

FROM THE DESK OF THE PRESIDENT

Managing in This Environment

Several years ago, I recall a district manager being embarrassed by some postmasters when some headquarters personnel came in for a meeting. The HQ people were dressed in suits and ties, and the postmasters were very casual in open collars and polo shirts. Following which, the district manager directed all postmasters and managers to where at minimum shirts and ties for men, and business formal for women. In the City of Detroit, former postmaster Lloyd Wesley always directed his managers to dress professionally, even on casual Fridays. What is my point?

When did managers being dressed professionally become conducive to throwing parcels in the morning and evening, or walking routes in all types of weather conditions? If the managers are throwing parcels, then what are the clerks doing? If managers are walking routes, then what are the supervisors doing?



I am not suggesting that everyone does not have more than enough to do. My question is, are we adequately staffed so that there is a clear distinction between craft, supervisors, and managers?

I recently attempted to mail a letter at the post office on a Saturday, only to find the window closed due to no clerks being available. I went to a second station to find the line going out the door because there were not adequate clerks on the window to move the line. The day before, I spoke to a manager who was working the window for the same reason, all while being derided by the CSOM for not responding timely to the CSOM's inquiry.

I know that we are being told we are performing well in our customer service functions. However, if this is how we define success, then we need to ask at what cost. The stress levels that are being experienced in the field are like never before. How long can we keep doing this?

District Court Rules that NAPS is Entitled to Discovery in Pay Lawsuit

NAPS recently won another victory in its pay lawsuit against the U.S. Postal Service when the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia ruled that NAPS is entitled to some discovery in its challenge of USPS pay actions. Prior to the decision, there had been no caselaw addressing whether discovery (that is, requests for documents and written questions that must be answered under oath) is available for a challenge to Postal Service action as violating the Postal Service Reorganization Act of 1970.

In a 20-page decision on August 15th, senior district judge Royce C. Lamberth ordered discovery to proceed relating to the size and adequacy of the supervisory pay differential USPS paid to eligible EAS personnel as part of the 2016-19 pay package. The judge also ordered the Postal Service to identify which EAS labor-management personnel at Area and Headquarters facilities are ineligible for NAPS representation, considering NAPS's right to represent EAS personnel at those facilities (as confirmed by the D.C. Circuit Court of Appeals in its 2022 decision). The judge limited the discovery to private sector pay comparability but left the merits of NAPS's pay comparability claim to be decided later.

Earlier this week lawyers for NAPS and the Postal Service filed a proposed discovery order with the court that would establish a 90-day period for discovery. "We are pleased our case is moving ahead," NAPS President Ivan D. Butts said, "and we remain confident that our rightful claims will be vindicated."

Hopefully, this ruling will cause the Postal Service and NAPS to both come to the table and settle this lingering issue.

Ken Bunch