

RETREAT RIGHTS FAQs

This document contains frequently asked questions (FAQs) regarding the process and activities related to employee retreat rights.

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1.0 GENERAL

What are retreat rights?

Retreat rights provide an excessed bargaining unit employee with the opportunity to return to their former section, craft, and/or bid cluster.

Where can I find more information about retreat rights?

Information regarding retreat rights may be found in the appropriate collective bargaining agreement or in the appropriate joint interpretation manual.

Can employees from all crafts request retreat rights?

All excessed bargaining employees may request retreat rights back to their former section, craft, and/or bid cluster.

How do I request retreat rights?

Clerks, Maintenance, Motor Vehicle and City Carrier craft employees (full time, part-time regular, or part-time flexible) who are involuntarily reassigned may submit a written request at the time of reassignment to be returned to the first vacancy in the level and craft in the installation from which reassigned. The quickest and most reliable method of accepting retreat rights for clerks and city letter carriers is to use eJob Bidding in the Employee Apps - Quick Links on LiteBlue (<https://liteblue.usps.gov>). Mail Handlers, who are involuntarily reassigned, will automatically receive retreat rights. The retreat rights for all crafts will be honored until the employee is (1) returned, (2) the request for retreat rights is withdrawn or (3) the employee declines an opportunity to return in accordance with the requested retreat rights.

To whom should I submit my acceptance of retreat rights?

You will be notified at the time of the excessing.

Is an employee who is exercising *retreat rights* considered to be bidding?

In the Clerk craft it is bidding to vacancies in their former pay level and bid cluster but does not count as one of the five (5) successful bids under Article 12, Section 3, or as one of the five senior unsuccessful bids under Article 37. Maintenance, Motor Vehicle, Mail Handler and City Carrier craft employees submit preferences for eligible residual vacancies.

After being excessed, how soon can I retreat back to my former installation?

You may retreat back to a vacant residual position in your former installation when you are reached in seniority order.

Who keeps track of retreat rights?

Local Services has access to retreat rights records which are maintained in the Job Bid Management (JBM) application. Employees may also view retreat rights records in eJob Bidding in the Employee Apps - Quick Links on LiteBlue (<https://liteblue.usps.gov>).

How are excessed employees notified of positions that they are eligible to retreat to?

If the employee was excessed from a manual bid site, the Installation Head of the losing installation will send the postings to the Installation Head of the gaining installation to give to the employee to ensure that the excessed employee has knowledge of eligible positions. If the employee was excessed from an automated bid site, the employee should check eJob Bidding in the Employee Apps - Quick Links on LiteBlue (<https://liteblue.usps.gov>) each Monday for eligible postings in their former installation.

Are employees who voluntarily reassign in lieu of junior impacted employees entitled to retreat rights?

No.

When an employee is excessed into a different craft within the same bid cluster does that employee receive retreat rights?

No. That employee must return to their former craft upon the first available residual vacancy. However, APWU represented employees who have been excessed into APWU represented craft positions will have five business days to provide the Postal Service written notice that they wish to remain in their current position.

Does an employee who is excessed to a different craft in the new bid cluster have retreat rights?

Yes. An employee excessed to a different bid cluster and craft has Retreat Rights to their former craft at their former bid cluster.

Does a full time regular (FTR) clerk have to accept an offer to retreat to a Non-traditional Full-Time (NTFT) position with less than 40 hours/week in the former bid cluster?

No. The MOU on (NTFT) Duty Assignments states that "No clerk or MVO employee who at the signing of this Agreement, has a full-time regular work schedule of 40 hours a week will be involuntarily reassigned to occupy a NTFT duty assignment of less than 40 hour a week."

FTR clerks may be offered a retreat to a NTFT position; however a FTR would not lose retreat rights if they declined a successful retreat to a NTFT position with less than 40 hours/week.

If a clerk is excessed outside the bid cluster to a lower level duty assignment with saved grade pursuant to Article 37.4.C.6.b, and is later offered and declines retreat rights to his/her former level and craft in the former bid cluster, does the employee lose the saved grade protection?

The clerk must bid or apply to positions in their former level for which they are eligible to bid or apply to retain saved grade status.

When a clerk is placed into a lower level duty assignment to accommodate an excessed senior preference eligible Clerk, does he/she have retreat rights to the level?

No. If placed in a lower level duty assignment due to the placement of an excessed senior preference eligible Clerk, he/she will have retreat rights solely to the former duty assignment on a one-time basis when the former position is vacated. If he/she refuses the retreat rights, they lose saved grade protection.

If I received relocation benefits when I was involuntarily reassigned, will I receive the same benefits if I exercise my retreat rights?

No. Relocation benefits are not available for the move back to your former bid cluster.

If I received relocation benefits when I was involuntarily reassigned, will I have to repay the relocation benefits if I exercise my retreat rights to my former bid cluster within one year of being relocated?

If you are eligible to exercise retreat rights and choose to return to your former bid cluster, you will not be required to repay the costs associated with your relocation to the new bid cluster. However, you are still obligated to reconcile any advanced funds that you have received and which remain outstanding.

2.0 Automated Retreat Rights

What is automated retreat rights?

Automated retreat rights is a more convenient, automated way to accept retreat rights using eJob Bidding on LiteBlue. It allows Clerks to view and bid on vacant positions offered on Vacancy Postings in the office you were excessed from as well as in your current bid cluster. City Carrier and Mail Handler craft employees can submit their preferences for residual vacancies in their former bid cluster(s).

CLERK CRAFT EMPLOYEES: Before being involuntarily reassigned to the gaining bid cluster, you are required to file a written request or accept retreat rights via eJob Bidding from LiteBlue, to be returned to the first vacancy in the same level or residual vacancies in lower or higher level(s) and craft in the losing bid cluster.

CITY CARRIER CRAFT EMPLOYEES: Before being involuntarily reassigned to the gaining bid cluster, you are required to file a written request or accept retreat rights via eJob Bidding from LiteBlue to be returned to the first residual vacancy in the same level and craft in the losing bid cluster.

MAIL HANDLER CRAFT EMPLOYEES: When notified of an involuntary reassignment to another bid cluster, Mail Handlers will automatically receive retreat rights to the first available residual vacancy in the craft, regardless of level, in the losing bid cluster.

Is this a new policy?

No. Retreat Rights are covered under Article 12 of the National Agreements. Automated retreat rights was developed in adherence to the Article 12 language in the APWU, NALC and NPMHU National Contracts and is offered as a more convenient option to written acceptance of retreat rights acceptance.

How are retreat rights offered to employees using automated retreat rights?

Local Services will enter employee retreat right offer records. Once the offer record is entered, the quickest and most reliable method for the impacted Clerks and City Carriers to accept the retreat rights offer is through eJob Bidding on LiteBlue in the Employee Apps - Quick Links (<https://liteblue.usps.gov>). Mail Handlers automatically receive retreat rights.

Can employees in bid clusters that are not automated bid sites accept retreat rights using eJob Bidding in the Employee Apps - Quick Links on LiteBlue (<https://liteblue.usps.gov>)?

Yes. All Clerks and City Carriers may utilize eJob Bidding to accept offered retreat rights regardless of whether their bid cluster is an automated bid site or a manual bid site. However, you will need to bid or submit preferences by a manual process.

Can employees use the phone to accept automated retreat rights?

No. Automated Retreat Rights related bidding is not available via telephone bidding (IVR).

When can an employee accept an offer of automated retreat rights?

Acceptance of Retreat Rights **MUST** be done prior to the effective date of the employee being placed into the gaining bid cluster, whether submitting acceptance manually – in person or via eJob Bidding in the Employee Apps - Quick Links on LiteBlue (<https://liteblue.usps.gov>).

Does automated retreat rights allow employees to state preferences?

Yes. Clerks can state preferences for a same level vacancy or higher or lower level residual vacancies in their former bid cluster. Carriers can state preferences for a residual vacancy at the same level position in their former bid cluster. Mail handlers can state preferences on any eligible residual vacancy. If employees do not state preferences, the system will automatically preference vacancies by the job ID number.

Does a clerk's acceptance of automated retreat rights serve as bid on all eligible positions in the former bid cluster?

Yes. After Clerk craft employees state preferences for any posted positions they are specifically interested in, bids are automatically entered for any remaining positions that the clerk is eligible to retreat to in a former bid cluster.

How can an employee withdraw a request for retreat rights?

Employees can withdraw retreat rights by using eJob Bidding in the Employee Apps - Quick Links on LiteBlue (<https://liteblue.usps.gov>) or by submitting a written request to the bid cluster head of the losing bid cluster.

Will an employee using eJob bidding be able to print a document showing that retreat rights were accepted?

Yes; by using the browser print function.

How are excessed employees notified of positions that they are eligible to retreat to?

If the employee was excessed from a manual bid site, the Installation Head of the losing bid cluster will send the postings to the Installation Head of the gaining bid cluster to give to the employee to ensure that the excessed employee has knowledge of eligible positions. If the employee was excessed from an automated bid site, the employee should check eJob Bidding in the Employee Apps - Quick Links on LiteBlue (<https://liteblue.usps.gov>) each Monday for eligible postings in their former bid cluster.