



# **Postal delivery members' handbook**

***South Midlands Postal Branch***

**Published: 2018.**

## Introduction.

This booklet has been produced in order to provide CWU members on delivery with some useful information regarding agreements, arrangements and entitlements.

Whilst we hope that this booklet is of use, we would always recommend that members speak directly to their local representatives on any issue of concern or in order to simply seek clarification, advice or assistance. Equally, members can contact the local branch with any enquiries.

Hope you find this booklet of use.

## Branch Contacts:

### *Branch Office*

CWU Office  
Queens House  
16 Queens Road  
Coventry  
CV1 3EG  
02476552400

Website: [www.cwusouthmidpostal.org](http://www.cwusouthmidpostal.org)

Twitter: @SouthMidsPostal

### *Des Arthur*

*Branch Secretary, 07738683231*  
[cwusouthmidlandspostal@gmail.com](mailto:cwusouthmidlandspostal@gmail.com)  
Twitter: @desarthur411

### *Julian Travill*

*Area Delivery Rep, 07947576564*  
[Jules.cwu.rep@gmail.com](mailto:Jules.cwu.rep@gmail.com)

### *Paul Joyce*

*Area Safety Rep, 07885999769*  
[Pauljoyce75@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:Pauljoyce75@yahoo.co.uk)

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## Your First Few Weeks

All new entrants should be allocated a local workplace coach on their arrival at their delivery office. This workplace coach will support the new entrant for the first six-week period in getting to know the job and in order to help build the new starter's competence and experience during this important induction period.

Actual on-the-job training should take place during the first three-to-five-day period and will normally be led by the workplace coach. This will include the new starter shadowing the workplace coach on the delivery that he/she is due to perform for their first six weeks.

Whilst a new entrant is due to remain on the same delivery duty for their first six-week period to assist them in learning the job, where this is not possible the new starter will be given additional support and training (either by the workplace coach or another experienced member of staff) on the first day of each new delivery that they are placed on during this first six-week period.

Following this six-week period the new entrant will then normally be placed on the local delivery office reserve list and allotted duties in line with the local arrangements at that office, until such time as they are able to select a duty using their established seniority.

*(The above information is based on the CWU/Royal Mail National Agreement Induction Training With Coaching Support.)*

**Please Note:** Whilst your workplace coach is there to offer you on-the-job support and training during your first few weeks, your local CWU rep is also there to provide you with support and advice during this important time.

## Your Annual Leave Entitlement

Basic annual leave entitlement is as follows:

- On entry – Four and a half weeks.
- After 5 years – Four weeks 3.5 days.
- After 15 years – Five weeks 1 day.
- After 20 years – Six weeks.

All periods of service on a temporary or permanent contract will count towards calculating leave due.

In addition to the above entitlements, employees might, during the course of the year accumulate further annual leave entitlements – known as 'lieu days' when their rest days (i.e. scheduled Day Off or when on annual leave itself) falls on one of the following Bank/Public holidays: **New Year's Day, Good Friday, Easter Monday, May Day, Spring Bank Holiday, Late Summer Bank Holiday, Christmas Day and Boxing Day.**

Over and above the outlined standard entitlement, employees with less than 20 years' service will have the chance to increase their holiday entitlement to (or towards) six weeks per year, by foregoing an element of basic pay – known as the Leave Purchase Option. For each whole week of additional leave purchased, basic pay will be adjusted by 2% per week regardless of the length of the working week; purchases of half a week's leave will cost 1% of basic pay. Obviously, once the higher level of leave becomes an entitlement through service, or if the employee opts to return to their standard entitlements, pay is then restored to its maximum.

*(The above information is based on the CWU/Royal Mail National Way Forward Agreement.)*

## Recording of Annual Leave

Whilst there is no material change to the amount of leave which employees are entitled to, since 2012 Royal Mail have record annual leave in hours instead of days via the PSP (People System Portal). This means that annual leave entitlement will be reduced by the actual hours and minutes taken - not days. This means that leave can be taken in hours if a full day is not required.

For example, an employee contracted to work on a Tuesday for six hours will have six hours deducted from their leave entitlement rather than one day, alternatively an employee contracted to work nine hours will have nine hours deducted rather than one day.

The leave year will continue to run April to March. Leave entitlements will be rounded up to the nearest half day and will be converted into hours. When leave is taken, it will be reduced by hours and minutes with no rounding, except by the conversion to decimals. This is the only change to annual leave. Leave entitlements and the principles of how this is allocated will not be changing whatsoever.

*(The above information is based on the National Agreed Interim Joint Statement covering the Deployment of People System Portal - PSP.)*

**Please Note:** The above annual leave entitlement is based on a 12-month period, from April of each year to the following year. Therefore, if you start work for Royal Mail during the leave year you will receive a pro-rata annual leave entitlement until the beginning of the next leave year – April – at which point you will receive the full basic entitlement.

**Please Note:** Within your first few weeks a manager should advise you of your annual leave entitlement and ask when you would like to take it – subject to availability. Equally, you should have been asked during your initial training period if you have any pre-booked holiday arrangements prior to starting your new job – which management should honour.

**Please Note:** Whilst your leave entitlement should automatically be updated with extra leave days added, such as lieu days, as and when accrued on the office leave system; it is recommended that you keep your own personal record of your leave entitlement and any leave taken, in order to assist with any future enquiries.

## Your Meal Breaks

All duties will have a set paid meal break time, with the length of these meal breaks being in line with the following:

### Attendance Length & Length of Break:

2.5 hours to 3 hours – **10 minutes**

3 hours 1 minute to 3 hours 30 minutes – **15 minutes**

3 hours 31 minutes to 4 hours 59 minutes – **20 minutes**

5 hours to 7 hours – **30 minutes**

7 hours 1 minute to 8 hours 59 minutes – **40 minutes** (or 20 + 20 minutes)

9 hours to 10 hours 59 minutes – **50 minutes** (or 30 + 20 minutes)

11 hours to 12 hours 59 minutes – **60 minutes** (or 30 + 30minutes)

13 hours or longer – **70 minutes**

Employees aged under 18 are entitled to a 30-minute meal break on any attendance of four-and-a-half hours or more in length.

*(The above information is based on the CWU/Royal Mail National Way Forward Agreement.)*

**Please Note:** If you perform overtime either at the beginning or end of your duty this may attract a further meal break entitlement. For example, if your duty is five hours long you will have a 30-minute meal break, if you perform three hours overtime that day, taking your total attendance to eight hours, you are entitled to a further 10-minute paid meal break.

**Please Note:** Scheduled Attendance overtime does not attract paid meal breaks, but employees should still take a break in line with the actual overall attendance performed.

## Royal Mail's Special Leave Arrangements

Special Leave – which can be either paid or unpaid – is mainly an occasional absence from work which does not fall under the heading of annual or sick leave.

Special leave requests by employees can be made for a number of different reasons, such as: Urgent Domestic Distress, Dependants' Leave or Bereavement, with these requests normally only being for a few days. Although such special leave requests may only attract one or two days paid leave, there are occasions when further paid special leave may be granted.

**Please Note:** Whilst you have a statutory right in employment law to take reasonable unpaid time off to deal with an emergency involving a 'dependant' (a dependant can be a spouse or civil partner, child, parent, sibling, etc.), many of these circumstances may be covered by Royal Mail's own special leave provisions and therefore attracts paid leave.

Equally, there are other headings for which longer term special leave can be requested, such as: Paternity/Maternity Leave, Parental Leave, Regular Medical Treatment and Hospital Appointments, Adoptive Leave, Paid Civic Duties, Voluntary Unpaid Service, Political Purposes, Military Leave, etc.

In the cases of longer term special leave requests Royal Mail have clear guidelines outlining all employees' basic entitlements, some of which are covered by current employment law – such as Paternity/Maternity Leave, Parental Leave and Adoptive Leave.

All requests for special leave should be made to a manager with as much notice as possible or, if no advance notice is possible, (which could be the case in relation to Urgent Domestic Distress, Dependants Leave or Bereavement), by telephone as soon as possible and then confirming the details immediately upon return to work. The employee must ensure that their manager is kept informed of the likely length of absence.

*(The above information is based on Royal Mail's Special Leave Guidelines.)*

## Uniform Arrangements

### Core uniform items and allocations:

Trousers/Shorts (male or female cut) - 3 items every 2 years.

Skirts - 3 items every 2 years.

Tops - 5 items every 2 years. (Includes unisex shirt/polo shirt/female sholo/blouse)

Fleece Jacket - 1 item every 2 years.

Stormproof coat - 1 item every 3 years.

Cagoule - 1 item every 2 years.

Footwear - 2 items every 1 year.

For the full range of available uniform allocation visit:

**<https://www.myroyalmail.com/working-royal-mail/uniform>**

Royal Mail operates a 'wear and tear' arrangement regarding the replacement of uniform items. Whilst all uniform items have a life expectancy, any item of uniform which needs to be replaced early because it is damaged, lost or stolen, or simply because it is worn out, can be replaced by re-ordering the item from Royal Mail uniform stores.

All uniform orders, whether within or over allocation, can either be arranged via your line manager, or directly via the Self-Serve Uniform Order online:

**<http://detail.dimensions.co.uk/royalmail>**

However, it should be noted that uniform orders for early replacements will need to be authorised and footwear items over allocation will need to be authorised by your line manager.

Should you require any further assistance with uniform orders contact Royal Mail uniform supplies at Dimensions Customer Service Team on 01332 697118.

*If you have any questions, concerns or need any advice or assistance on these or other matters, please speak to your local rep or contact your branch office.*

## Some tips for the job...

### Do Not Use Your Car, Motorcycle, Moped or Scooter

The use of private cars, motorcycles, mopeds or scooters on delivery is banned by Royal Mail for many reasons not least safety and mail security.

All delivery duties have an official method of delivery which should be followed. The use of unofficial means of transport could have serious consequences such as disciplinary action and in some case could result in a prosecution in the absence of the necessary insurance provisions.

### Avoiding Dog Attacks

Never attempt a delivery if menaced or intimidated by a dog, or where a dog is loose. Never accept an owner's assurance that a dog is safe or friendly. Never put your fingers through a letterbox. Report all incidents of hostile and hazardous dogs to local management in order for it to be dealt with under Royal Mail Dog Attacks Procedure.

### Avoiding Conflict (when on delivery)

Aggression and violence are becoming more apparent in our everyday working lives so:

Seek to avoid confrontation; it takes as much courage to walk away from violence as it does to become involved.

Do not put yourself at risk of injury when guarding the mail against robbery or Royal Mail property against damage.

Be alert to the possibility of an attack – and report any concerns you have to your manager and representative and safety representative. Royal Mail and the CWU have introduced arrangements to assist any employee who is verbally or physically assaulted whilst on delivery. Under these arrangements the local manager and safety representative must examine the threat of assault and build into the delivery any necessary measures to minimise the risks on the streets.

## Report all Accidents at Work

Accidents should be reported as soon as possible to a manager who will complete an on-line electronic accident report form called 'ERICA' (*Electronic Reporting of Incidents for Collation and Analysis*). Once the manager has done this, ask them to print you a copy for your personal retention, which might be needed by you at a later date.

**Please Note:** Reporting an accident to a manager and completing an entry on 'ERICA' will not register the accident under the Social Security Regulations. You should always contact the local DWP Office (Department for Work and Pensions) direct and formally seek to register all accidents as an Industrial Injury, as soon as possible.

**Please Note:** If you are in any doubt about how to seek to register an accident with the DWP, or need further advice or assistance regarding the reporting of an accident at work, please see your local rep or contact your branch office.

## Accidents and Making a Claim for Compensation

As the result of an accident, or injury suffered at work – which includes dog bites – the CWU will pursue a claim for compensation (provided we are legally advised by our solicitors to do so). Therefore it is important that you always report an accident at work and make sure it has been recorded – register it with the DWP – and then seek the support of the CWU in making a claim.

**Please Note:** For more information on how to pursue a claim for compensation following an accident at work, or for more details on other legal services offered by the CWU, please contact your branch office. Or contact the CWU legal services directly at UnionLine: **0300 333 0303** or **www.unionline.co.uk**

## Start Times

Always attend work at your official start times. Attending work far in advance of your scheduled attendance times is unnecessary, means you are working for no pay, will give an unfair reflection of your daily workload and the time needed, and will have serious detrimental consequences if you are involved in an accident.

The fact is any employee who attends work early and does so voluntarily and who is then involved in an accident will not have such an accident viewed as an industrial injury by the DWP, which will impact on any possible later claim for compensation.

## Overtime in Royal Mail

The performance of overtime is voluntary, and it is your choice whether you want to work beyond your contractual hours.



Equally, overtime rates of pay are only paid after you have performed 39 hours (38 as from October 2018) a week (which is the contractual hours for full-time jobs) – irrespective of your actual contractual hours. Therefore, any overtime worked by a part-time employee up to 39 hours (or 38 hours) is paid at the basic rate, with only hours worked beyond this attracting the overtime rates of pay.

**Please Note:**Part-time employees working additional hours up to the normal full time working week are paid at Standard Single Pay Rate (SSPR). This ensures equal treatment between full and part-time employees doing the same work. SSPR is pensionable and includes pro-rata payment at the appropriate hourly rate of any allowances or regional supplements to which the employee is entitled.

*Again, if you have any questions, concerns or need any advice or assistance on these or other matters, please speak to your local rep or contact your branch office.*

## • Your Rights Under Royal Mail's Procedures

If, for whatever reason you find yourself being asked to attending a formal or informal meeting with a manager, always talk to your local rep in advance.

You are entitled to seek union advice and assistance at any time and it is always advisable to do this if approach under any of Royal Mail's formal procedures. In the absence of your local rep you can seek assistance and support from the Area Delivery Representative, or by contacting your branch office.

## Royal Mail – Conduct Code

- Everyone who works for Royal Mail is entitled to be treated with courtesy, dignity, fairness and respect when subject to the conduct code.
- Employees have the right to seek support and prior advice and be accompanied by his/her relevant CWU representative during any fact finding and/or conduct code hearing.
- Employees have the right to be treated fairly, including the right to make a case in response to any allegations or questions put, whether formal or informal.
- Information and documents that a manager may rely on in reaching a decision should be made available in advance of any interview or hearing.
- The right to appeal against a discipline penalty without the fear of the original penalty issued being increased.

## Royal Mail Avoiding Delay Process

Delay to mail is a serious matter and could potentially be unlawful. All employees have a responsibility to ensure all items are processed in accordance with the local workplan. All employees will be made aware of the local workplan and the specific requirement of the particular job roles they will perform. Any time mail is delayed, for whatever reason, Royal Mail employees should attempt to correct the problem efficiently and effectively as soon as possible.

### General rules

- Employees must be made aware that mail must never be taken home at the end of a delivery. Correct endorsement procedures and correct use of the pouch-off wallet, where appropriate, will avoid this.
- Under normal circumstance, if procedures have been followed, no conduct action will be taken against individuals if it is not possible to deliver all mail within their scheduled time.
- The main aim will be to avoid the circumstances that may pose operational difficulties to an employee and to find ways of overcoming any potential problem at an early stage. It is also important that all employees are made fully aware of the implications of delaying mail and the possible consequences.
- Measures must be put in place to advise employees on the course of action to be taken when difficulties arise when managers are unavailable.

### Prior to commencement of delivery

On completion of their preparation, where an employee believes that they may experience difficulty in completing their delivery within the authorised time allotted, they should approach their manager as soon as possible before setting out on delivery. It will be for the manager to discuss any problem and advise the employee what particular action should be taken, including the consideration of collection on delivery around associated postboxes to enable USO compliance.

When an employee has requested assistance on delivery, but the manager believes that assistance is not required, the decision, along with the advice given to the employee, should be recorded and associated with the daily traffic volume record. The employee can have access to this record and may ask to see it prior to commencement of their delivery.

The employee should be encouraged to see their union representative if agreement cannot be reached. Instances where there is a difference of opinion between the employee and the manager about what is possible during the shift will be looked at individually within the unit on the basis of factual evidence. Such difference will be addressed prior to the employee leaving the office for delivery.

The employee and manager should agree a specific time to phone if full completion of delivery workload within the allocated time proves not possible. If it becomes obvious that the delivery may be a problem, the employee can contact the manager before the arranged time.

### **After commencement of delivery**

Where an employee is prevented from completing their delivery for any reason, it is essential that this is reported immediately, either by returning to the office or by phone. A written record will be kept.

All employees should be informed of the local authorised arrangements in writing.

*(The above information is based on the CWU/Royal Mail Conduct Agreement.)*

**Please Note:** To obtain a copy of the Royal Mail Conduct Code procedure, and for more information, advice or assistance on conduct code matters, please contact your local rep or your branch office.

### **Point of Clarification on 30 Minutes Flexibility**

The Agenda For Growth national agreement clarified the 30 minutes flexibility as:

Both parties re-affirm their commitment to the 30 minutes flexibility arrangements within the Pay and Modernisation agreement (2007). The following provides clarification of the agreed approach.

Where necessary, for example when traffic volumes are unexpectedly high or resourcing issues arise, individuals may be asked and may themselves request to vary their duty times by up to 30 minutes on a 'swings and roundabouts basis'. Individual circumstances will be taken into account and total weekly contractual hours will not change. This means that individuals may flex their duty times by up to 30 minutes on any given day and this will be balanced either way over the next 5 working days. However this period can be extended by local agreement. A local record will be kept. Any requirement to change times of attendance or flex will take into account individual's personal obligations and responsibilities.

There is no other agreement in place between Royal Mail and the CWU that overrides or supersedes this statement. To be clear any hours worked before or after official duty times should attract the appropriate overtime payment, unless there is an arrangement agreed in line with the above.

*(The above information is based on the CWU/Royal Mail National Agenda For Growth, Stability and Long Term Success Agreement.)*

## Royal Mail – Attendance Procedure:

- Employees have the right to seek support and prior advice and be accompanied by his/her relevant CWU representative during any interviews.
- The right to at least three working days written advance notice of any formal interview.
- Absences resulting from accidents at work, maternity or an employee's disability (covered under the Equality Act) are normally discounted.
- Part day absences will not normally be considered.
- The right to request to be interviewed under the procedure by a manager of the same sex and to have such a request treated sympathetically. (You can also request to be accompanied by a CWU representative of the same sex.)

### Royal Mail Attendance Standards:

**Attendance review 1 prompt:** 4 absences or 14 days in a 12 month period.

**Attendance review 2 prompt:** 2 absences or 10 days in the next 6 months following an attendance review 1 formal notification.

**Consideration of dismissal prompt:** 2 absences or 10 days in the next 6 months following an attendance review 2 formal notification.

### Royal Mail Attendance Standards for Triallists:

**Attendance review 1 prompt:** 2 absences or 7 days in 6 months.

**Attendance review 2 prompt:** 1 absence in the next 2 months following an attendance review 1 formal notification.

**Consideration of dismissal:** 1 absence in the next 2 months following an attendance review 2 formal notification.

*(The above information is based on the CWU/Royal Mail Attendance Agreement.)*

## Contact Strategy within the Attendance Procedure

### Notifying and reporting of absence

During an employee's absence from work, it is vital contact is formed and maintained between the manager and employee. Involving the relevant union representative can also be helpful in maintaining contact and resolving issues.

The employee should make every effort to report their absence before the start of their shift and have a discussion with their manager to establish:

- The reason for absence.
- The likely duration.
- Any anticipated return date.
- Any support Royal Mail may be able to offer.

## Contact strategy

To ensure the contact strategy is effective, it is important that:

- Everyone knows the correct number to call when reporting their absence.
- The contact number is displayed prominently in the office and someone is available to answer the phone at all times, whether it is an office number (landline) or a manager's mobile number.
- Employee contact details are up to date.

## Maintaining contact

It is important that the manager and employee are proactive in maintaining contact during a period of absence due to illness. If the absence is likely to be longer than a few days, the employee and manager should agree how contact will be maintained - how often and the method e.g. email, telephone. Contact between the manager and employee should be supportive rather than threat-centred.

Contact should be used to discuss:

- How the employee is feeling.
- Any change to the employee's expected return to work date.
- The employee's health, including any updates from medical appointments. Managers should focus on managing the absence and avoid making medical diagnosis.
- Exploring potential options which may expedite a return to work, for example, short term modified duties.
- Any developments at work about which the employee should be made aware.
- Any help or support that the manager can provide, including the Feeling First Class Helpline and the Rowland Hill Fund (0800 6888 777 and/or [www.feelingfirstclass.co.uk](http://www.feelingfirstclass.co.uk) using the code FFC1 to register).
- Whether a referral to the Occupational Health Service is appropriate.
- The agreed arrangements during periods of absence. The discussions can be face to face or by telephone and will vary according to the length and nature of the absence.

In the rare event contact is not made, managers should use the jointly agreed approach in the Attendance Policy and the Absence Notification and Maintaining Contact Guide.

*(The above information is based on the CWU/Royal Mail Attendance Agreement.)*

**Please Note:** To obtain a copy of the Royal Mail Attendance procedure, and for more information, advice or assistance on attendance and sick absence issues, please contact your local rep or your branch office.

## Royal Mail – Grievance Procedure:

- This procedure should be used when you wish to raise a complaint or concern in connection with your treatment at work or your employment that affects you individually.
- Employees have the right to seek support and prior advice and be accompanied by his/her relevant CWU representative during any interview.

- The procedure seeks to resolve concerns as quickly and sensitively as possible, and encourages issues to be addressed informally if possible.
- The procedure aims to ensure concerns raised are taken seriously and any necessary investigations are carried out within set timescales.
- The Grievance Procedure is made up of three stages:
  - Resolution with your line manager
  - Resolution with your second line manager or another appropriate manager
  - Appeal.

*(The above information is based on the Royal Mail Grievance Policy.)*

**Please Note:** To obtain a copy of the Royal Mail Grievance Policy booklet, and for more information, advice or assistance concerning a possible grievance, please contact your local rep or your Branch Office.

### Whether you find yourself under the above procedures or another Royal Mail procedure such as:

- ⇒ **MEDICAL/ILL HEALTH PROCEDURE...**
- ⇒ **TRIAL INTERVIEWS...**
- ⇒ **PERFORMANCES STANDARDS...**

**All members are advised to seek immediate advice and support from their CWU rep and should never attend such interviews or hearings without CWU representation.**

Remember, you are always entitled to be treated with dignity and respect at all times and can expect to work in a safe environment, where you are supported and feel valued. Equally, you are entitled to union advice and assistance at all times and in advance – therefore in the absence of your local rep you can seek support from the Area Delivery Representative, or by contacting your branch office.

### Would You Like to be Kept Updated.

If you would like to be kept informed by the CWU nationally of development and other news and information which may affect you then why not sign up to:

#### **CWU Outdoor Department e-bulletin.**

You can sign up to receive the Outdoor Department's e-bulletin by providing your name, membership number, workplace and email address to: **outdoorsecretary@cwu.org**

#### **CWU 'WhatsApp'.**

By adding WhatsApp to your phone. Save **07907502190** to your contacts. Text your name, workplace (if you have one) and CWU Branch to **07907502190**.

## Other Social Media Links.



The Communications Union - (Facebook)



@CWUNews - (Twitter)



@cwunews - (Instagram)

Or just visit the CWU national website at: [www.cwu.org](http://www.cwu.org)

### ***Thank you for taking the time to read this booklet...***

Clearly, it would be impossible to set out all the potentially relevant information you may need in this one booklet. However, the information detailed is based on those issues that are often raised by members and new starters within Royal Mail on a regular basis, and we hope it is of use to you.

However, and irrespective of what information is published in this booklet, the key point you should always keep in mind is that you are never alone.

**Remember – if you have any questions or need support and advice – just ask your union.**

