporary assignment to the higher level position for a period of 30 consecutive workdays or longer before he or she takes any annual or sick leave. The temporary assignment must be resumed upon return to work.

422.42 **Written Management Order**

Any employee, except one of those covered in 432.2, who is temporarily assigned to higher level work is given PS Form 1723, *Assignment Order*, stating beginning and approximate termination and directing the employee to perform the duties of the higher level position. The written order is accepted as authorization for higher grade pay. The failure of management to give a written order is not grounds for denial of higher level pay if the employee was otherwise directed to perform the duties of the higher level position.

422.43 **Rate of Pay**

422.431 **Part-Time Flexible Employees**

A part-time flexible employee remains a part-time flexible employee while temporarily assigned to a higher level position. The employee neither has nor acquires a regular work schedule and is paid at the part-time flexible hourly rate for the higher level position.

422.432 **Regular Employees**

Rules for pay for temporary higher level work depend on the factors below:

- a. *Assignment in PS Schedule.* A PS employee who is temporarily assigned to higher level work in the PS schedule is paid at the higher level for time actually spent on such job. The employee's higher level rate is determined as if he or she had been promoted to the position. (See promotion rules in 422.23.)
- b. *Assignment to Other Schedule.* The rate of pay for service in a higher grade position in other than the PS Schedule is determined in accordance with promotion rules for the salary schedule in which the higher level position is placed. (See rules for assignment to a different salary schedule in 410.)
- c. *Service in Several Positions.* If higher level service is performed in more than one position in a pay period, the appropriate rate for each salary level is determined and paid in accordance with the actual time worked at each level.
- d. *Annual and Sick Leave Pay.* Leave pay for employees temporarily assigned to a higher level position depends on the term of the assignment as follows:
 - (1) *Short-Term Temporary Assignments* (see 422.41a). These employees, except those covered by 428, are entitled to approved annual and sick leave paid at the higher level rate for a period *not to exceed 3 days* for each occurrence, provided that

they are not replaced while on leave and that they resume the assignment upon returning to work.

- (2) *Long-Term Temporary Assignments* (see 422.41b). These employees are entitled to approved annual and sick leave paid at the higher level rate for the full period of leave provided that they resume the assignment upon returning to work.
- e. *Holiday Leave Pay*. Full-time employees are paid for the holiday at the rate of the higher level, provided that they perform higher level service both on the workday preceding and on the workday following the holiday. Otherwise, the employee is paid for the holiday at the rate appropriate for her or his regular position.
- f. *Holiday Worked Pay*. If an employee performs authorized service at the higher grade on a holiday, the employee is paid at the rate for the higher grade position, in addition to holiday leave pay.

422.44 **Adjustments and Increases**

422.441 **Step Increase Credit**

An employee temporarily assigned to a higher grade bargaining unit position is entitled to credit toward the next step increase for service in the higher grade with higher grade pay that is continuous to the date of any subsequent promotion.

422.442 **Effect on Promotion**

If subsequently promoted, the employee's salary is reviewed to ensure application of the appropriate promotion rule and credit for continuous service at the higher grade if the higher level service is continuous to the time of promotion to the higher grade. (See 422.23 for promotion rules.)

422.45 **Benefits**

422.451 **Terminal Leave Payments**

Terminal leave payments resulting from death are paid at the higher grade for any employee, except one of those covered by 423, who is temporarily assigned to a higher grade position on his or her last day in a duty status.

422.452 **Retirement Deductions**

Retirement deductions are determined from the basic annual salary and any additional basic higher level pay the employee is receiving for the pay period.

422.453 **Continuation of Pay (Injury Compensation)**

An employee who is eligible for continuation of pay as a result of an injury on duty and who is serving in a higher level position when injured will receive such payments at the higher level rate.

422.5 **Dual (Multiple) Employment**

422.51 **Explanation**

Dual or multiple employment means that a current employee is appointed to an additional position or a new employee is appointed to two or more positions at the same time.

422.52 **Salary Determination**

The appropriate compensation for each new position is determined under the rules relating to appointments (see 422.21).

422.53 **Documentation**

Separate personnel actions are effected for each position, with an estimate of the workhours to be spent in each position and compensation specified in advance for the employee's attention.

422.54 **Step Increases**

Periodic step increases for separate positions are earned separately:

- a. If dual employment is accomplished on the same day or if the employee does not receive an equivalent increase when appointed to an additional position, creditable service toward step increases in the first position is also creditable toward step increases in the subsequent positions. In these cases, the anniversary dates for step increases in all positions are the same.
- b. If an employee receives an equivalent increase when appointed to an additional position, step increases are earned separately for each position on the basis of time served in each position. Receipt of the equivalent increase in one position does not start a new waiting period in the other position.

422.55 **Leave**

The appropriate rate of compensation for annual and sick leave when taken from two or more positions in different salary grades is determined from the Form 50 affecting the assignment as follows:

- a. An employee assigned for 50 percent or more of the time to the higher grade work is paid for leave at the higher grade rate of pay.
- b. An employee assigned to the lower grade work for more than 50 percent of the time is paid for leave at the lower grade rate of pay.
- c. If less than 50 percent of the time is spent in any one grade, the employee is paid for leave at the rate for the intermediate grade. The annual rate of compensation for annual or sick leave taken in one position is determined from the salary grade for that position.

422.56 **Reassignment**

When an employee serving in two or more part-time positions is changed to a full-time annual rate position in the same grade as one of the occupied positions, the step is determined according to 422.24. Compensation received in unaffected additional positions may not be used as highest previous compensation in calculating the new salary.

422.57 **Promotion**

When an employee is promoted to a position in a grade above the highest grade to which appointed, compensation of the highest grade is used in establishing the step according to 422.23.

422.6 **Change From Rural Carrier Schedules**

For all changes other than those covered by 546, a career rural carrier's salary is converted to that of the attained step in the 40-hour evaluated salary schedule. Following this conversion, the applicable procedures in 422 apply.

423 **Mail Handlers Schedule**

The provisions of 422 cited below are made applicable to this salary schedule by reference:

- a. Salary system:
 - (1) The Mail Handlers (MH) Schedule consists of Grades 4 through 6.
 - (2) Basis of rates (see 422.12).
 - (3) Cost-of-living adjustments (see 422.13).
 - (4) Setting salaries (see 422.14).
 - (5) Employee classifications (see 422.15).
- b. Change action pay rules:
 - (1) Career appointment (see 422.21).
 - (2) Additional appointment (see 422.22).
 - (3) Promotion (see 422.23).
 - (4) Reassignment (see 422.24).
 - (5) Reduction in grade (see 422.25).
- c. Step increases (see 422.3 and [Exhibit 422.3](#)).
- d. Higher level assignments (see 422.4).
- e. Dual (multiple) employment (see 422.5).

424 **Rural Carriers Schedules**

The provisions of 422 cited are made applicable to this salary schedule by reference.

424.1 **Salary System**

424.11 **Salary Schedules**

There are five types of rural carrier salary schedules, as follows:

- a. *Evaluated Schedule*. Applies to routes evaluated at 12 to 48 hours per week.
- b. *Rural Carrier Mileage Schedule (RCS)*. Applies to routes evaluated at 6 to 140 miles per day.
- c. *Substitute Rural Carrier Schedules — Daily Rates*. The 5-Day Evaluated Schedule is 40 to 48 hours per week. The 5 1/2-Day Evaluated Schedule is 41 to 46 hours per week. The 6-Day Evaluated Schedule is 12 to 48 hours per week.

- d. *Rural Auxiliary Pay Schedule*. This pay schedule includes Grade 5 — Annual Rates and Grade 5 — Hourly Rates.
- e. *Rural Carrier Associate (RCA) and Rural Carrier Relief (RCR) — Hourly Rates*.

424.12 **Basis of Rates**

See the USPS–NRLCA National Agreement, Article 9, Section 2 (A, B, and C).

424.13 **Cost-of-Living Adjustment**

Regular and substitute rural carriers covered by the collective bargaining agreement receive the cost-of-living adjustments provided by the USPS–NRLCA National Agreement.

424.14 **Setting Salaries**

The appointing officer has primary responsibility for setting salaries of rural carriers according to the guidelines in 424.

424.15 **Employee Classifications**

The employee classifications in 432 that apply to rural carriers are:

- a. Career regular rural carrier.
- b. Noncareer rural carrier supplemental workforce:
 - (1) Substitute rural carrier.
 - (2) Auxiliary rural carrier.
 - (3) Rural carrier associate.
 - (4) Rural carrier relief.

424.2 **Change Action Pay Rules**

424.21 **Appointment**

424.211 **Regular Rural Carrier**

The following provisions apply:

- a. *New Hire*. All new regular rural carrier appointees begin at Step A, except that:
 - (1) A rural carrier serving *one triweekly route* is paid on the basis of a route one-half the length of the triweekly route.
 - (2) A rural carrier serving *two triweekly routes* is paid on the basis of a route one-half the combined length of the two triweekly routes.
- b. *Conversion From Substitute*. Substitute rural carriers who convert to regular rural carrier status are converted at Step 8, or their existing step, whichever is lower, except that substitutes serving in excess of 90 days on a vacant route at the time of conversion convert at their existing step.

424.212 Auxiliary Rural Carrier

The following provisions apply:

- a. An auxiliary rural carrier is paid at the attained step of the 40-hour evaluated rate.
- b. A rural carrier associate and a rural carrier relief are paid at the hourly rate of pay they regularly receive.

424.213 Rural Carrier Associate and Rural Carrier Relief

RCA and RCR employees are paid an hourly rate as shown in the collective bargaining agreement for the period covered.

424.22 Promotion

See 422.6.

424.23 Transfer to Rural Carrier

A postal employee on the rolls since before August 7, 1991, who is transferred from a position not under the RC schedule to a regular rural carrier position begins at Step C.

424.24 Waiting Period for Step Increase

All new regular rural carriers, including substitutes converting to regular carrier, regardless of the amount of time already served toward advancement to the next step in the former position, begin a new waiting period for advancement to the next step upon appointment to a regular rural carrier position.

424.25 Adjusting Pay for Route Change**424.251 Change in Length of Route**

Compensation of a rural carrier whose route evaluation is adjusted is placed in the same alpha or numeric step for the adjusted route that corresponds to the alpha or numeric step held prior to the evaluation adjustment.

424.252 Reassignment to Another Route

Compensation of a rural carrier who is reassigned to another rural route is placed in the same alpha or numeric step of the new route that corresponds to the alpha or numeric step of the old route.

424.3 Step Increase**424.31 Eligibility and Procedure**

Regular rural carriers and substitute rural carriers with an indefinite appointment are granted step increases in accordance with the provisions of 422.3, provided they performed in a satisfactory or outstanding manner during the waiting period.

424.32 **Performance Determinations**

424.321 **Responsibility**

Installation heads and their subordinate supervisors have joint responsibility for understanding the kind of work performance expected of employees. Supervisors must (a) keep informed of the deficiencies and proficiencies of employees and (b) provide appropriate commendation, counseling, or assistance on a continual basis — rather than only at the time of a step increase rating.

424.322 **Criteria**

Performance ratings are based on such job-related factors as reliability, work habits, quantity and quality of work performed, cooperation with other employees, and attendance. Criteria for the three categories of performance ratings follow:

- a. *Outstanding (O)*. Performance and achievement in terms of productive effort, proficiency, and significant contributions to the Postal Service that are well above the established norm.

Note: An outstanding employee may be considered for a quality step increase or Special Achievement Award.

- b. *Satisfactory (S)*. Performance at an acceptable level involving such qualities as reliability, cooperation, and competence in meeting the normal requirements of a position.

Note: This rating applies to the majority of employees whose performance may range from minimum to very good to above average in several respects of their work.

- c. *Unsatisfactory (U)*. Employees who repeatedly and/or continually fail to meet the essential requirements of their position involving such characteristics as lack of cooperation, poor attendance, and failure to produce acceptable work even after they have been counseled on deficiencies.

Note: When an advance written notice of charges has been given to an employee on account of unsatisfactory service, any step increase otherwise normally due must be withheld pending a final decision on the merits of the charges.

424.33 **Processing a Step Increase**

424.331 **Notification of Increase**

At least 45 days prior to the effective date, the Eagan ASC provides installations with two copies of a report listing those employees who have completed the required waiting period for advancement to the next step. LWOP hours, when sufficient to require withholding of a step increase (see 422.33), are printed on the listing.

424.332 Supervisor's Appraisal

When supervisors receive the step increase notice, they must:

- a. Evaluate the employee against performance criteria (see 424.322) and make a judgment about the employee's service during the waiting period.
- b. Check the appropriate performance code (O, S, or U), write the effective date, and sign each line.

424.333 Approved Increase

Employees whose step increase is approved receive a copy of a PS Form 50 and a notification on PS Form 1223-A, *Earnings Statement*, for the pay period in which the increase is effective. The effective date of the increase is the beginning of the first pay period following completion of the waiting period.

424.334 Withheld Increase

Employees whose step increase is withheld will receive a written advance notice from the installation head or her or his designee. Employees will receive a copy of a Form 50 at a later date, confirming that the step increase was withheld.

Notes: Withholding of a step increase should not be used as punishment for overt acts that should be handled under the disciplinary procedures.

- a. In cases of *excessive LWOP*, the revised effective date depends on the amount of LWOP. (See 422.33 for deferral periods.)
- b. In cases of *unsatisfactory performance*, a 7-pay period redetermination period follows the date of withholding. During this period, the supervisor should encourage and assist the employee to overcome the deficiencies, provide needed training, consider reassignment to more suitable work, and/or other appropriate personnel action. The Eagan ASC includes the employee's name on a listing 45 days in advance of the revised effective date.
 - (1) If the employee's service is satisfactory at the end of the additional waiting period, the step increase is approved (see 424.334).
 - (2) If the employee's service is not satisfactory at the end of the additional waiting period, the step increase may be withheld for another redetermination period, or disciplinary measures under the collective bargaining agreement may be taken.

424.34 Adjustment in Length of Route

An increase in basic salary because of an increase in the length of route is not an equivalent increase. Therefore, a step increase is not withheld because of the increase in length of route.

424.4 Higher Level Pay

The following provisions apply:

- a. A regular rural carrier is paid based on the evaluation of the route to which the carrier is assigned for the first 30 days of the temporary higher level assignment. At the beginning of the next pay period following completion of the first 30 days, the carrier's salary is converted to that of a 40-hour evaluated route, attained step. The salary is then adjusted in accordance with the salary rules for changes under the salary schedule to which assigned.
- b. A rural carrier who normally serves a route 6 days a week or 6 days every other week, temporarily assigned to a position under a different salary schedule for five 8-hour days in a service week, is paid for the full work week without carrying the route on Saturday.

425 Postal Nurses Schedule

The provisions of 422 cited below are made applicable to this salary schedule by reference:

- a. Salary System:
 - (1) The Postal Nurses Schedule (PNS) consists of Grade 1.
 - (2) Basis of rates:
 - (a) *Annual Rate.* The basic annual salaries for full-time nurses, augmented by general increases provided by the bargaining unit agreement are established on a full-time basis of 2,080 hours per year.
 - (b) *Hourly Rate.* Basic hourly rates for part-time flexible schedule nurses are determined by dividing the annual basic rate by 2,000 hours.
 - (3) *Setting Salaries.* The appointing officer has primary responsibility for setting salaries of employees according to the guidelines in 425b. Salaries are subject to the approval of the appointing official's superior.
 - (4) *Employee Classifications* (see 422.15). The bargaining unit classifications in 432.111 that apply to bargaining unit nurses are full-time regular and part-time flexible. The bargaining unit classification of part-time regular does not apply.
- b. Change action pay rules:
 - (1) *Career Appointment.* Newly appointed nurses are to be paid the rate for the first step in the position's salary range, except as specified below:
 - (a) For situations involving reinstatement, prior congressional service, transfer of a function from a federal agency, or veteran preference eligibility, see 422.21.
 - (b) If local conditions for hiring a nurse require a higher starting salary than that of Step 1, the approving official may authorize a salary at Step 2 or 3 of the salary schedule. If

this is done, any current bargaining unit nurse at the same facility paid at a lower step than the newly hired nurse must be placed at the same step as the newly hired nurse with an effective date no later than that of the new hire. The current employee begins a new step waiting period when placed in the higher step.

- (2) *Additional Appointment* (see 422.22).
- (3) *Promotion* (see 422.23).
- (4) *Reassignment* (see 422.24).
- (5) *Reduction in Grade* (see 422.25).
- c. Step increases (see 422.3 and 424.3 through 424.34). In addition to the conditions listed in 422.31, the employee must have performed in a satisfactory or outstanding manner during the waiting period. The waiting periods appear in [Exhibit 422.3](#).
- d. Higher level assignments (see 422.4).
- e. Dual (multiple) employment (see 422.5).

426 Information Service Centers (ISC) Schedule

426.1 Salary System

426.11 Schedule

The basic annual salary schedule for employees covered by the Information Service Centers (ISC) collective bargaining agreement is the Information Service Centers schedule, consisting of Grades 6 through 23. The basic annual salaries are augmented by general increases provided by the collective bargaining agreement.

426.12 Part-Time Employees

Part-time flexible and part-time regular schedule employees are paid according to 422.122 based on the schedule for ISC bargaining unit employees.

426.13 Cost-of-Living Adjustment

In addition to their basic annual or hourly rate, all bargaining unit employees also receive such COLA as specified by their applicable collective bargaining agreement.

426.14 Employee Classifications

The bargaining unit classifications in 432.111 that apply to ISC employees are *full-time regular*, *part-time flexible*, and *part-time regular*.

Note: Casual (see 432.12a) is a nonbargaining unit employee classification. Therefore, casuals at the ISC are not in the bargaining unit.

426.2 **Change Action Pay Rules**

426.21 **Career Appointment**

A new employee to the Postal Service hired into the ISC schedule with a career appointment is paid the minimum rate for the grade (see 422.21).

426.22 **Promotion**

See 421.43a for definition of *promotion*. Rules for promotion *to or within* the ISC schedule appear below.

- a. *Promotion Increase*. A promoted employee will receive an increase in basic salary in accordance with promotion rules in 422.23.
- b. *Effect of Saved Rate*. The new salary may not exceed the maximum of the new grade unless, on the day immediately preceding the effective date of the promotion, the employee has a saved rate including a red-circle amount (see 421.52). In such case, the new salary may exceed the maximum of the new grade by an amount not greater than the dollar amount of the red circle, subject to termination of rate retention (see 421.514).

426.23 **Reassignment**

See 421.43b for definition of reassignment. An employee's salary is not changed as a result of reassignment within the ISC schedule. (For reassignment to nonbargaining unit salary schedules, see 414. For reassignment to another bargaining unit salary schedules, see 422.24c.)

426.24 **Demotion**

See 421.43c for definition and general regulation for demotion. See 422.25 for demotion to and within the ISC schedule. For demotion to a nonbargaining unit salary schedule, see 415.

426.25 **Voluntary Reduction**

See 421.43d for definition. See 422.25 for voluntary reduction to and within the ISC schedule. See 415 for voluntary reduction to a nonbargaining unit schedule.

426.26 **Management Action Reduction**

In this case of a nondisciplinary and involuntary reduction, the rate retention provisions below apply.

- a. *Saved Rate*. Employees retain their salary and remain eligible for any in-grade salary increases for which they otherwise would have been eligible. They continue in this status until such time as they fail to bid or apply for assignment to a vacant, established position (a) in the former grade or (b) in a grade between that of the former grade and the new grade within the same facility — provided acceptance of the vacant position does not result in any loss in salary. The facility notifies employees of any vacant position for which they are or may be qualified. Failure to qualify for the position does not result in the loss of saved rate. (See also 421.521.)

- b. *Saved Grade.* For saved grade rules due to technological or mechanization changes, see 421.53.

426.3 **Step Increases**

The rules for granting step increases in 422.3 apply to ISC bargaining unit employees except that the waiting period between steps is as shown in [Exhibit 422.3](#).

426.4 **Higher Level Assignments**

See the ISC collective bargaining agreement.

427 **Operating Services Division Headquarters and Facilities Service Section, Merrifield, VA**

427.1 **Salary System**

427.11 **Salary Schedule**

An Operating Services Division (OSD) salary schedule exists for the grades and steps of employees in the Headquarters Facilities Service at Postal Service Headquarters and Facilities Service Section, Merrifield (APWU) in accordance with the OSD collective bargaining agreement.

427.12 **Basis of Rates**

See 422.12.

427.13 **Cost-of-Living Adjustment**

See 422.13.

427.14 **Determination of Salaries**

The salary set by the appointing officer is subject to the approval of the vice president of Facilities.

427.15 **Employee Classifications**

See 422.15.

427.2 **Change Action Pay Rules**

427.21 **Career Appointment**

A new Postal Service employee hired into the OSD schedule is paid the rate for the first step of the grade except as specified below:

- a. *Exceptional Qualifications.* If the appointing official (with approval of superior) determines that the person has exceptional qualifications, the rate of pay may be set at a higher step, not to exceed the fourth step of that grade — except as provided in item b below.
- b. *Reemployment and Transfer.* The appointing officer may set the salary of a former or current federal civilian or Postal Service employee who is being given a career appointment either (1) at the first step of the grade

of the position or (2) at any step of the grade that is less than one full step above the highest basic compensation the employee previously received — but not in excess of the maximum step of the grade for the assigned position.

427.22 **Additional Appointment**

See 422.22.

427.23 **Promotion**

See 421.43a for definition. See 422.23 for promotion rules *to and within* the OSD/RSSB schedule. For promotion *from* the OSD schedule to a nonbargaining schedule, see 413.

427.24 **Reassignment**

See 421.43b for definition. An employee's salary is *not* changed as a result of reassignment.

427.25 **Demotion**

See 421.43c for definition. Rules for demotion *to and within* the OSD schedule appear in 422.25.

427.26 **Voluntary Reduction**

See 421.43d for definition. See 422.25 for voluntary reduction *to and within* the OSD Schedule. See 415 for voluntary reduction *from* the OSD to a nonbargaining schedule.

427.27 **Management Action Reduction**

See 421.43e for definition for reduction *from* the OSD schedule to a nonbargaining schedule. Rules in 422.25 for management action reductions *to and within* the PS schedule apply to OSD employees — except as qualified below:

- a. If an OSD employee whose job is eliminated cannot be placed in a job of equal grade, the saved grade provision in 422.252 does *not* apply.
- b. Instead, the employee (1) is assigned to any available lower level position for which he or she qualifies and (2) is entitled to protected rate for a period of 2 calendar years.

427.3 **Step Increases**

All of the step increase rules in 422.3 apply to OSD employees. See [Exhibit 422.3](#) for step increase waiting periods.

427.4 **Higher Level Assignments**

The rules in 422.4 apply to OSD employees — except for the provision stated in 422.42.

427.5 **Multiple Employment**

See 422.5.

427.6 Change From RC Schedules

See 422.6.

428 Postal Police Officers Schedule

The provisions of 422 cited below are made applicable to this salary schedule by reference.

428.1 Salary System

The following provisions apply:

- a. The Postal Police Officers (PPO) schedule consists of Grade 6.
- b. Basis of rates (see 422.12).
- c. Setting salaries (see 422.14).
- d. Employee classifications. There are two categories of employees in the Postal Police Officers' bargaining unit:
 - (1) Full-time.
 - (2) Part-time.

428.2 Change Action Pay Rules

The following provisions apply:

- a. Career appointment (see 422.21).
- b. Additional appointment (see 422.22).
- c. Promotion (see 422.23).
- d. Reassignment (see 422.24).
- e. Reduction in grade (see 422.25).

428.3 Step Increases

See 422.3 and 424.32 through 424.34. The following provisions apply:

- a. The rules in 424.32 also apply to postal police officers, except that where the text in 424.32 reads "installation heads," substitute "inspectors in charge" for postal police officers.
- b. Where the text reads "Installations," substitute "Inspection Service divisions" for postal police officers.
- c. In addition to the conditions listed in 422.31, the employee must have performed in a satisfactory or outstanding manner during the waiting period. The waiting periods appear in Exhibit 422.3.

428.4 Higher Level Assignments

See 422.4. The following provisions apply:

- a. The rules in 422.4 also apply to postal police officers, except that where the text in 422.4 reads "installation heads," substitute "inspectors in charge" for postal police officers.

- b. Where the text reads “installations,” substitute “Inspection Service divisions” for postal police officers.

428.5 **Dual (Multiple) Employment**

See 422.5.

428.6 **Change From Rural Carrier Schedules**

See 422.6.

429 **(Reserved for Tool and Die Shop)**

Pay Administration
Wage Administration Policy for Bargaining Unit Employees

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