

Uniform Program

Policies

National policy for the Uniform Program is established through the *Employee and Labor Relations Manual* (ELM), Section 930, Work Clothes and Uniforms, and Article 26, Uniforms and Work Clothes, in the national agreements with the American Postal Workers Union, National Association of Letter Carriers, National Postal Mail Handlers Union, Fraternal Order of Police, and the National Postal Professional Nurses. Rural carriers do not receive a uniform allowance. Article 30.1.O of the Agreement between the USPS and the National Rural Letter Carriers' Association requires an identification badge be provided to each rural carrier for display at the upper left front of the carrier's outer garment. The ELM, Section 930, is currently under complete revision and you will receive updates as they occur.

Fraud and Abuse Policy

Under the Postal Service's Uniform Program, Postal Service employees who are eligible to wear work clothes or uniforms must purchase official uniform items from licensed vendors and make purchases with their uniform allowance purchase cards. Postal Service employees may only use their UAPC to purchase authorized uniform items for uniform wear according to employee craft.

Postal Service employees assume financial responsibility for purchases in excess of the employee's yearly uniform allowance balance. Vendors may permit exchanges and credits for returned merchandise, but no cash refunds are allowed.

The Postal Service reserves the right to pursue any remedies appropriate in violation of the terms and conditions of ELM 930, including but not limited to remedies available for making unauthorized or fraudulent purchases, misuse and abuse of the uniform allowance purchase card, identity theft or misrepresentation of a Postal Service employee.

Prior-Year Allowance Process

Uniform allowances from the prior year are lost if an employee did not use his or her complete uniform allowance during the anniversary year.

Uniform Program

Contacts

Citibank

Uniformed employees use a Uniform Allowance Purchase Card (UAPC) to purchase uniform items. This is a declining-balance Visa credit card issued by Citibank. If you need to contact Citibank regarding:

- An employee's lost or stolen card;
- An employee's uniform allowance balance;
- To request a new card for an employee; or
- To change an employee's mailing address with Citibank

Contact Citibank Customer Service at 800-287-5003, Option 0. You must be authorized to contact Citibank regarding employees accounts within your jurisdiction. This is also the same number that employees use to contact Citibank.

HR Shared Service Center

If your Human Resources office has moved to Shared Services and you need assistance with:

- An employee's uniform allowance anniversary date;
- Prior-year allowance;
- Job change;
- Separation;
- Retirement; or
- Transfer to another Government agency

Please contact the Human Resources Shared Service Center at 877-477-3273, ext. 5. Any correspondence to Shared Services must be mailed to:

Human Resources Shared Service Center
Attn: Compensation and Benefits
PO Box 970400
Greensboro, NC 27497-0400

Labor Relations Systems

If you have questions or issues concerning:

- uniform vendors;
- uniform manufacturers;
- uniform program policies;
- grievances regarding uniforms; or
- Citibank issues

Contact the Uniform Program Office:

Uniform Programs
Labor Relations, Room 9120
475 L' Enfant Plaza, SW
Washington, DC 20260-4140

Uniform Program Hotline: 202-268-8391
Fax: 202-268-7490
Email: uniformprogram@usps.gov

Uniform Program Frequently Asked Questions

1. Who gets an allowance?
 2. When am I eligible for an allowance?
 3. How do I establish a Uniform Allowance?
 4. What if I am a new employee?
 5. What happens to my allowance if I transfer from one craft to another?
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 7. How much is my annual uniform allowance?
 8. What is a uniform allowance anniversary date?
 9. Does the uniform allowance anniversary date ever change?
 10. When should employees spend their allotment?
 11. What happens if they do not spend it in a timely manner?
 12. What number should I call to check my balance on my Uniform Allowance Purchase Card?
 13. What number should I call to get a person on the line?
 14. Does my uniform allowance carry-over into the next year if I do not spend it?
 15. Can I use this card at any uniform store?
 16. My card is not working at the vendors, what should I do?
 17. Will the Uniform Allowance Purchase card affect my credit score?
 18. I just completed my probationary period. When can I expect my Uniform Allowance Purchase Card?
 19. I lost my card and I need a new one. What do I do?
 20. When my card arrives in the mail, will it come in a Citibank envelope?
 21. I am changing crafts and moving to a new office. Should I cancel my card now?
 22. I just got my card and it doesn't work.
 23. When does Citibank cancel a card?
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1. Who gets an allowance?

Employees who work full time or 4 hours or more a day performing certain duties; are in the public view for 4 hours a day, 5 days a week or not less than 30 hours a week; and/or work in certain facilities or post offices are entitled to a uniform allowance.

- Type 1 - city letter carriers, clerk/special delivery messengers, clerks performing city letter carrier duties, motor vehicle operators, tractor-trailer operators, driving instructors and examiners, letterbox mechanics, ramp clerks and transfer clerks, AMF, performing ramp clerk duties, area maintenance technician/specialists, maintenance mechanics working as letterbox mechanics (see ELM 932.11i), passenger elevator operators, and elevator starters.
- Type 2 - employees assigned to retail operations.
- Type 3 - vehicle maintenance, custodial maintenance, mail handler, BMEU, and clerical employees eligible under ELM 932.12 and 932.13.
- Type 4 - security force police officers.
- Type 5 - bargaining unit and nonbargaining unit medical personnel.
- Type 6 - Supervisors eligible for work clothes (ELM 938.1)

An employee MUST meet ALL criteria for the specified position before a uniform allowance is established.

2. When am I eligible for an allowance?

Employees are eligible for an allowance upon the completion of the 90-day probationary period with the exception of the security force and current career employees who are assigned a uniform allowance. They are not required to wait 90 days for uniform eligibility. **IMPORTANT:** The appropriate paperwork must be completed before an allowance is established. It could be 6 weeks before the employee receives a card or have their existing card refreshed with the new allowance amount.

3. How do I establish a Uniform Allowance?

Uniform allowances are not automated. The manager, supervisor, postmaster, or OIC of the unit must complete one of the following forms (which can be found on the HR Shared Service Center's Website).

- [Request for Uniform Allowance \(March 2006\)](#) -Regular Allowance
- [Request to Establish Work Clothes Allowance \(February 2006\)](#) - for work clothes allowance
- [Contract Uniform Request ELM 932.12](#) -- contract uniform allowance

At the Headquarters level, we do not establish allowances, but rather administer the policy, and the inclusion of the uniform clothing into the program. The HR Shared Service Center (HRSSC) handles entering this information into the database. Once the necessary paperwork is completed, fax the signed document to the **651-994-3543**. If you have any questions, please contact the HRSSC at **877-477-3273 (option 5 and then Option 1)**.

Note: these forms will not be processed without the appropriate signature.

4. What if I am a new employee?

Employees must successfully complete their 90-day probationary period before they are entitled to a uniform allowance.

- The manager, supervisor, postmaster, or OIC of the unit must complete one of the HR Shared Services forms that request the appropriate allowance type.
- The manager, supervisor, postmaster, or OIC of the unit faxes the form (signed by the appropriate accountable manager) to the HR Shared Services Unit.
- Shared Services will process the request.
- In approximately 6 weeks, the employee will receive the uniform allowance debit card from Citibank in a plain white envelope.

5. What happens to my allowance if I transfer from one craft to another?

Your manager, supervisor, postmaster, or OIC of the unit must complete the appropriate form as shown above to request a change from one type of uniform allowance to another. This can be done when the employee is effective in his/her new

position. The employee will not receive a new card, but the amount on the card will reflect the new allowance amount appropriately.

6. What happens if I transfer into a position and will be receiving an allowance for the first time?

Your manager, supervisor, postmaster, or OIC of the unit must complete and submit the appropriate form (see question 3) to request a new uniform allowance. In approximately 6 weeks, the employee will receive the uniform allowance debit card from Citibank.

7. How much is my annual uniform allowance?

This allowances amount can be found under the ~~Uniform Allowance Schedule Activity and Designation Code Listing~~ link on the Blue and Liteblue Website.

- [Uniform Allowance Schedule Activity and Designation Code Listing](#)

8. What is a uniform allowance anniversary date?

The uniform anniversary date establishes the day your annual allotment is replenished. Allowances take effect on the earliest date an employee is required to wear the uniform after completing the 90-day probationary period.

9. Does the uniform allowance anniversary date ever change?

Yes, when employees who have been receiving allowances in one uniformed category transfer or are reappointed to a different uniform category within the allowance year, they start a new anniversary date, provided they are eligible in the new category on the date assignment. ELM 935.12

or

Employees on LWOP in excess of a year, or absent on military duty in excess of a year, who were eligible for uniform allowances immediately prior to their absence receive a new anniversary date for uniform allowances directly on return to a duty and pay status in a uniformed category. ELM 935.22.

10. When should employees spend their allotment?

Employees should spend their allowances early in the year. The later they spend their allotment, the greater the risk for losing it due to unforeseen situations (i.e. lost cards or delayed transaction posting). **Sometimes it takes a while for an employee to get their replacement cards or for a transaction to post at Citibank.** If an employee spends their allowance too close to their anniversary date, it may be posted on the next year's allotment, thus resulting in the employee forfeiting their prior year allowance. For best results, shop early or at least no later than 3 weeks before your allotment is replenished.

11. What happens if they do not spend it in a timely manner?

If an employee does not spend their allotment or a transaction is not posted within their anniversary date in a timely manner, it is forfeited.

12. What number should I call to check my balance on my Uniform Allowance Purchase Card?

Citibank's automated phone service is 800-287-5003. This is the place where employees can check their balance and check their recent usage.

13. What number should I call to get a person on the line?

Call 800-248-4553 for problems with your current account balance, getting a replacement card, changing your address or to report a lost or stolen card.

14. Does my uniform allowance carry-over into the next year if I do not spend it?

No. The uniform allowance is an annual allotment. If you do not use your uniform allowance within the year, you lose it.

15. Can I use this card at any uniform store?

No, you can only purchase uniform items from USPS licensed vendors. Before you shop, check the Uniform Website for the most current list of authorized vendors. The list is subject to change because if the vendors fail to adhere to the license agreement, they are terminated from the program and your Uniform Purchase card will no longer work at their store. The list of approved vendors is on Blue and LiteBlue under the title of **License Uniform Vendors**.

- [List of Approved Vendors for the Uniform Program](#)

16. My card is not working at the vendors, what should I do?

If the vendor is an authorized licensed supplier in good standing with the Postal Service, call Citibank's automated phone service at 800-287-5003 to ensure that you have funds available. If you have an appropriate balance on your account, call our hotline at 202-268-8391 to report the issue.

17. Will the Uniform Allowance Purchase card affect my credit score?

No, the UAPC does not appear on an employee's credit bureau report. The employee should not close this card to "boost" their credit rating. This is not a line of revolving credit nor is it a personal credit card.

18. I just completed my probationary period. When can I expect my Uniform Allowance Purchase Card?

The anniversary date is the 91st day after the hire date. After the supervisor has filled out the necessary paperwork and submitted it to the HR Shared Service Center, employees should receive their Uniform Allowance Purchase Card in approximately 4-6 weeks.

19. I lost my card and I need a new one. What do I do?

Immediately report lost cards or changes of mailing address to Citibank at Call 1-800-248-4553. Replacement cards take 5 to 10 days to produce after employee reports card missing.

20. When my card arrives in the mail, will it come in a Citibank envelope?

No, cards are mailed in a plain white bulk mail envelope

21. I am changing crafts and moving to a new office. Should I cancel my card now?

No, cards should be kept if employee changes craft or offices. The bank will change the employee's allowance amount and does not issue a new card.

22. I just got my card and it doesn't work.

Employees must activate cards by following the instructions on the card before buying items.

23. When does Citibank cancel a card?

Citibank cancels a card when:

- No card activity for 18 months
- The expiration date is exceeded
- When the employee is separated from the USPS
- Card reported lost or stolen

- Whenever fraud is suspected
 - When a replacement card has been requested
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Uniform Program

Uniform Types

- **Type 1 Uniforms** — Type 1a uniforms are worn by city letter carriers, clerk/special delivery messengers, clerks performing city letter carrier duties, motor vehicle operators, tractor-trailer operators, driving instructors and examiners, letterbox mechanics, ramp clerks and transfer clerks, AMF, area maintenance technician/specialists, and maintenance mechanics working as letterbox mechanics. Letterbox mechanics must be assigned to work outdoors more than one-half the time. Maintenance mechanics assigned to letterbox mechanic duties performing outdoors for more than one-half of the time also qualify. Type 1b uniforms are worn by passenger elevator operators and elevator starters.
- **Type 2 Uniforms** — are worn by employees assigned to retail operations.
- **Type 3 Uniforms** — are worn by vehicle maintenance, custodial maintenance, mail handler, BMEU, and clerical employees who qualify in accordance with provisions 932.12 and 932.13 of the ELM.
- **Type 4 Uniforms** — are worn by security force police officers.
- **Type 5 Uniforms** — Type 5a uniforms are worn by bargaining unit medical personnel. Type 5b uniforms are worn by nonbargaining unit medical personnel.

Uniform Program

Uniform Allowances Increases

Employees covered under the 2006-2010 United States Postal Service-American Postal Workers Union (USPS-APWU) national agreement who are eligible to receive annual clothing allowances, as specified in *Employee and Labor Relations Manual* (ELM), Section 932.1, are entitled to an annual uniform allowance increase effective on the employee's allowance anniversary dates occurring on or after November 21, 2006, as follows:

Regular Uniform Program (ELM 932.11)

Year	2006	2007	2008	2009
Effective Date	Nov 21	Nov 21	Nov 21	Nov 21
First-year amount (Type 1 uniforms)	\$424	\$435	\$446	\$457
First-year amount (Type 2 uniforms)	\$165	\$169	\$173	\$178
Employees no longer eligible for a first-year allowance (Type 1 uniforms)	\$344	\$353	\$362	\$371
Employees no longer eligible for a first-year allowance (Type 2 uniforms)	\$148	\$151	\$155	\$159

Work Clothes and Contract Uniforms Program (ELM 932.12- 932.13)

Year	2006	2007	2008	2009
Effective Date	Nov 21	Nov 21	Nov 21	Nov 21
Work Clothes Allowance: Clerical, Motor Vehicle, Maintenance (eligible) Type 3 Uniforms	\$70	\$71	\$73	\$75
Contract Uniform Allowance: Custodial Maintenance (eligible) Type 3 Uniforms	\$133	\$135	\$140	\$143
Contract Uniform Allowance: Vehicle Maintenance (eligible) Type 3 uniforms	\$168	\$172	\$177	\$181

The allowance amount is updated on the employee's uniform allowance anniversary date. The Uniform Allowance Purchase Card will reflect the increase approximately two weeks after the employee's uniform allowance anniversary date. In accordance with the 2006-2010 national agreement, increases are effective on November 21 of the contract year.

- Labor Relations Systems
Labor Relations, 11/20/08

Uniform and Work Clothes Program Allowances under the USPS-NPMHU National Agreement

Employees covered under the 2006-2011 United States Postal Service-National Postal Mail Handlers Union (USPS-NPMHU) national agreement who are eligible to receive annual clothing allowances, as specified in *Employee and Labor Relations Manual* (ELM), Section 932.1, are entitled to an annual uniform allowance increase effective on the employee's