

Relief Supervisor Utilization

AUDIT REPORT

March 31, 2026 | Report Number 25-131-R26



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Highlights

Background

In June 2023, the U.S. Postal Service authorized the creation of relief supervisor positions in customer service, mail processing, maintenance, and logistics. The intent of these newly created positions is to provide coverage for regular supervisors during their leave and scheduled days off and reduce the reliance on acting supervisors. Relief supervisors are responsible for performing the same job duties and have the same training requirements as regular supervisors. Relief supervisor positions are earned at the facility level using a ratio of one relief supervisor for every five authorized regular supervisors. As of fiscal year (FY) 2025, the Postal Service filled 1,949 of the 2,168 (89.9 percent) authorized relief supervisor positions nationwide.

What We Did

Our objective was to evaluate the establishment of the relief supervisor position and its impact on the workforce. We judgmentally selected 17 Postal Service facilities nationwide based on relief supervisor positions and interviewed headquarters personnel, facility managers, and relief supervisors to understand the position and responsibilities.

What We Found

Overall, we determined the relief supervisor position was implemented successfully to provide coverage for regular supervisors on leave and scheduled days off. We found 31 of 33 (93.9 percent) relief supervisors believed the position was aligned with the job description and were satisfied with the position.

However, we concluded that the Postal Service did not effectively reduce its reliance on acting supervisors when it brought on relief supervisors, as was intended. During FYs 2023 through 2025, facilities with relief supervisors still accounted for more than half of all acting supervisors' hours used nationwide. This occurred due to lack of effective workhour management, detailing relief supervisors into other roles, and organizational changes. As a result, in FY 2025, we identified \$62.7 million in questioned costs due to the increase in total relief supervisor and acting supervisor workhours.

Recommendations and Management's Comments

We made two recommendations to address the issues identified, and Postal Service management disagreed with both recommendations. We will pursue the two disagreed recommendations through the audit resolution process. Management's comments and our evaluation are at the end of each finding and recommendation. See [Appendix B](#) for management's comments in their entirety.

Transmittal Letter



OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL
UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE

March 31, 2026

MEMORANDUM FOR: JOSEPH BRUCE
VICE PRESIDENT, HUMAN RESOURCES

ELVIN MERCADO
CHIEF RETAIL AND DELIVERY OFFICER AND EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT

ISAAC CRONKHITE
CHIEF PROCESSING AND DISTRIBUTION OFFICER AND EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT

PETER ROUTSOLIAS
CHIEF LOGISTICS OFFICER AND EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kelly Thresher".

FROM: Kelly Thresher
Deputy Assistant Inspector General
for Finance, Pricing, and Human Capital

SUBJECT: Audit Report – Relief Supervisor Utilization (Report Number 25-131-R26)

This report presents the results of our audit of U.S. Postal Service Relief Supervisor Utilization.

All recommendations require U.S. Postal Service Office of Inspector General's (OIG) concurrence before closure. Consequently, the OIG requests written confirmation when corrective actions are completed. Recommendations 1 and 2 should not be closed in the Postal Service's follow-up tracking system until the OIG provides written confirmation that the recommendations can be closed. We will work with Postal Service management through the audit resolution process for these recommendations disagreed to by the Postal Service.

We appreciate the cooperation and courtesy provided by your staff. If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Lazarick Poland, Director, Human Capital Management, or me at 703-248-2100.

Attachment

cc: Postmaster General
Corporate Audit Response Management

Results

Introduction/Objective

This report presents the results of our self-initiated audit of Relief Supervisor Utilization (Project Number 25-131). Our objective was to evaluate the establishment of the relief supervisor position and its impact on the workforce. See [Appendix A](#) for additional information about this audit.

Background

As the U.S. Postal Service continues implementation of its *10-Year Delivering For America Plan (DFA)*,¹ one of its goals is to continue promoting employee retention through new supervisor tools and resources, development opportunities, and collaboration by leaders to make decisions, drive performance, and ensure accountability. As part of this initiative, in June 2023, the Postal Service created four relief supervisor positions in customer service, mail processing, maintenance, and logistics.

Prior to the relief supervisor position, the Postal Service relied on acting supervisors² to backfill vacant supervisor roles. The intent of relief supervisor positions is to provide coverage for regular supervisors during their leave and scheduled days off and to reduce the Postal Service's reliance on acting supervisors by eliminating acting supervisor workhours in the facilities where relief supervisors are authorized.

Acting supervisors are not selected through the standard hiring process and do not receive formal training aligned with their temporary role. In contrast, relief supervisors are more aligned with regular supervisors. They are responsible for performing the same job duties as regular supervisors, which include supervising employees and operations, interacting with customers, conducting accident investigations, and handling grievances. They have the same pay scale as regular supervisors and are selected through the standard hiring selection process.

Furthermore, relief supervisors have the same training requirements as regular supervisors.

“The Postal Service created four relief supervisor positions in customer service, mail processing, maintenance, and logistics.”

Relief Supervisor Authorization

Relief supervisor positions are earned at the facility level using a ratio of one relief supervisor for every five authorized regular supervisors.³ Some relief supervisors rotate between several stations or branch offices, as they are not assigned to one specific facility. For example, a customer service relief supervisor could be assigned to one or more Postal Service retail and/or delivery facilities within a district. However, most processing facilities and larger post offices have relief supervisor positions that only report to that facility.

The Postal Service expects relief supervisors to work a non-standard, flexible schedule to cover work shifts and move between different office locations, sometimes with minimal advance notice. In the processing facilities we visited, plant management typically assigned one relief supervisor per tour, so they were not required to constantly switch tours.

All eligible facilities were authorized to hire relief supervisors in fiscal year (FY) 2024. At the end of FY 2023, there were 1,417 relief supervisors on the rolls. As of the end of FY 2025, the Postal Service filled 1,949 of the 2,168 (89.9 percent) relief supervisor positions nationwide. This puts the vacancy rate for relief supervisors above the Postal Service's overall supervisor vacancy rate target of 5 percent. See [Table 1](#) for FY 2025 relief supervisor positions by operation and their associated vacancy rate.

¹ *Delivering for America Second-Year Progress Report*, dated April 2023.

² Acting supervisors (sometimes referred to as 204Bs) receive a temporary higher-level assignment to backfill a vacant position or fill in when unexpected absences or extended leave occurs.

³ Relief supervisors are authorized by lead finance number and could report to multiple offices under that finance number.

Table 1. FY 2025 Relief Supervisor Positions

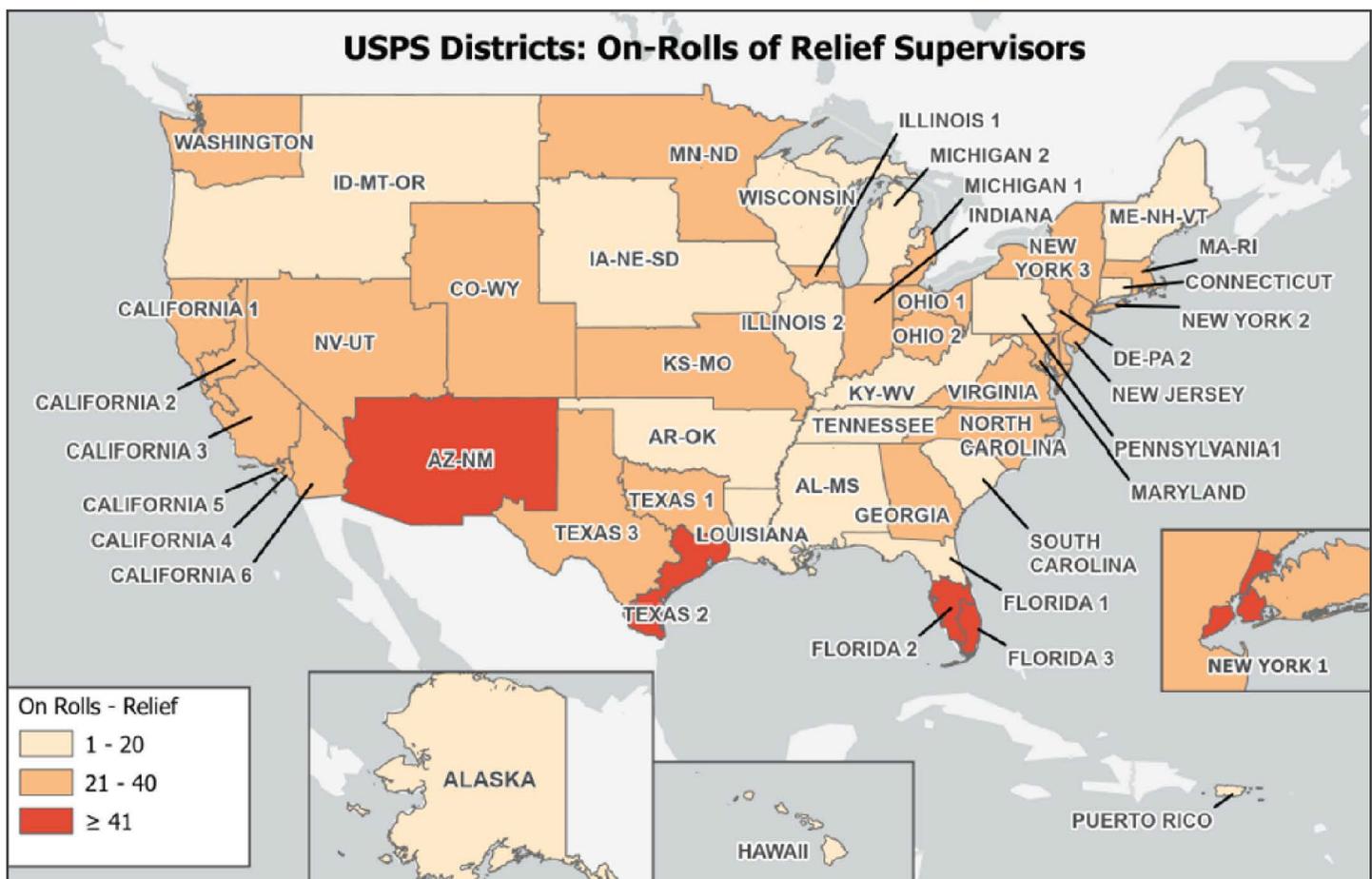
Position Title	Number of Positions Filled	Number of Authorized Positions	Vacancy Rate
Supervisor, Customer Service (Relief)	1,206	1,309	7.9%
Supervisor, Distribution Operations (Relief)	563	643	12.4%
Supervisor, Logistics Operations (Relief)	39	49	20.4%
Supervisor, Maintenance Operations (Relief)	141	167	15.6%
Total	1,949	2,168	10.1%

Source: U.S. Postal Service Office of Inspector General (OIG) analysis of Human Capital Enterprise System (HCES) data.

Five retail and delivery districts had 41 or more relief supervisors on rolls, with the New York 1 District having the most at 59. For Processing and Logistics, ten divisions had 41 or more relief supervisors on rolls,

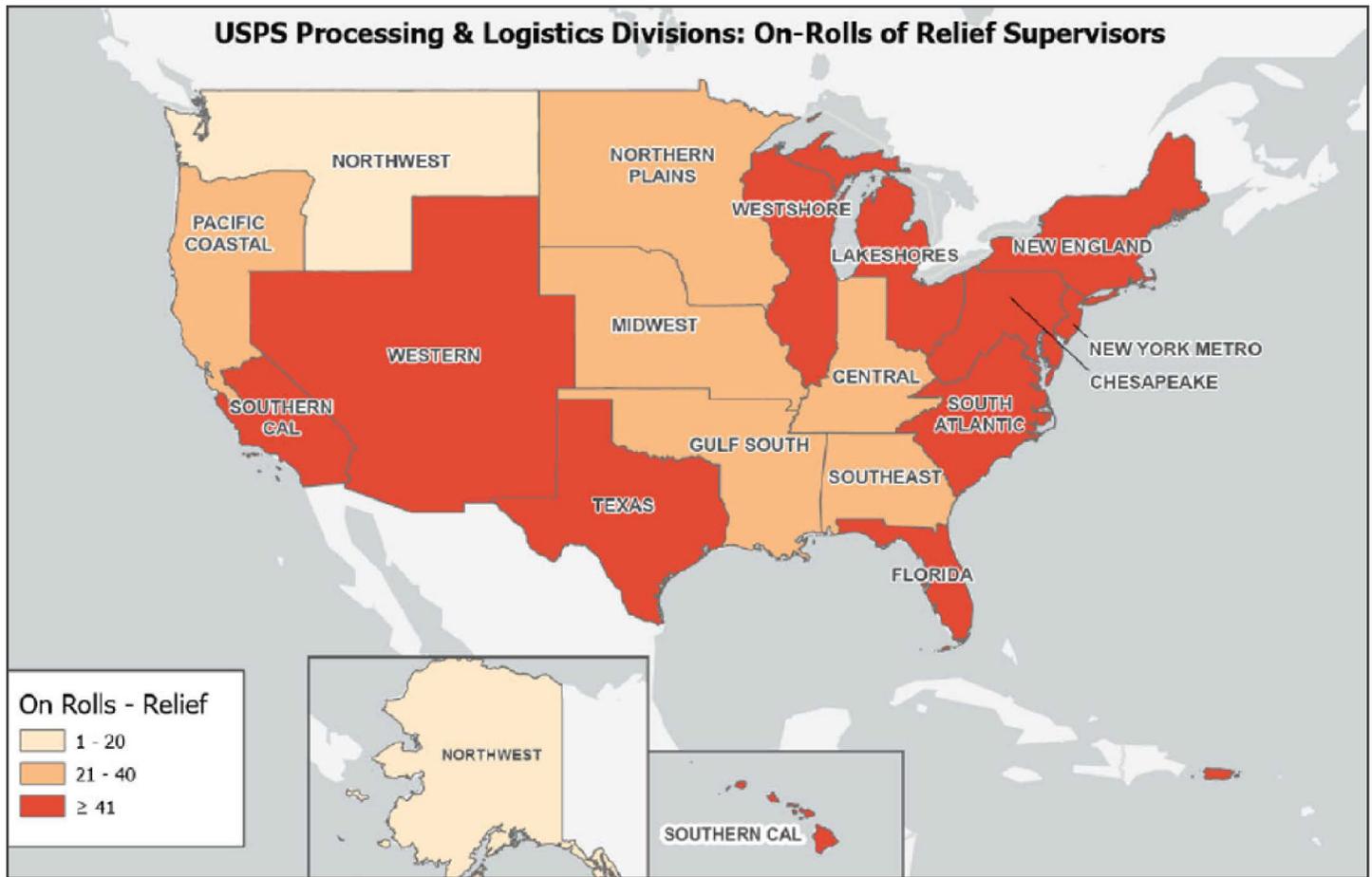
with the New York Metro Division having the most with 70, followed by the Chesapeake Division with 64. See Figure 1 and Figure 2 for the divisions and districts with the most relief supervisors on rolls.

Figure 1. Retail and Delivery Districts Relief Supervisors On Rolls - FY 2025



Source: OIG analysis of HCES data.

Figure 2. Processing and Logistics Divisions Relief Supervisors On Rolls - FY 2025



Source: OIG analysis of HCES data.

Finding #1: Establishment of Relief Supervisors

Overall, we determined the Postal Service achieved some targets of implementing the relief supervisor position. Relief supervisors contributed to a positive working environment by completing required training, providing flexibility, and decreasing grievance costs related to acting supervisors nationwide.

Relief Supervisor Experience and Training

We interviewed 33 relief supervisors to gain insight into their position, as it relates to their job roles and responsibilities, experience, training, and possible improvements. We found 31 of 33 (93.9 percent) relief supervisors believed the position was aligned with the job description and were satisfied with the position. Many relief supervisors interviewed had fairly consistent schedules, although they acknowledged the schedules and locations could change based on supervisory needs. They also described the position as beneficial and contributing to a positive work-life balance for all supervisors. For example, a distribution operations relief supervisor interviewed in the Western Processing Division stated he believes he has the chance to make a difference, while working on different tours at his facility. As another example, a customer service relief supervisor interviewed in the Tennessee District stated he believes the position allows supervisors to learn the practices of other offices and gain more insight into efficient ways of supervising.

The Postal Service was able to provide flexibility for regular supervisors and improve the working environment because it successfully implemented the relief supervisor position. To prepare supervisors for the role, the Postal Service launched a revised training program in July 2022, called the Postal Service Supervisor Program. All full-time Postal Service supervisors — including relief supervisors — are required to participate in the year-long program. The Supervisor Program includes two weeks of virtual training, then the supervisor is paired with a mentor/coach for on-the-job training and monthly assessments. It helps create diverse opportunities to gain knowledge and expertise,

build networking relationships, develop leadership and administration skillsets, and translate guidance into hands-on practical experience ensuring preparation for the role. We found over 95.1 percent of relief supervisors took the required

Postal Service Supervisor Program training nationwide. In addition, most relief supervisors interviewed had previous acting supervisor experience, which they stated helped prepare them when they could not get training immediately.

Grievance Activity

Since implementing the relief supervisor position, acting supervisor-related grievance costs decreased nationwide. Specifically, we assessed grievance activity related to acting supervisors and found these grievances decreased by 1,009 (31.7 percent) from FY 2023 to FY 2025, and overall costs decreased by over \$6.3 million (63.4 percent). See Table 2 for details.

“We found 31 of 33 (93.9 percent) relief supervisors believed the position was aligned with the job description and were satisfied with the position.”

Table 2. Acting Supervisor Grievances and Payouts – FYs 2023-2025

FY	Number of Grievances ⁴	Total Amount Paid
2023	3,184	\$9,983,383
2024	2,071	\$5,769,788
2025	2,175	\$3,658,572
Total	7,430	\$19,411,743

Source: OIG analysis of Grievance Arbitration Tracking System - Application System Reporting data.

4 All grievances related to acting supervisors, but the paid amount would have had to be adjudicated.

According to a June 2023 memorandum,⁵ the relief supervisor position was implemented to provide coverage for regular supervisors. Additionally, the memorandum stated implementation of relief supervisors should improve the work environment and eliminate grievance activity. When organizations invest in their employees with training and development, it creates a positive environment and increases opportunities for promotion and success. When employees are promoted into supervisory roles without training, they are more likely to rely on policies and authority, rather than peer collaboration. This may alienate employees and negatively impact workplace morale.

As a result of the overall success in implementing the relief supervisor position, we did not identify any issues and will not be making a recommendation in relation to this finding.

Postal Service Response

Management agreed with this finding.

OIG Evaluation

Although this finding did not contain any recommendations, the OIG acknowledges management's agreement to the finding.

⁵ United States Postal Service Memorandum, dated June 2023.

Finding #2: Relief Supervisor Workforce Impact

The Postal Service did not effectively reduce its reliance on acting supervisors when it brought on relief supervisors, as intended. Specifically, we found there were still over 20 million acting supervisor workhours used in facilities with relief supervisors on the rolls from FYs 2023 through 2025.⁶ As compensation and benefits are the Postal Service's highest cost driver, controlling workhours is a critical function.

We reviewed acting supervisor workhours and found over 1,100 facilities authorized a relief supervisor

used both relief supervisor and acting supervisor workhours each year during FYs 2023 through 2025. These facilities used more than half (65.0 percent) of all acting supervisor workhours nationwide, despite the intention for relief supervisors to reduce reliance on acting supervisors. At the end of FY 2025, both acting supervisor and relief supervisor workhours increased from the previous year. See Table 3 for acting supervisor workhours compared to relief supervisor workhours over the same period.

Table 3. Relief and Acting Supervisor Workhours at Facilities Authorized Relief Supervisors- FYs 2023-2025

FY	Number of Facilities	Acting Supervisor Hours	Relief Supervisor Hours	Total Hours
2023	1,126	8,632,989	246,516	8,879,505
2024	1,138	5,819,243	4,022,555	9,841,798
2025	1,132	6,005,694	4,083,355	10,089,048
Total	1,186⁷	20,457,925	8,352,426	28,810,351

Source: OIG analysis of HCES and New on Rolls Personnel Employee System data.

“These facilities used more than half (65.0 percent) of all acting supervisor workhours nationwide, despite the intention for relief supervisors to reduce reliance on acting supervisors.”

Acting supervisors' workhours did not decline due to lack of effective workhour management, relief supervisors being detailed into other roles, and organizational changes. Headquarters and local management monitor acting supervisor workhours, but there is no enforcement effort to reduce those workhours. This contributed to the growth in acting supervisor workhours while relief supervisors were on

rolls. In addition, three relief supervisors interviewed were detailed to other positions after accepting the relief supervisor position. One was in the relief position for only three months before moving into a detailed position. Additionally, recent Postal Service changes at processing facilities have impacted the ability to hire. Specifically, positions were eliminated in processing facilities, causing the need for more detail assignments and reallocation of resources. Therefore, the Postal Service is not currently able to eliminate all acting supervisor positions at facilities with relief supervisors.

According to the June 2023 memorandum implementing relief supervisors, facilities that earn these positions would eliminate the use of acting supervisors. Headquarters management clarified that the establishment of the relief supervisor position had an aspirational goal of eliminating acting supervisor workhours, but realistically the position would only

⁶ Due to relief supervisors possibly reporting to multiple offices under the lead finance number, it is possible that there was a relief supervisor at one facility and acting supervisors at other facilities under the same finance number.

⁷ We counted each office authorized a relief supervisor between FYs 2023-2025 to come up with 1,186 unique facilities.

reduce acting supervisor workhours. However, we found total supervisory⁸ costs at the Postal Service have increased. Additionally, acting supervisor workhours have not significantly diminished in facilities with relief supervisors. As a result, we identified \$116.3 million in questioned costs from FYs 2024 through 2025 due to the increase in total supervisory workhours.

Recommendation #1:

We recommend the **Chief Retail and Delivery Officer; Chief Processing and Distribution Officer;** and **Chief Logistics Officer**, identify methods of reducing acting supervisor usage at facilities with relief supervisors and high acting supervisor workhours.

Recommendation #2:

We recommend the **Vice President, Human Resources**, in coordination with the **Chief Retail and Delivery Officer; Chief Processing and Distribution Officer;** and **Chief Logistics Officer**, assess the impact on acting supervisor workhours when relief supervisors are detailed, and evaluate creating guidance for detailing relief supervisors to lateral positions.

Postal Service Response

Management disagreed with this finding, the monetary impact, and recommendations 1 and 2. Management also noted that three of four stakeholders assigned to the findings and recommendations were not engaged in the audit process until the release of a Discussion Draft of this report.

Regarding the finding, management stated the OIG did not include the following elements in its analysis: regular supervisor work hours, earned supervisor workhours, number of supervisor positions, additional delivery points, and implementation of Sorting & Delivery Centers (S&DC). Regarding the monetary impact,

“As a result, we identified \$116.3 million in questioned costs from FYs 2024 through 2025 due to the increase in total supervisory workhours.”

management stated the methodology used did not account for the overall supervisory requirements derived from established earned staffing factors. Management noted supervisory complement increased at facilities that underwent network changes, like S&DCs. Management pulled overall supervisory workhours for seven lead finance units to demonstrate a decrease in acting supervisor workhours at those units.

Regarding recommendation 1, management did not agree with how the data was gathered and analyzed for this finding. Management stated it will continue to use and adapt the methods currently used to ensure there is adequate supervisor coverage for Postal Service operations, with a focus on reducing acting supervisor workhours. Management said there are different circumstances where there is a need for supervisor coverage.

Regarding recommendation 2, management stated the recommendation was not built off evidence-based findings that were validated by a thorough analysis. Management is concerned that the recommendation was based on the OIG speaking with three detailed relief supervisors and asserting that acting supervisor workhours did not decline due to relief supervisors being detailed to other roles. Management stated the recommendation suggests that Postal Service management should conduct its own counter-comparative assessment to either substantiate or refute the OIG's claims.

⁸ Includes only acting supervisors and relief supervisors.

OIG Evaluation

The OIG considers management's comments unresponsive to recommendations 1 and 2, and will pursue them formally through the audit resolution process.

Regarding management's statement of the right personnel not being engaged in the audit process, the OIG's audit process involves engaging with management throughout the various phases of the audit as facilitated by the Postal Service's Corporate Audit Response Management team. During this audit, we had a number of meetings with relevant management officials including the survey entrance conference, fieldwork entrance conference, pre-exit meeting, and exit conference. Furthermore, management officials had three weeks prior to the exit conference to review the discussion draft report and any requested supporting documentation to raise concerns with the report. Finally, during the pre-exit and exit conferences, lower-level management officials in attendance did not communicate or explain disagreement with the recommendations or other key concerns that were later included in the written response.

Regarding the disagreements with the finding and monetary impact, the OIG only analyzed and referenced acting supervisor workhours for those facilities with relief supervisors, nationwide. The Postal Service provided the OIG this data. We did not evaluate workhours in the context of the total supervisory complement because these numbers are not relevant to the evaluation of the use of relief supervisors to reduce the use of acting supervisors. Rather, we assessed facilities that were authorized relief supervisors and compared the acting supervisor workhours. The OIG also acknowledges the decrease in acting supervisor workhours. However, acting supervisor workhours were still higher than relief supervisor workhours in facilities authorized relief supervisors, which was not the intent of implementing the relief supervisor position.

Regarding recommendation 1, the OIG relied on data provided by Postal Service Headquarters management, which had already been analyzed and validated by the Postal Service, before it was provided to the OIG. While the Postal Service stated it will continue to use methods currently in place to reduce acting supervisor workhours, it never shared what those methods are. Furthermore, current methods are not working, as shown by the Postal Service's own data. Around 1,186 facilities were authorized relief supervisors, and all of these facilities continued to rely on acting supervisor workhours. In fact, these facilities used more than half (65.0 percent) of all acting supervisor workhours nationwide. The OIG also recognizes there are different circumstances where there is a need for supervisor coverage; however, this does not change the intent for establishing the relief supervisor position to reduce the reliance on acting supervisors.

Regarding recommendation 2, the OIG's recommendation was developed based on various types of evidence, such as testimonial and documentary evidence identified throughout the engagement and in accordance with Generally Accepted Government Auditing Standards. While the OIG audit team cannot physically cover all Postal Service facilities, the audit team interviewed 33 relief supervisors nationwide. While the OIG identified relief supervisors being detailed to other roles, we also identified that acting supervisor workhours did not decline because of ineffective workhour management and organizational changes. An assessment should be conducted to evaluate the number of relief supervisors on detail, since this is a newer position aimed at providing coverage for regular supervisors. Guidance for use of relief supervisors into acting roles may be needed.

Looking Forward

While it may not be possible to eliminate all acting supervisor roles at the Postal Service, an important step to diminishing reliance on acting supervisors is to create a strong supervisor succession plan. The relief supervisor position was one way to accomplish this, and in July 2023, the Postal Service launched an additional program to create a stronger pipeline and career path to reduce reliance on acting supervisors. Specifically, the six-month Apprentice Program seeks to develop and prepare apprentices for placement into regular and relief supervisor positions upon graduation. This should, ultimately, build a talented pipeline to fill open supervisor positions and decrease the supervisor vacancy rate. Since launch, nearly 100 employees have graduated and been placed into supervisory roles — both relief and regular supervisor positions. During FY 2024, all apprentices who completed the program were placed into supervisor positions. The Postal Service should continue to promote and encourage the Apprentice Program nationwide to increase awareness and enrollment.

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Appendix A: Additional Information

Scope and Methodology

The scope of our audit was workhours of relief supervisors within customer service, maintenance, distribution operations, and logistics and workhours of acting first-line supervisors recorded during FYs 2023–2025.

We conducted site visits in the Atlantic, Central, Southern Areas, and virtual visits in the Western-Pacific Area using the following methodology:

- We visited retail and delivery facilities and processing facilities based on the number of relief supervisors in selected districts. We spoke with facility managers and relief supervisors regarding their positions and their impact on the Postal Service. In total, we visited 17 facilities. See Table 4 for facilities visited during the audit.

Table 4: Fieldwork Site Visits

Area	District	Facility
Atlantic	New York 3	Buffalo Post Office
		Southside Station
		Westside Station
Central	Ohio 2	German Village Station
		West City Station
		Westland Sorting & Delivery Center
Southern	Tennessee	Jere Baxter Branch
		Church Station
		Bellevue Station
		Metro Station
Virtual Site Visit		
Western-Pacific	Colorado-Wyoming	Denver Post Office
Region	Division	Facility
Eastern	New England	Buffalo Processing & Distribution Center (P&DC)
	Central	Nashville P&DC
	Lakeshores	Music City Annex
		Columbus P&DC
Virtual Site Visit		
Western	Western	Denver P&DC
		Denver Network Distribution Center

Source: OIG.

To accomplish our objective, we:

- Identified, reviewed, and documented the Postal Service’s guidance and memorandums regarding the creation and use of relief supervisors.
- Interviewed headquarters personnel to determine the rationale and allocation of relief supervisors and how they, and acting supervisors, are used in those facilities.
- Obtained and analyzed FYs 2023–2025 supervisor and acting supervisor workhours data by operation and district.
- Reviewed supervisor turnover data for FYs 2023–2025.
- Retrieved and analyzed supervisor training records to determine the number of supervisors who completed required training.
- Determined the district’s process for posting relief supervisor positions.
- Determined facility management’s process for scheduling and hiring relief supervisors and monitoring acting supervisor workhours.
- Interviewed relief supervisors to obtain information about their position and impact on the Postal Service.

We conducted this performance audit from August 2025 through March 2026 in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards and included such tests of internal controls as we considered necessary under the circumstances. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to provide a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objective. We believe that the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objective. We discussed our observations and conclusions with management on March 6, 2026, and included its comments where appropriate.

In planning and conducting the audit, we obtained an understanding of relief supervisors internal control structure to help determine the nature, timing, and extent of our audit procedures. We reviewed the management controls for overseeing the program and mitigating associated risks. Additionally, we assessed the internal control components and underlying principles, and we determined that the following two components were significant to our audit objective:

- Risk Assessment
- Monitoring

We developed audit work to ensure that we assessed these controls. Based on the work performed, we identified internal control deficiencies related to risk assessment and monitoring that were significant within the context of our objective. Our recommendations, if implemented, should correct the weaknesses we identified.

We assessed the reliability of FYs 2023 through 2025 relief supervisor data provided by the Postal Service by testing the reasonableness, completeness, accuracy, and validity of the data. We compared the relief supervisor employee identification numbers to available training records to verify training records matched, assessed the data for missing values or gaps, retrieved data from the Learning Management Software, and pulled the Workforce Planning Dashboard authorized relief customer service positions to complete our data reliability testing. We determined that the data were sufficiently reliable for the purposes of this report.

Prior Audit Coverage

The OIG did not identify any prior audits or reviews related to the objective of this audit within the last five years.

Appendix B: Management's Comments

March 25, 2026

LAURA LOZON
DIRECTOR, AUDIT SERVICES

SUBJECT: Management Response: *Relief Supervisor Utilization (25-131-DRAFT)*

The Postal Service has had an opportunity to review the findings and conclusions contained in the draft audit report, *Relief Supervisor Utilization*.

Management notes that three of the four stakeholders assigned to the findings and recommendations (Chief Retail and Delivery Officer; Chief Processing and Distribution Officer; and Chief Logistics and Infrastructure Officer) were not engaged in the audit process or the supporting data analysis until the release of the Discussion Draft. Management suggests that, when feasible, stakeholders identified for findings and recommendations be engaged earlier in the audit process to allow for greater collaboration, context, and alignment prior to issuance.

Finding #1: Establishment of Relief Supervisors

Relief supervisors contributed to a positive working environment by completing required training, providing flexibility, and decreasing grievance costs related to acting supervisors nationwide.

Management **agrees** with this finding

Finding #2: Relief Supervisor Workforce Impact

The Postal Service did not effectively reduce its reliance on acting supervisors when it brought on relief supervisors.

Management **disagrees** with this finding

Per the June 2023 Memorandum, management's initial intent for implementing the relief supervisor position was to provide coverage for regular supervisors during their leave and scheduled days off. Implementation of this change was expected to not only increase flexibility and improve the working environment for regular supervisors but also reduce the Postal Service's reliance on acting supervisors.

While OIG acknowledged gains made within the working environment for Finding #1, (Grievance activity decreasing by 31.7% and Overall Grievance Costs decreasing by over \$6.3 million (63.4%)), their "high level summary" for acting/relief supervisor work hours used admittedly lacked relevant factors and operational insight. Elements missing from their analysis included: regular supervisor work hours, earned supervisor workhours, number of supervisor positions, additional delivery points and

implementation of Sorting & Distribution Centers (S&DCs). Even so, acting supervisor workhours decreased as intended by more than 2.6M between FY23 through FY25.

For example, most Processing relief supervisors were not onboarded/effective until October/November of FY24. Since this timeframe, processing has opened eight new major processing facilities accounting for approximately 350 new supervisor authorized positions. Comparing cost associated to processing supervisor workhours (LDC 10 salaries and benefits) the current FY26 cost to date (Oct – Feb) is \$326M, which is essentially the same as FY24, \$323M, and ~\$14M less than FY25 \$340M. Thus, processing has been able to reduce costs associated with supervision, with new facility activations occurring, and cost per supervisor workhour increasing.

Monetary Impact

Management **disagrees** with the monetary impact.

The methodology used in calculating the Monetary Impact does not appear to account for the overall supervisory requirements derived from established earned staffing factors. While the analysis references an increase in acting, relief, and regular supervisory work hours, it does not appear to evaluate those hours in the context of the total supervisory complement required to support operational changes and increases in earned supervisors in some instances. Additionally, upon review of the Monetary Impact documentation, management was unable to identify where specific operation numbers were analyzed as part of the underlying methodology. An analysis incorporating operation-level data would provide greater precision and context, particularly given the substantial structural changes that have occurred across the network, including the implementation of new Sorting and Delivery Centers (S&DCs), Regional Processing and Distribution Centers (RPDCs), and other network realignments.

Additionally, CRDO pulled hours for the following Lead Finance Units (PHILADELPHIA PO (416544), LOS ANGELES PO (054530), SAN DIEGO PO (056768), SAN FRANCISCO PO (056786), WASHINGTON DC PO (105000), CHICAGO POST OFFICE (161542), BRONX PO (350982)) and included Supervisor of Customer Service along with 204-b hours and Supervisor of Customer Service (Relief) hours over the calendar years 2023, 2024 and 2025. During that period, 204-b hours were reduced 32%, from 418k to 284k annually. EAS-17 hours increased from 947k to 1.139M, a 20% increase. Finally total hours for employees working in an EAS-17 position went from 1.366M to 1.424M – a minimal increase of only 4%. Over the course of those three calendar years Supervisor of Customer Services (Relief) hours were 32.8K in 2023, 129.7k in 2024 and 167.9 in 2025; increasing as positions were added. The increase in Supervisor of Customer Service (Relief) hours nearly mimics the decrease in 204-b hours.

The following are management's comments on each of the two recommendations.

Recommendation 1:

We recommend the Chief Retail and Delivery Officer; Chief Processing and Distribution Officer; and Chief Logistics Officer, identify methods of reducing acting supervisor usage at facilities with relief supervisors and high acting supervisor workhours.

Management Response/Action Plan:

Management **disagrees** with this recommendation.

Since the data presented in this audit has been inconclusive and inconsistent in how it was gathered, calculated, and analyzed, Management will continue to utilize and adapt the methods currently used to ensure there is adequate supervisor coverage for USPS operations - with an eye on continuing to reduce acting supervisor workhours. Management also recognizes that there are different circumstances where there is a need for supervisor coverage. There isn't a blanket method to cover each occurrence everywhere homogenously.

Target Implementation Date: NA

Responsible Official: NA

Recommendation 2:

We recommend the Vice President, Human Resources, in coordination with the Chief Retail and Delivery Officer; Chief Processing and Distribution Officer; and Chief Logistics Officer, assess the impact on acting supervisor workhours when relief supervisors are detailed, and evaluate creating guidance for detailing relief supervisors to lateral positions.

Management Response/Action Plan:

Management **disagrees** with this recommendation.

By definition, a recommendation should be built off evidence-based findings that have been validated by a thorough analysis. It is concerning that this recommendation is grounded on the OIG speaking with just three detailed relief supervisors (0.154% of the 1,949 total) and then asserting that acting work hours did not decline due to relief supervisors being detailed to other roles. The recommendation goes on to suggest that postal management should "do the work" of conducting its own counter-comparative assessment to either substantiate or refute the OIG claims.

Management utilizes details to fill vacant positions, cover employee absences, and/or provide developmental opportunities. The Postal Service will not agree to any limitations on details. All decisions are made on a case-by-case basis. There is no path to a global restriction. Singling out one position title over another for limitations would make positions difficult to fill.

Target Implementation Date: NA

Responsible Official: NA

E-SIGNED by Joseph Bruce
on 2026-03-26 12:45:24 EDT

Joseph Bruce
Vice President, Human Resources

E-SIGNED by ELVIN MERCADO
on 2026-03-26 08:33:07 EDT

Elvin Mercado
Chief Retail & Delivery Officer

E-SIGNED by ISAAC S CRONKHITE
on 2026-03-26 08:59:05 EDT

Isaac Cronkhite
Chief Processing & Distribution Officer

E-SIGNED by PETER ROUTSOLIAS
on 2026-03-26 08:33:02 EDT

Pete Routsolias
Acting Chief Logistics Officer

cc: Corporate Audit & Response Management

OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

UNITED STATES



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