

Instructional Document

NAPS Teleconference Improvement:
Monitoring Plan



As of October 2016
NAPS Headquarters



Purpose:

- To address concerns about postal teleconferences where members are subjected to demeaning, threatening and abusive behavior from their managers.
- Highlighted in visits made by the resident officers to this years' area and state conventions.
- Postal officials who attended our conventions heard, first-hand about abuse and threats and even cases where profanity was used in teleconference settings.
- While there was a commitment by postal officials in convention settings that they would correct teleconference problems, until such time as these issues are reported to proper postal officials, our members will continue to be on the receiving end of poorly managed teleconferences.



Background:

- Teleconferences are a useful and necessary method for sharing information with various groups without resorting to travelling to a physical meeting location.
- Teleconferences can be efficient in providing information, sharing and receiving feedback and improving operations.
- Most of today's teleconferences held between levels of postal management are managed professionally by the leader of the call.
- Of the thousands of teleconferences that are held at all levels of the Postal Service on a daily and weekly basis, most are beneficial and well managed.
- However, there are instances where teleconferences are not productive, where the presiding teleconference leader uses tactics and techniques that are abusive, demeaning and threatening.
- This behavior may potentially violate provisions of the Employee and Labor Relations Manual in addition to common business practice etiquette.



Background: ELM Provisions

651.3 Non-disciplinary Corrective Measures

Accountable managers/supervisors are responsible for the direct day-to-day performance management of subordinates. The accountable manager/supervisor monitors subordinates' performance and provides appropriate resources, coaching, and feedback to subordinates. The manager/supervisor is responsible for leading the employee to a higher level of achievement. Performance improvement should be a shared concern and effort between manager and employee. Early dialogue and guidance are critical to achieving positive results and continuance of an effective manager/employee relationship.



Background: ELM Provisions (Cont'd)

665.16 Behavior and Personal Habits

Employees are expected to conduct themselves during and outside of working hours in a manner that reflects favorably upon the Postal Service. Although it is not the policy of the Postal Service to interfere with the private lives of employees, it does require that postal employees be honest, reliable, trustworthy, courteous, and of good character and reputation. The Federal Standards of Ethical Conduct referenced in [662.1](#) also contain regulations governing the off-duty behavior of postal employees. Employees must not engage in criminal, dishonest, notoriously disgraceful, immoral, or other conduct prejudicial to the Postal Service. Conviction for a violation of any criminal statute may be grounds for disciplinary action against an employee, including removal of the employee, in addition to any other penalty imposed pursuant to statute. Employees are expected to maintain harmonious working relationships and not to do anything that would contribute to an unpleasant working environment.



Background: ELM Provisions (Cont'd)

665.24 Violent and/or Threatening Behavior

The Postal Service is committed to the principle that all employees have a basic right to a safe and humane working environment. In order to ensure this right, it is the unequivocal policy of the Postal Service that there must be no tolerance of violence or threats of violence by anyone at any level of the Postal Service. Similarly, there must be no tolerance of harassment, intimidation, threats, or bullying by anyone at any level. Violation of this policy may result in disciplinary action, including removal from the Postal Service.



Background: Core Definitions

Bullying Defined:

The following definition is included in section 55A (1) of the [Occupational Health, Safety and Welfare Act 1986](#):

'Workplace bullying means any behavior that is repeated, systematic and directed towards an employee or group of employees that a reasonable person, having regard to the circumstances, would expect to victimize, humiliate, undermine or threaten and which creates a risk to health and safety.'

Profanity Defined:

Profanity (also called bad language, swearing or cursing) is a [subset](#) of a language's [lexicon](#) that is considered by some to be strongly impolite or offensive. It can show a [desecration or debasement of someone or something](#), or show [strong or intense emotion](#). Profanity can take the form of words, expressions, gestures (such as [flipping the middle finger](#)), or other [social behaviors](#) that are construed or interpreted as [insulting](#), [rude](#), [vulgar](#), [obscene](#), [obnoxious](#), foul, desecrating, or other forms.



The Plan to Improve Postal Teleconferences:

- Address the concerns of our 25,000 active members, many of whom participate in multiple teleconferences on a daily/weekly basis.
- The three resident officers will be coordinating an effort to identify and report instances where NAPS members report bullying, the use of threatening, abusive or profane language in teleconference settings.
- Contact information collected for all District Managers and District Managers of Human Resources.
- When NAPS headquarters receives a report from a member in the field that has apparent issues with respect to the demeanor of a postal teleconference, the reports of teleconference abuses from our members will be thoroughly vetted at our headquarters offices.



National Coverage for the NAPS Teleconference Improvement – Monitoring Program

In order to efficiently address reports that are received from the field, the three resident officers have been designated to cover specific NAPS areas as identified below:

<u>President</u>	<u>Exe. Vice President</u>	<u>Secretary/Treasurer</u>
Southeast Area	Northeast Area	Illini Area
Texas Area	New York Area	MINK Area
Pacific Area	Mideast Area	Michiana Area
Rocky Mountain Area	Capitol/Atlantic Area	Northwest Area
Cotton Belt Area	Pioneer Area	North Central Area
Central Gulf Area		



Step One: Document the incident(s)

When you are participating in a teleconference where bullying, the use of threatening, abusive or profane language is being used in teleconference settings, we need your report to NAPS headquarters to include:

- The name of the postal District where the teleconference took place;
- The name and title of the postal official directing the teleconference;
- The name(s) of all attendees or the offices that were on the teleconference;
- The date and time the teleconference was held;
- The problem with the teleconference in specific terms; i.e. the actual language used, if people were threatened, who, if anyone on the teleconference was bullied or abused in any way;



Step Two: Send the information to NAPS

Headquarters

Once a member has completed the pertinent information to all the questions shown above, the information contained in the report should be sent from a non-postal computer to NAPS headquarters at: napshq@naps.org.



Step Three: Follow-up by NAPS headquarters

- The resident officers will review the report filed by the member through our web address: napshq@naps.org.
- We already are anticipating that many of the reports that will be provided by our members may lack the specificity that we need to make contact with the local District leadership.
- Provide contact phone number (cell preferred) and best time to contact (local time)
- There will be a designated resident officer who will be handling reports from your geographic area.
- This follow-up will assist the resident officers in ensuring that sufficient facts are at hand to move forward.



Step Four: Resolution

- A resident officer has made contact with District officials.
- It is expected that the matter will be addressed locally and that the problem will be resolved.
- Our measurement system will benchmark our success by relying on each NAPS member's expectation of how they should be treated on postal teleconferences.
- All reports will be logged and maintained at our headquarters offices for future reference for any repeat offenses.
- If reported problems don't appear to be remedied, you should initiate an additional contact with NAPS headquarters and report the problem again.
- Should the resident officers not achieve successful in resolving the problem at the District level then it is our intention to elevate the issue until it is resolved.



Promotion of Program to NAPS Members & Postal Leadership

- In order to promote this initiative, we will be developing a special section on our NAPS website.
- We will also be producing a Powerpoint presentation that can be used in the field at branch meetings. Please contact us for copies.
- Please forward your teleconference reports, your questions and comments to our headquarters email address: napshq@naps.org.
- NAPS headquarters has informed the Postal Service at the Area and District level about the details of this initiative. They are fully aware of this program and their support is anticipated.
- The resident officers are committed to supporting you and this process. We believe that it can work to improve teleconferences and your working conditions. This initiative will only be as successful as you are in reporting teleconference abuses by following the instructions we have provided.



Maintaining Member Anonymity

- It is paramount to maintain the anonymity of individuals' who report teleconference problems to NAPS headquarters.
- When we receive a report of teleconference abuse, it stands to reason that there are multiple participants on the teleconference. This is why we asked for a list of attendees (or offices) to be provided to NAPS headquarters.
- When contact is made with the local District leadership, we do not intend to provide the name of the individual who initiated the report to NAPS. Our report will be concerning the individual who was in charge of the teleconference, what they allegedly said or did and who the participants were on the teleconference.
- Based on the information members provide to NAPS headquarters confidentially, we will report the allegations to the District leadership and recommend that the District first initiate contact with the teleconference leader to provide them with our allegations. Should it be necessary, we will also recommend to the District leadership to contact several of the offices where individuals who were on the teleconferences are working to attempt to validate the allegations.



Maintaining Member Anonymity (Cont'd)

- Once the report gets to this stage, as members of NAPS we all must stand up for the dignity and respect for both ourselves and others who are being subjected to poor treatment and abuse on teleconferences. Should you either report abuse or be a witness to abuse or poor behavior this will be your opportunity to bring the problem to the attention of management.
- Many times management is already aware that an individual is treating his/her subordinates poorly.
- The lack of good judgment by senior officials in correcting this type of poor behavior actually condones and promotes this bad behavior.
- The **Teleconference Improvement and Monitoring Program** is your opportunity to correct teleconference abuses towards you and other EAS employees.



Conclusion:

All of us in NAPS believe that holding all levels of postal management accountable for their actions is a key to achieving breakthrough performance that is necessary for the Postal Service to be successful.

While we hold ourselves and others to high standards of performance, these standards must include managers at all levels treating their subordinates with dignity and respect.

While operational deficiencies may exist in an individual's performance, such deficiencies should be discussed constructively in private, and not on a teleconference.

