



United States  
**Office of  
Personnel Management**

Washington, DC 20415-0001

In Reply, Refer To:

Your Reference:

JUN 13 2003

Mr. Patrick R. Donahoe  
Chief Operating Officer and Executive Vice President  
United States Postal Service  
475 L'Enfant Plaza, SW.  
Washington, DC 20260-0080

Dear Mr. Donahoe:

Based on your agency's request, the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) has determined that a need exists for a substantial reshaping of the workforce within the U.S. Postal Service (USPS). This letter authorizes the use of voluntary early retirements under sections 8336(d)(2) and 8414(b)(1) of title 5, United States Code (U.S.C.), and sections 831.114 and 842.213 of title 5, Code of Federal Regulations (CFR). Your OPM authority number is 2003-078.

As you have requested, this authority does not cover all employees of USPS. The following are excluded:

- (1) Any employees who have not been continuously on the agency's rolls since at least 31 days before the date of your request, January 23, 2003;
- (2) Any USPS employees who are not represented by the American Postal Workers Union;
- (3) Employees serving under time-limited appointments; and
- (4) Employees in receipt of a decision of involuntary separation for misconduct or unsatisfactory performance.

USPS may offer voluntary early retirements to its eligible employees from the date of approval through September 30, 2003, subject to the provisions, limitations, and instructions outlined in this letter and sections 831.114 and 842.213 of 5 CFR.

Sincerely,

Ellen E. Tunstall  
Deputy Associate Director  
for Talent and Capacity Policy

2 Enclosures

## **Instructions for Use of This VERA**

You may determine the coverage of offers to eligible employees under this authority based on any combination of organizational components, geographic areas, occupational series or levels, or other nonpersonal and objective factors. These offers may be established on your own initiative.

You may establish early retirement window periods during which early retirements may be offered. These window periods may be established for any duration covered by this authority. You may limit window periods only by an established opening and closing date or by receipt of a specified number of early retirement applications. The manner of the limitation must be announced to employees at the time of the initial offer. You may subsequently establish and publicize a revised closing date, or a revised number of applications, when a change in management's need to offer voluntary early retirement has occurred. The revised closing date, or number of applications, may be applicable to the entire authority or only to employees in specific organizational unit(s), occupational series or level(s), or geographic area(s). The notice of the revised closing date or number of applications must be publicized in the same manner and to the same group(s) of employees as the original notice.

In granting this authority, OPM recognizes your need to offer voluntary early retirement to a specific group of employees within your organization for a specific period of time. You have not been delegated the authority to oversee any aspect of the voluntary early retirement program that is outside the scope of this delegation. We have granted this authority based on information concerning the number of excess employees in your agency, the number of employees eligible for voluntary early retirement, and the number of employees expected to exercise the early retirement option. You must use early retirements only to the extent necessary to achieve the changes in your workforce outlined in your request.

You must notify OPM if, at any time, further use of voluntary early retirement will no longer accomplish the objectives stated in your request for authority. OPM may suspend or terminate an authority if OPM determines that your agency is no longer undergoing the substantial delayering, workforce reshaping, reorganization, reduction in force, or transfer of function that formed the basis for the approval of the authority. Also, OPM may suspend or terminate this authority if your agency is not operating its early retirement program in a manner consistent with applicable laws or regulatory requirements or if your agency is not complying with the reporting requirements provided in this approval letter.

If you find that you must limit voluntary early retirements among your employees, you may adopt any fair and objective methods and criteria for approving applications that you believe are necessary. Please ensure that agency managers or employees do not coerce employees who are eligible for voluntary early retirement.