



National Postal Mail Handlers Union

THE BREAKDOWN SPECIAL

VERA UPDATE

USPS releases details of voluntary early retirement offer

The Postal Service has released details of the voluntary early retirement (VER) offer recently authorized by the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) for USPS employees in clerk, mail handler, supervisor of distribution operations and supervisor of customer services positions. This offer is open to employees in those positions who meet the OPM conditions, and who are at least 50 years of age with 20 years of creditable federal service or any age with 25 years of creditable federal service — see the FAQ for more details.

On Aug. 18, an annuity estimate will be mailed to all VER-eligible employees from Eagan, MN. In addition, on Aug. 22 a VER offer packet will be sent to all eligible employees containing a cover letter, an application and a list of questions and answers. Interested employees will have from Aug. 25 to Sept. 30 to submit their application. It's important to note that Sept. 30 is the date when an employee's voluntary choice to retire becomes irrevocable.

By mid-November, the Human Resources Shared Services Center (HRSSC) will notify employees as to the status of their VER application. At that time, retirement counseling will become available. Employees receiving approval will have an effective retirement date of Dec. 31.

As a reminder, a voluntary early retirement is just that — voluntary. This timeline only applies to employees in clerk, mail handler, supervisor of distribution operations and supervisor of customer services positions who meet the eligibility requirements.

The National Office has learned that the Postal Service has formally been granted authority by the U.S. Office of Personnel Management to offer a VERA to certain postal employees during the period from June 30, 2008 through June 30, 2009. The grant of this authority does not obligate the Postal Service to offer a VERA, but simply gives the Postal Service the authority to offer a VERA if, after discussions and negotiations with the affected postal unions, the Postal Service believes that a VERA would be helpful.

In the next few days and weeks, the NPMHU and the Postal Service will meet to discuss any and all early out options. Until discussions occur, there is no additional information to distribute.

As always, the National Office will continue to address the situation and will alert our members when there are substantive developments to report.