

## NALC/USPS Contract Process

### Negotiations Process

The collective bargaining process for the Postal Service may entail a three-step process: negotiation, mediation and interest arbitration. The parties may negotiate a contract at any of the three steps in the process.

Step 1: The negotiations period begins approximately 90-days prior to the expiration of the contract. During this time, the parties try to reach agreement themselves. If they reach a tentative agreement, it must then be ratified by a vote of the union membership.

Step 2: If they cannot reach agreement, a federal mediator is appointed by the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service (FMCS), unless both parties waive mediation. If no agreement is reached with the mediator, or if the parties waive mediation, the contract goes to impasse.

Step 3: The impasse proceeds to final and binding interest arbitration. In interest arbitration the dispute goes before a three-member panel. The panel consists of a neutral arbitrator serving as chairperson and two arbitrators representing each party. The neutral arbitrator may be selected by agreement of the parties, or from a list provided by the FMCS.