

Duties and Requirements of a Letter Carrier

Usual Requirements of the Letter Carrier

Activity	Continuous	Intermittent	Hours Daily
Lifting/Carrying	10 Pounds	70 Pounds	8 or More Hours
Sitting			4 or More Hours
Standing			6 or More Hours
Walking			6 or More Hours
Climbing			2 or More Hours
Kneeling			2 or More Hours
Bending/Stooping			2 or More Hours
Twisting			4 or More Hours
Pushing/Pulling			2 or More Hours
Simple Grasping			8 or More Hours
Fine Manipulation			8 or More Hours
Reaching Above Shoulder			2 or More Hours
Driving a Vehicle			6 or More Hours
Temperature Extremes	All types weather		8 or More Hours
High Humidity			6 or More Hours
Fumes/Dust			3 or More Hours
Carrier may be required to work up to 10 or 12 hours per day or longer as service needs require. Carrier may be required to lift up to 70 lbs from floor to waist height or higher. Copyright © 2005 Postal Employee Network			

OFFICE DUTIES: As a letter carrier, there are many physical duties and requirements. After the carriers tour of duty begins he/she must inspect their postal vehicle and then retrieve letter and flat mail from the mail distribution case. This mail may weigh from mere ounces to 10 or more pounds. This mail must be lifted and transported by the carrier to their route case for sorting.

At the carriers case there are trays and tubs of mail that have been distributed to their route by a distribution clerk. The carriers day begins by loading his case ledge with as much mail as possible. In order to do this the carrier must bend and lift trays and/or tubs of mail off of the floor surrounding their case and place same on their case ledge for sorting as needed. These tubs or trays of mail can weigh 30 or more pounds. The carrier then begins casing this mail into their "U" shaped route case, which is setup in route delivery sequence. On average days this may take from approximately 1.5 to 2.5 hours of continuous standing, twisting, turning, and reaching above the shoulder.

The USPS handbook entitled City Delivery Carriers'--Duties and Responsibilities, states that "the accurate and speedy routing of mail is one of the most important duties of a carrier; you must be proficient at this task".

After casing all available mail for their route the carrier must retrieve their parcel hamper which is a wheeled container filled with large and small parcels that may weigh up to 70 lbs. The carrier rolls this hamper to their case where the carrier then pulls the route down in delivery sequence and places this mail into trays or tubs and then into their parcel hamper. After this has been completed the carrier must clock onto street time, roll their hamper of mail outside to their postal truck, and load this mail into their truck or vehicle for street delivery. All mail tubs, trays, and parcels must be lifted by the carrier from their parcel hamper and placed in their vehicle. Loaded mail trays and tubs can weigh as much as 35 pounds or more. All of these duties requires continuous twisting, turning, bending, lifting, and stooping.

STREET and/or DELIVERY DUTIES: After completing their office duties and loading their vehicle the carriers street duties begin which may last up 6 hours or much longer. The vast majority of mail routes are park and loop routes, which consists of parking and "looping" mail delivery up one side of the street and then back down the other side carrying their mail in their hands and via a satchel normally hanging over their shoulder filled with up to 35 lbs. of additional mail and parcels.

The carrier returns to their vehicle when completing each park and loop. He then moves the vehicle to the next park and loop point. These 'park and loops' can subject the carrier to all types of terrain from concrete to sand to mud, from hilly to flat grounds, rugged rock filled paths, or normal downtown street sidewalks. Naturally, the carrier performs all of these street duties in all types of weather. Their park and loops may expose them to walking on snow or ice covered terrain, as well as rain soaked ground cover.

The carrier is required to be able to lift up to 70 pounds - in the office or while on the street. Street duties require constant bending, twisting, stooping, lifting and climbing of stairs or hills in all types of weather. All of these duties exposes the carriers body to constant pressure upon feet and knees and upper and lower body.