

RURAL BIDDING PROCESS

The contractual language governing the implementation of the new bidding process is found in MOU #18 RURAL BIDDING of the 2006 – 2010 National Agreement. “In an effort to improve, standardize and automate the bidding process for regular rural routes, and part-time flexible positions, the NRLCA and the USPS have agreed to the following provisions. All requirements provided in Article 12, Article 30, MOU #6 and MOU #7 [of the current contract] will apply.”

Bidding for the regular rural route(s) listed on the posting is not only for the posted vacancy, but for any regular route(s) in the office that may become available as a result of filling the original route vacancy. Eligible rural carriers will submit bids using employee self-service at www.liteblue.usps.gov, HR Kiosks, web bidding computers or phone bidding at 1-877-477-3273 Option 2, TDD/TTY 1-800-265-7208. The use of telephone, computer or other automated bidding at an installation is the prerogative of the Employer.

The following conditions apply to the Automated Bidding System:

1. EIN and PIN numbers are required for carriers to utilize Interactive Voice Response (IVR) telephone bidding.
2. The Automated Bidding System is available twenty-four (24) hours a day, seven (7) days a week.
3. All bids close at 11:59 p.m. (Central Time).
4. Employees can enter, withdraw, change preferences and/or review the status of their bids.
5. Employees will need their Employee Identification Number (EIN) and personal password to access web applications for eJob bidding.

The Rural Route Posting Notice shall include the following information for the vacant route, **as well as for every regular rural route in the office:**

1. Official position identification number
2. Route number
3. The day of the week of the authorized relief day
4. Whether a USPS vehicle will be provided
5. Route length
6. Classification
7. Number of boxes
8. Number of stops
9. Volume factor
10. Whether the route is a seasonal route
11. Physical and other requirements, including possession of a valid State driver's license and, if necessary, a certificate of vehicle familiarization and safe operation.

Any eligible rural carrier, who wishes to be considered in the bidding process, must utilize the method(s) of bidding indicated on the route posting. A carrier will list, in order of preference, **ONLY the routes he or she will accept. Carriers will not be able to decline a position/route that they have listed as a choice after the close of the 10 day posting period.**

If a carrier wishes to withdraw or change bid preferences, the carrier must do so through the Automated Bidding System prior to the closing date of the posting. The carrier should indicate their decision to withdraw from the bidding process or change preferences previously submitted. A carrier who withdraws from the bidding process will not be considered for routes that may be vacated in association with the vacancy notice.

All eligible rural carriers (regular rural carriers, PTFs, substitutes and non-probationary RCAs) must list preferred routes by the official position identification number(s), not route number(s). If the vacant position/route is not listed as a preference by any regular rural carrier, then no movement or changes of other regular routes will occur because no other regular routes will become available.

PTF rural carriers do not need to submit a bid for a posted vacant regular rural route unless the office has posted multiple vacant routes. When more than one vacancy exists, PTF rural carrier(s) submitting bids have a choice of the residual vacancies based on the longest period of service in the office. When a posting contains multiple vacant routes, PTF rural carriers must list all regular routes by the official position identification number(s), in the order of preference. If a PTF rural carrier does not indicate preferences when multiple vacant routes have been posted, the PTF rural carrier will be assigned a residual vacancy without the benefit of a preference.

Substitutes and RCAs who are eligible to bid and will accept any regular rural route in the office should click the "Select All & Submit Bid" button on the USPS Job Bidding Screen of the web based application. No preferences need to be listed except in the following situations:

1. The substitute or RCA would only accept a regular position dependent upon a certain route(s) becoming available. In this situation, the substitute or RCA would list, in the order of preference, only those routes that would be accepted if the route(s) becomes available.
2. The office has posted multiple vacant routes.
 - a. If more than one vacancy exists, the substitute or RCA may have a choice of residual vacancies based on the longest period of service in the office in accordance with Article 12.3.C.2.g.
 - b. When bidding, substitutes or RCAs may list all regular routes by the official position identification number(s), in the order of preference should the route(s) becomes available.
 - c. If a substitute or RCA bids, but does not indicate preferences when multiple vacant routes have been posted, the substitute or RCA will be assigned a residual vacancy without the benefit of a preference.

Submitted preferences for any regular route in the facility will be honored based on availability and in accordance with seniority. Preferences are considered for all routes that become vacant due to placement of any carrier into the initial vacancy. Carriers may withdraw a bid at any time during the 10-day posting period.

Bids will be sorted by HRSSC. A Pre-award notice will be forwarded to Local Services at the District level to verify before the vacancy award notice is printed.

When a PTF (part-time flexible rural carrier) assignment is posted in accordance with Article 30.2.A.3, eligible substitute rural carriers and RCAs are simply bidding to be converted to a career status PTF. The specific route assignments are not to be included on the posting notice.

When an office posts more than one PTF position, the eligible substitute rural carriers and RCAs will need to submit a bid for each position by the individual position identification number to be considered for each assignment.

Q AND A

Q. Regular rural carriers have previously been afforded the opportunity to decline assignments which may become vacant as a result of the original posting in favor of a more desirable assignment. Will this opportunity still exist?

A. No. The regular carrier will indicate, in order of preference, all routes which they will accept. Once the posting is closed, the carrier will not be able to decline a route on which they are the successful bidder. This provision will apply to all assignments bid by all rural carriers.

Q. Is it possible that a substitute or RCA can be awarded a residual vacancy ahead of a substitute or RCA bidder with a longer period of continuous service as a substitute or RCA?

A. Yes. If the substitute or RCA with the longer period of continuous service only lists specific routes on the submitted bid, and the residual vacancy is not one of the listed preferences, then the more "junior" substitute or RCA will be awarded the residual vacancy.

Q. Are there instances when the PS form 1717-A, Preferred Assignment Multiple Bid Card, will be used instead of Automated Bidding?

A. Yes. The manual PS Form 1717-A will be used only when a carrier is bidding a route outside of their assigned office in conjunction with an excessing situation or retreat rights.

Q. The PS Form 1717-A has room to list 45 routes in order of preference. How should a rural carrier in an excessing or retreat rights situation, who is bidding into an office with more than 45 routes, list their preferences?

A. Rural carriers wishing to submit a bid that includes a listing of position identification numbers, in the order of preference, for more than 45 routes should fully complete a second PS Form 1717-A or as many forms as necessary, changing the choice numbers sequentially with the completion of each additional form. Under no circumstances should rural carriers annotate all remaining routes in the office in the 45th choice.

Q. How does a rural carrier withdraw a submitted PS Form 1717-A?

A. A rural carrier may withdraw a PS Form 1717-A by submitting a second PS Form 1717-A stating "withdraw previously submitted bid." When more than one bid is submitted for a posting, the latest dated PS Form 1717-A is accepted, provided the signature is valid and the posting has not closed.

Q. How does a rural carrier change a submitted PS Form 1717-A?

A. A rural carrier may change a PS Form 1717-A by submitting a second PS Form 1717-A with new preferences listed. When more than one PS Form 1717-A is submitted for a posting, the latest dated PS Form 1717-A is accepted provided the signature is valid and the posting has not closed. Although not required, the bid may be marked "disregard previously submitted bid" to minimize confusion.