

# **Automated Postal Centers**

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## **Lobby Director Program And Lobby Sweeps**

Iowa State Convention  
Sioux City, IA  
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## Automated Postal Centers

The USPS began deploying Automated Postal Centers (APCs) in February 2004, and plans to install them throughout the country. APCs are designed to reduce lines at windows and provide customers an alternate way to send mail and purchase services.

They provide many of the services currently available at full-service windows, including:

Weighing and rating letters, flats, and parcels up to 70 pounds

- Dispensing variable rate postage
- Providing mailing options and special services
- Certified mail;
- Express mail forms
- ZIP Code lookup
- Providing receipts

The USPS and APWU agree that a window clerk or sales and service associate will perform the routine duties associated with this equipment. These duties may include restocking paper, PVI tape, and stamp books. The clerk may also clear minor paper jams.

The APWU Maintenance Division has filed a national-level grievance over the maintenance work on the machine which is currently performed by the company that designed and installed the APCs. Because this piece of equipment is automated rather than mechanical, it is clear the work is not exclusive to the Self-Service Postal Clerk. We have been informed that the maintenance on the APC is "plug and play," and will not need the level of service that traditional vending machines that accept coins and cash tend to require.

During initial testing, the Lead Sales and Services Associates were assigned the restocking duties. In the absence of an LSSA, the duties may be assigned to another window clerk who has stamp stock. This clerk will also be responsible for replacing paper and strip rolls.

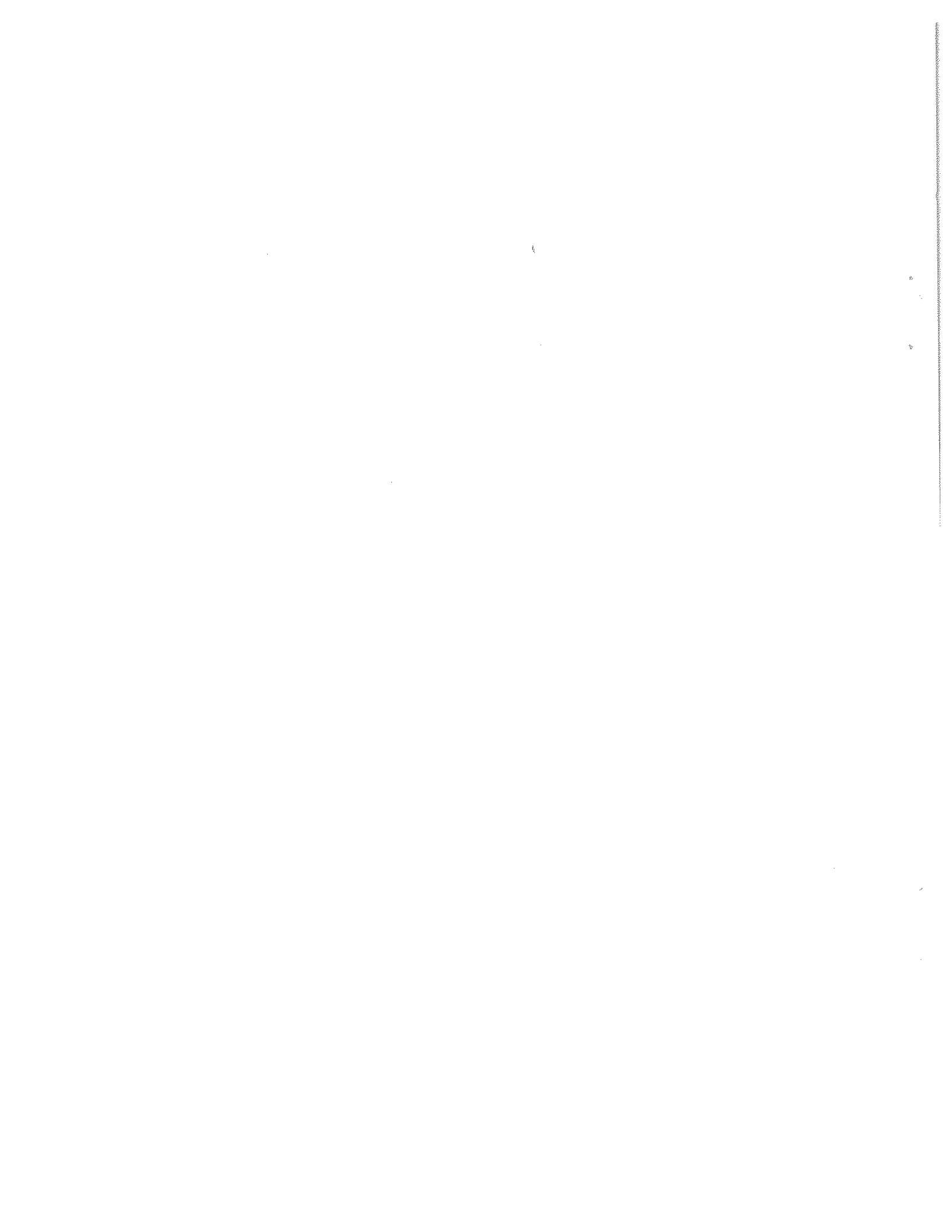
The Postal Service may designate APC Customer Advisors to educate customers on various aspects of the equipment during the first 90 days following deployment. The USPS APC Customer Service Advisor Guide is also attached. Management maintains the right to select any employee to perform this simple task. However, it is advisable to select Lobby Directors or window clerks, so that APC Customer Advisors do not cross over and perform the duties of Lobby Directors or window clerks.

The Lobby Director Program Guide will help locals ensure that the employees who serve as APC Customer Advisors during the 90 days following installation do not perform bargaining unit work unless they are in the bargaining unit.

A USPS letter dated July 16, 2004, responds to questions raised by the APWU concerning safety issues and site selection.

The APC installation summary [warning! large file - 9 Mb] by Area and District lists the sites where the APC will be installed.

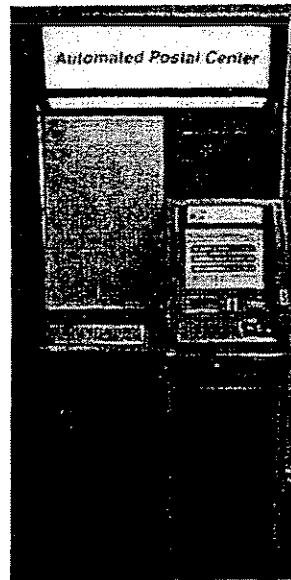
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UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE

AUTOMATED POSTAL CENTER

CUSTOMER SERVICE ADVISOR GUIDE

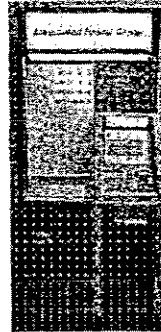


"HELP, CARET, AND EDUCATE"

## **INTRODUCTION:**

As the Postal Service's "Customer Service Advisor," you will be introducing the new Automated Postal Center (APC) to our customers.

For the first 90 days following installation of the machine, you will be stationed in the lobby near the Automated Postal Center.



It will be your responsibility to:

- Help customers get acquainted with the machine.
- Encourage customers to use it.
- Assist them with their transaction.
- Answer any questions about the machine.

In this handbook you will learn about the machine, its functionality, and different ways that will assist you in making it a success in your office.

***“SUCCESS DEPENDS ON YOU!”***





# LOBBY DIRECTOR PROGRAM GUIDE

Office of Retail  
Philatelic & Retail Services Department



2. Eligibility

All clerks with window service responsibilities in a participating unit are eligible to apply.

3. Application Procedures

Window clerks apply by completing the Lobby Director Volunteer Form (Appendix, page 24).

4. Term of Assignment

Every applicant will be given the opportunity to act as Lobby Director. Local management in consultation with the APWU representing the volunteers in each participating office will determine which of the following options will be used:

Option 1

The Lobby Director assignment will be rotated among all the volunteers. It will be assigned on a first volunteer, first-serve basis. If two or more clerks volunteer at the same time, the senior clerk would serve first in the rotation.

The primary director serves for three months. The next volunteer(s) substitute for the primary director on their days off, lunch hours, etc. for the same three month period.

At the end of three months, the substitute becomes the primary director and next volunteer becomes the substitute. This process continues every three months depending on the number of volunteers.

Note: Three months is the suggested term of the assignment, however local management may tailor the term of the assignment to local needs. Once a rotation is established, managers should consult with the APWU when considering a change in the term of the assignment. The final decision will rest with local management.

Option 2

The senior volunteer serves as the primary on a permanent basis. The remaining volunteer(s) substitute for the primary director on their days off, lunch hours, etc.

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## E. LOBBY DIRECTOR DUTIES

Lobby Directors perform the same duties as the clerks behind the counter with the exception of handling money. Directors must be knowledgeable, patient, courteous and neat in appearance. Positioned in front of the counter, they are able to react quickly to the customers' presence and concerns. When the lobby becomes busy, the Lobby Director will perform these duties:

- o Greet each customer as soon as they see them. Ask, "How can we help you?" and identify the customer's needs.
- o Recommend the services that best meet the customer's needs.
- o If necessary, explain the features and benefits of our services to assist customers in selecting a product or service.
- o Ensure that customers have the necessary forms and that they are properly completed.
- o Check to see if parcels are wrapped properly and help customers wrap packages to meet mailing requirements.
- o Provide packaging products, i.e., padded bags, boxes etc., allowing customers to prepare their mailing before they reach the window.
- o Direct customers to vending machines and to any special service window, such as Stamps Only, Express Mail, or Pick-up.
- o Answer questions.
- o Approve checks
- o Help weigh parcels.
- o Deliver vacation hold and accountable mail to customers in the lobby.
- o Handle inquiries and complaints,
- o Accept changes of address, P.O. box applications and request for vacation holds.

- o Provide any necessary assistance to customers in the lobby.

The director may also open Stamps Only or Express Mail windows and set postage meters.

## F. UNIFORM

The following uniform will be worn to project the polished professional image we want for the Lobby Director:

Blazer	The director is outfitted in a light-weight navy blue blazer.
Warm Weather Option:	Navy blue vest may be substituted for the blazer only in warm weather.
Shirt/Blouse	Standard uniform item in white, blue or gold.
Neckties	Men's navy blue and red necktie. Women's navy blue and red necktie.
Slacks/Skirts	Men wear navy blue slacks. Women wear navy blue skirts/slacks (skirts are preferred).
Shoes	Men and women wear black or navy blue enclosed shoes.
Gold Badge	They wear an attractive gold badge with the Postal Service logo, the title "Lobby Director" and their name below. This is worn in lieu of standard window clerk badge.

This uniform is consistent with the new window clerk uniform as detailed in the notice on page 6 of Postal Bulletin 21771, dated June 28, 1990. The new uniform items should replace the old uniform as soon as possible. Blazers are to be purchased through normal procurement channels using PS Form 7381. For ordering procedures, specifications and suggested sources of supply, contact Gloria Cheek at PEN 268-6963.

## G. EQUIPMENT/SUPPLIES

Directors work from a mobile cart/cabinet, a table or basket and carry all necessary supplies and forms to assist customers in line.

Although a standard mobile cart has not been selected, several divisions have constructed mobile or stationary carts. The approximate size should be 25" long x 18" wide x 42" high (appendix, pages 25-38). The cart will house a scale and serve as a customer writing and wrapping table. Built-in drawers or cabinets below will store the supplies needed by the director.

Other options being used include:

- o Use of a designated lobby writing table.
- o Small table with drawers positioned at the end of the queue.
- o Parcel slide
- o Rolling stock cabinets.
- o Rolling AV/Utility tables (Appendix, page 39).

We will continue to search for the optimum mobile cart and appreciate any suggestions from the field. In selecting this piece of equipment, unit managers should consider the lobby size and unique characteristics of their office. In any case, the equipment should be in good condition and present a professional appearance.

Supply List - Appendix, pages 40 and 41.

should be granted. Handbook EL-602, *Food Service Operations*, provides guidance for Postal Service compliance with the Randolph-Sheppard Act.

**125.4 Lobby Director Program**

**125.41 Description**

The *lobby director* is a friendly, knowledgeable clerk in the lobby who greets customers, determines what they need, and assists them in selecting services and preparing paperwork before they reach the service counter. Lobby directors perform the same duties as the clerks behind the counter, except that they do not handle money.

**125.42 Purpose and Scope**

The program's objective is to reduce the average customer waiting time by assisting many customers *before* they reach the retail service counter. In addition, it aims to reduce customers' perceived waiting time by demonstrating that the Postal Service intends to provide prompt, efficient, and courteous service. The lobby director should be used during peak traffic periods during the day.

The lobby director program is appropriate for high-traffic offices that:

- a. Might otherwise have long lines at several periods of the day, month, or year.
- b. Receive customer complaints about long lines, waiting time, or employee discourtesy.
- c. Have two full-time and at least one part-time retail service counters in operation.

**Note:** To implement the lobby director program, there must be enough lobby space for an extra person to work the line.

**125.43 Implementation**

**125.431 Notify Employees**

Managers should provide all clerks with a program overview that describes the program and its objectives as well as benefits for customers, retail clerks, and employees acting as the lobby director.

**125.432 Encourage Volunteers**

All employees with retail responsibilities in a unit may volunteer for the lobby director program. Each volunteer will be given the opportunity to serve as a lobby director.

**125.433 Provide Training**

Each lobby director receives 8 hours of training that focuses on communications and human relations skills, salesmanship, and knowledge of Postal Service products and services.

**125.434 Uniforms**

Lobby directors must wear a standard retail clerk uniform blouse, slacks, skirt, or jumper, and black or navy blue shoes.

**125.435 Obtain Supplies and Equipment**

Lobby directors may work from a mobile cart or a table. The following supplies should be available:

- a. Letter scale.
- b. Mailing forms and labels.
- c. Tape.
- d. Packaging products for sale to customers.
- e. Bad check list.
- f. Zone chart.
- g. Rate charts (giveaways).
- h. Publication 201, *Consumer's Guide to Postal Services and Products*.
- i. Other brochures (giveaways).

**125.5 Articles Found in Lobbies or Public Areas**

When articles found in lobbies or in public areas around a post office are turned in to employees, the employees follow these procedures:

- a. Ask the finder to write down on a Postal Service routing slip (Item 0-13) name, address, telephone number, and a description of the article. Unless the article is Postal Service or government property or a money order, it can be returned to the finder if the loser does not claim it within 30 days.
- b. If the finder does not leave a name, want the article, or claim the article within 30 days after being notified that it is available, dispose of it in the same manner as unidentified material found loose in the mail. Do not return government property or money orders to the finder. Dispose of government property as prescribed by 691.54. Money orders should be mailed to the St. Louis Accounting Service Center.
- c. Note on the routing slip the date and disposition of the article. Also note the name of the employee handling the disposition. File the routing slip for 3 months, then destroy it. The postmaster should make sure that the article is not lost or damaged.

**126 Retail Services Management****126.1 Purpose and Scope**

In addition to operations involving direct contact with customers, retail clerks must report cash, sales of items, and stock on hand. They must also maintain records, complete data collection forms, and perform other related tasks as required. This section explains administrative responsibilities and applicable regulations.





UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE  
 REGISTRATION  
 TELEPHONE 268 3216  
 FAX 268 3212

OFFICE OF THE  
 ASSISTANT POSTMASTER GENERAL  
 LABOR RELATIONS DEPARTMENT

ARTICLE \_\_\_\_\_ WCM   
 SECTION 6 LOST   
 SUBJECT \_\_\_\_\_ MOD.

LOBBY SWEEP

RECEIVED

AUG 24 1990

APWU  
 CLERK DIVISION

Mr. Thomas Thompson  
 Assistant Director  
 Clerk Craft Division  
 American Postal Workers  
 Union, AFL-CIO  
 1300 L Street, N.W.  
 Washington, DC 20005-4128

Re: B7C-5R-C 18534  
 Local  
 Bellingham, WA 98225

Dear Mr. Thompson:

On August 15, 1990, we met to discuss the above-captioned grievance at the fourth step of our contractual grievance procedure.

The issue in this grievance is whether the performance of "lobby sweeps" by management is a violation of the National Agreement.

After reviewing this matter, we mutually agreed that no national interpretive issue is fairly presented in this case. We further agreed that management is not precluded from performing lobby sweeps.

Accordingly, we agreed to remand this case to the parties at Step 3 for further processing, including arbitration if necessary.

Please sign and return the enclosed copy of this letter as your acknowledgment of agreement to remand this case.

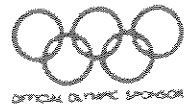
Time limits were extended by mutual consent.

Sincerely,

Joyce Ong  
 Joyce Ong  
 Grievance & Arbitration  
 Division

Thomas Thompson  
 Thomas Thompson  
 Assistant Director  
 Clerk Craft Division  
 American Postal Workers  
 Union, AFL-CIO

Date: 8-24-90 ✓







UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE  
Labor Relations Department  
475 L'Enfant Plaza, SW  
Washington, DC 20260-4100

RECEIVED

MAY 22 1990

APWU  
CLERK DIVISION

Mr. Thomas Thompson  
Assistant Director  
Clerk Craft Division  
American Postal Workers  
Union, AFL-CIO  
1300 L Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20005-4128

ARTICLE	1
SECTION	6
SUBJECT	LOBBY SWEEPS

Re: H7C-3D-C 25173  
Class Action  
Tuscaloosa, AL 35401

Dear Mr. Thompson:

On several occasions, we met to discuss the above-captioned grievance at the fourth step of our contractual grievance procedure.

The issue in this grievance is whether the performance of "lobby sweeps" by Management is a violation of the National Agreement.

During peak periods of customer activity, management performs lobby sweeps to ensure good service and customer satisfaction. The grievance file reflects that the actual tasks performed by the managers involve de minimus work and have been performed by management for years. There was no evidence presented by the union to show that lobby sweeps are exclusively bargaining unit work. In sum, the union has presented no evidence which shows that management has violated the National Agreement.

Thomas Thompson


2

Although the union requested that a Lobby Director be assigned to the office as part of the remedy requested in the Step 2 appeal, documentation in the file shows that the Lobby Director program is a voluntary one. Information connected with the Lobby Director Program also indicates that the union has implicitly recognized that lobby sweeps are a legitimate management function.

Based on these considerations, the grievance is denied.

Time limits were extended by mutual consent.

Sincerely,

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Kathleen Sheehan  
Grievance & Arbitration  
Division

DATE

5/22/90

The Parties agree that Management is not precluded from performing lobby sweeps. However, quoting from arbitration cases:

- 1) . . . "the practice should not be carried beyond a *de minimis* level and should not be abused to the extent it encroaches upon the work which has been assigned to the clerks." (G98C-4G-C 01213742)
- 2) "However, Management most clearly is wrong in its assertion it 'has a right to be the lobby director.' The lobby director's position is clearly identified in the POM as a clerk, a bargaining unit position.

On the other hand the parties have specifically agreed in Management Exhibit 1 that 'management is not precluded from performing lobby sweeps.' Presumably, this refers to those circumstances where there is no Lobby Director. For, in the second letter (Mgmt. Ex. 2) it is agreed management may 'perform lobby sweeps and provide relief to Lobby Directors *where that program has been implemented* (emphasis added).' Thus, whether a lobby director, clearly a bargaining unit position, is part of the workforce, Management still is entitled to perform lobby sweeps.

It is only, as acknowledged by the Postal Service advocate in this case, where Management has abused its 'lobby sweep' permission and under that guise performed bargaining unit work consistently and for some considerable period of time that a violation occurs. The testimony here simply does not support that conclusion in this case. The Postmaster testified he handled no retail or money transactions, thus, even if as urged by the Union, he occasionally went and found a parcel, this work was *de minimis* and lasted no more than a few minutes on any of the occasions cited." (G98C-4G-C 01078818)

- 3) "Regardless of whether you call it 'window work' or 'lobby sweeps' it is obvious from the testimony that at various times, who services customers regarding vacation hold mail, yellow slips for certified letters, parcel Post, etc. and exactly how those tasks have been performed has been a mixed bag of both bargaining unit employees and management. Although it is obvious that the majority of these tasks are carried out by the bargaining unit when performing their jobs at the window the question is whether or not it constituted a violation in the instant case when management performed the tasks under the heading of 'lobby sweeps.'

. . . Thus it is crystal clear that almost immediately after the Snow award was issued the parties mutually agreed to further clarify what was and was not considered to be bargaining unit work with regard to lobby sweeps. This clarification was not limited to just the above cases and therefore its impact was intended to be national. The Service is therefore correct insofar as the parties have mutually agreed that the work or tasks performed under the heading of 'lobby sweeps' is not exclusively the domain of the bargaining unit. (91-2 ARB 8499)

It is, however, a limited intrusion into that domain under very restricted circumstances. The parties have recognized and emphasized this in three ways or criteria. First in H7C-4B-C 23173 they stated '...management's right to perform lobby sweeps and to provide

relief to Lobby Directors where that pro gram has been implemented.' (MX#2). This infers that lobby sweeps are permissible at a minimum 'to provide relief.'"  
(E94C-4E-C 97050098)

- 4) "Nevertheless, it is my considered opinion that none of the identified exceptions were applicable with regard to the performance of 'lobby sweeps' or that of cleaning the Carriers as they returned from their routes in the afternoon. Clearly, the Supervisor and the Postmaster may interact with customers while they are in the lobby, but the evidence reveals that their actions went farther than necessary. (emphasis added) They performed traditional bargaining unit duties in place of employees. The job description for a Window Clerk includes:

2. Accepts from and, after proper identification, delivers to customers parcel post, insured, c.o.d., and registered mail; makes collection of required postage, issues necessary receipts; and issues general delivery mail to customers.  
...
6. Receives, follows up, and recommends action on customer claims and complaints.  
...
9. Provides information to the public concerning postal regulations, mailing restrictions, rates, and other matters involving postal transactions."  
(H98C-4H-C 01006406, 01006411, 00239597 & 00239601)

- 5) ..."in October of 1990, Arbitrator Brandon issued an award finding a contract violation when management performed lobby sweeps which included the collection of postage due and the securing of receipts for certified mail. (Case No. S7C-3W-C 99043.) In that case, the union agreed that lobby sweeps were not 'per se' violations of the National Agreement, but argued that some of the specific tasks performed by the supervisors constituted bargaining unit work. Arbitrator Brandon agreed. Relying on a prior National Award by Arbitrator Snow (Case No. A-C-N-6922 [1990]), Arbitrator Brandon found that 'the collection of monies in the process of providing mail services is a 'basic' or 'core' aspect of bargaining unit work.' Arbitrator Brandon also stated that 'window services are reserved to the bargaining unit' and that 'to the extent the lobby sweeps as a general practice as opposed to an isolated instance included doing such work such sweeps also violated the bargaining agreement.'" (F94C-4F-C 99014479 & F98C-4F-C 99124327)