

New Jersey Merged Branch 38 **Auxiliary Assistance Request Policy**

Throughout the offices of the Branch there is considerable confusion over the proper procedure concerning disputes arising from requests for auxiliary assistance and/or authorized overtime. The purpose of this document is to clarify the issues of the dispute and identify the correct action to be taken by Branch Carriers.

Disputes occur when the Carrier estimates that he or she will be unable to complete their assignment within 8 hours and management feels otherwise. The contrary position of management is usually based on DOIS or simply arbitrary. **Neither Branch 38, the NALC, nor the Contract recognize DOIS as the final arbiter of whether or not a Carrier needs auxiliary assistance.** Carriers are advised to not engage in any discussions involving DOIS numbers as a basis for denial of a request for auxiliary assistance. The only factor that has relevance is the Carrier's determination that help is required and his or her estimate of how much. DOIS is a measurement program, which is exclusively for managements use. The programs computations are not binding on any Carrier with respect to performance or estimating the need or amount of auxiliary assistance.

When a Carrier believes or determines that they will be unable to compete the assignment within 8 hours, he or she is to follow the requirements as spelled out in Handbook M-41.

M-41 City Delivery Carriers Duties and Responsibilities

131.4 Reporting Requirements

131.41 It is your responsibility to ***verbally inform management*** when you are of the opinion that you will be unable to case all mail distributed to the route, perform other required duties, and leave on schedule ***or when you will be unable to complete delivery of all mail.***

131.42 Inform management of this well in advance of the scheduled leaving time and not later than immediately following the final receipt of mail. ***Management will instruct you what to do.***

131.43 Complete applicable items on Form 3996, Carrier-Auxiliary Control, if overtime or auxiliary assistance is authorized in the office or on the street.

The key point is that the Carrier must inform management as soon as it is realized that overtime or aux help will be necessary to complete the assignment. **Management must be given the opportunity to decide what is to be done.** Possible action may include or be a combination of: router help, auxiliary assistance, authorized overtime, curtailment, pivoting, etc.. **The decision as to what to do rests solely with management and their instructions are to be followed as given.**

In situations where the request for auxiliary assistance is contentiously questioned, challenged or disputed by supervision, **the Carrier is to refrain from any arguing whatsoever.** Under those circumstances it is imperative that the Carrier obtain clear and concise instruction as to what he or she is to do. After a Carrier has followed the requirements of M-41, Section 131.4, management is then obligated to make a decision following the requirements of M-39, Section 122.33 that identifies numerous options available to management. **Refusing to provide a Carrier with PS Form 3996 is not one of them.**

M-39 Management of Delivery Services

122.33 The employee, upon request, will be provided a Form 3996, *Carrier - Auxiliary Control*, after the supervisor has been verbally informed as to the reason for the request. ***The employee shall not be denied the form and, upon request, a duplicate of the completed form will be provided the employee.***

The instruction “**Complete the assignment and be back in 8 hours**” is not uncommon on the Postal work floor. However, when a Carrier has verbally stated or given a Form 3996 informing that he or she cannot follow that instruction, management must make a decision. The instruction actually contains 2 directives. The Carriers has informed that he or she can do one or the other. It is management’s responsibility to decide which one it wants complied with.

When a manager refuses to clearly instruct as to whether the Carrier should complete the assignment or return within 8 hours, the Carrier will call from the street no later than 3 P.M. At that time, the Carrier is to inform the supervisor where he or she is, what work is left and an estimate of what time they will return to the office. The manager will then have a second opportunity to give clear instructions that can be followed. If none are given, then the Carrier is to complete as much as possible without going into overtime. If instructed to go back out to complete the route he or she must follow the instruction. **No Carrier has the authority to curtail mail; only management may make that decision.**

The scenario depicted above arises when the Carrier and Supervisor fail to agree on the need for auxiliary assistance or the amount of assistance required to complete the assignment and the manager inappropriately refuses to address the situation. In that situation it is of prime importance that the Carrier conduct his or her self professionally.

Do not be baited into arguing, swearing or making sarcastic comments. Maintain self-control and simply request clear concise instructions. Do so calmly and with a smile. Ask for your Shop Steward if necessary, make note of witnesses. Remember to stay calm and follow all instructions that are understandable and able to be complied with. **No carrier can be disciplined for professionally seeking clarification or explanation of an instruction.**