

THE CHALLENGE — RELIEF VS ACTING SUPERVISOR POSITIONS

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In July 2023, the Postal Service established Relief Supervisor Jobs as a part of the Delivering for America Plan. The Service announced this program in a memo to its “Officers.” Not only did the Postal Service not discuss the creation of this program with the NPMHU in advance, they also failed even to copy the NPMHU on the memo announcing the program.

Since the Postal Service’s announcement of the Relief Supervisors program, the NPMHU has met with the Postal Service to better understand the role of the Relief Supervisor position and to raise issues with the Postal Service’s implementation of the program.

By way of background, through the Relief Supervisor program, there is to be one (1) relief supervisor for every five (5) authorized, PS Form 50 – Supervisors. The Relief Supervisors are to coverage for front-line supervisors on leave and scheduled days off.

As of May 21, 2024, the Service reported that **2041** of the **2249** Relief Supervisor positions have now been filled. In Processing and Distribution Operations, where Mail Handlers are predominately employed, there are 183 facilities that are authorized for Relief Supervisors for a total of 746 Supervisor Distribution Operation (Relief) EAS-17 positions. The Postal

Service reported in their most recent report, 659 of those 746 positions have now been filled. A brief overview of this report for Eastern (E) and Western (W) Area Processing for Relief Supervisors (SDOs) show:

- **81 (51 E & 30 W) facilities are fully satisfied.**
- **70 (39 E & 31 W) facilities are not fully satisfied.**
- **32 (14 E & 18 W) facilities are over the amount.**

The Service has represented that, once the relief supervisor positions are filled, there will not be a need to continue the use of 204-Bs. The Postal Service’s directives to its sub-unit leaders and officers similarly emphasize the elimination of 204-B where the staffing of Relief Supervisors has been satisfied.

Notwithstanding this representation, in a number of locations, the Service continues to utilize 204-Bs even though the allocated Relief Supervisor positions for these facilities have been met. Eliminating 204-Bs and replacing them with full-time career positions should **improve our work environment, eliminate grievance activity, and stabilize our workforce.**

It is incumbent upon local unions to challenge the continued use of 204-Bs when the Service reaches and/or surpasses



the allotted number of Relief Supervisor positions in these facilities through the Grievance and Arbitration Procedures. And, in doing so, we are providing grievance language that can be utilized in common situations that have arisen in this area:

- (If the Service has fully staffed the Relief Supervisor positions in the facility — that is, has met the 1:5 ratio — but is still using 204-Bs including but not limited to the use of 204-Bs during holidays): *Because the Service has satisfied the allocation of Relief Supervisor positions for the installation as reported by Postal HQs (date of Relief Supervisor spreadsheet), the Service's continued use of 204-Bs is improper.*
- (If the Service has not fully staffed the Relief Supervisor positions in the facility and is using more 204-Bs than would be allowed under the Relief Supervisor 1:5 ratio): *The Service has engaged in improper conduct because the number of 204-Bs exceed the number of Relief Supervisors earned, pursuant to the 1:5 ratio, for the installations*

Locals should also review the Postal Service's use of 204-Bs through Requests for Information, requesting the following information (at a minimum):

- Allocated EAS Staffing Matrix (filled and vacant position) for the facility.
- Copies of the Form 50s for all EAS assigned to the facility.
- Weekly work schedules for all EAS positions.
- Employee Everything Reports for all EAS employees.
- All PS Form 1723s for EAS details.

The trickiest part of filing protests challenging the excessive usage of acting supervisors is formulating or fashioning a remedy consistent with the violation. Here's a couple of remedy examples:

- Cease and desist order.
- No non-OTDL employee forced overtime while Mail Handler craft employees are being utilized as acting supervisors.
- No forced holiday scheduling for non-volunteer Mail Handlers who are senior to the Mail Handler detailed as acting supervisor.

Please continue to report 204-B usage in these facilities that are fully staffed with relief supervisor(s) to the National CAD staff.