

Agency Changes Communiqué

33/2005

To: **Contract & Service Managers**
Distribution List

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Area Service Managers
Agent Recruitment Managers
Peter Pycock
Rural Development Managers
Rural Transfer Advisors

Paul Inwood

From: **Sue Price**
October 2005
Service Standards Support Manager

Date: 26

Subject: Subpostmaster Seminar Project - Pilot Activities

1. Introduction

The process by which we recruit new subpostmasters has been in place now for some years and is managed by the Agent Recruitment Teams in the Post Office Service Centre, Salford. The current recruitment process was designed to meet the three months notice period contained in the Subpostmasters Contract. Unfortunately we are not able to meet this timescale on a consistent basis and so a review of the overall process is required. In addition the need to recruit new subpostmasters who are sales orientated means that the skills we are seeking, and hence assess candidates against, need to be reviewed.

To address this potential gap and also to seek to attract good quality subpostmaster applicants, the business has decided to run 18 national Prospective Subpostmaster Seminar events. Candidates who attend these events and wish to be considered as subpostmasters will be put through a revised recruitment process, being run as a pilot to support these events. Those acceptable to the business after this revised process will be approved by the business as being acceptable as Subpostmasters before finding a branch. . Some of these individuals may choose to be trained to work as casuals in a Directly Managed Branch whilst seeking a Sub Post Office®

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branch. The Rural Strategy Team and the business as a whole will use the seminars to pilot the pre vetting recruitment process for subpostmasters as required.

This ACC, the first of two to be issued, deals with the initial stages of the subpostmaster seminars, and, the front end of the pilot recruitment process. It will explain people's roles and responsibilities within POL and POSC, to ensure the business meets its revised recruitment timescales.

A second ACC that introduces a pilot Interview Pack, a revised Business Plan, the operational interview process and an explanation of the casual process will be issued in due course.

2. Prospective Subpostmaster Seminars

Post Office Ltd in partnership with Humberstones, specialist Business Transfer Agents and valuers, will run the seminars. Contract & Service Managers (C&SM's) will be expected to attend one of the seminars to assist Eddie Herbert with the running of the day, and also, to assist those candidates who decide to apply for a position as a Subpostmaster complete of the Criminal Records Check and bank reference authority forms.

The Service Relationships team are sending seminar packs to all C&SMs, which they must take with them to their event. The packs will contain the following items, and C&SM's must ensure that they carry out the actions highlighted -

a). A Blank Delegate Record Sheet - This is in case C&SM's do not receive the delegates details from Rayna Kennedy before the seminar.

If C&SM's have to use this form then they will have to complete all the delegates' details on the form. If the sheet is received

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from Rayna all C&SM's will have to do is complete the last three boxes in respect of those delegates who actually decide to apply for a subpostmasters position. (A copy can be found in the winzip file at the end of this ACC)

ACTION - Once C&SM's have completed the sheet it must be returned to the: -

"Pre - Vet SPMR Team"
People & Organisational Service Centre
Capstan House, 35 Broadway
Salford, MANCHESTER
M50 2PB

b). Application packs (50 copies) -These should only be issued to those delegates who at the end of the seminar decide to apply for a subpostmasters position, they contain: -

- **A revised Application covering letter** - (A copy can be found in the winzip file at the end of this ACC)

ACTION - C&SM's will have to input the applicants name and address on the form and also input a date for return that must be five days after the seminar.

- **Application Form** - (A copy can be found in the winzip file at the end of this ACC)
- **Criminal Records Check authority forms (x2)** (A copy can be found in the winzip file at the end of this ACC)

NB: As well as the applicant completing this form the applicants spouse/partner will also have to complete a form if they are going to work in the Post Office Branch (even if they are only going to work occasionally) or in the case of a residential branch, if they will live on the premises in which the branch is located. If the spouse /partner is not going to be involved or live on the premises this check is NOT required.

ACTION - C&SM's will have to ensure the applicant and spouse/partner complete the form on the day so that these can be forwarded to Salford with the completed delegate sheet.

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- **Bank Reference Form** - (A copy can be found in the winzip file at the end of this ACC)

ACTION - C&SM's will have to get the applicant to complete on the day so that this can be forward to Salford with the completed Criminal Records Check form and completed delegate sheet

- **Subpostmaster Profile** - (A copy can be found in the winzip file at the end of this ACC)

- **Standards Leaflet**

c). Folders (50 packs)

ACTION - C&SM's should distribute the folders to the delegates. The folders contain a pad, pen, telephone post it notes, and "An Opportunity to Manage the Business Of Everyday Life" booklet.

3. Recruitment Process - Pilot only

A new process map detailing the end-to-end Pilot recruitment process can be found in the winzip file at the end of the ACC. The detail in this ACC only covers the first page of the process. The second ACC on this subject that will be issued shortly will cover off the process on the second page.

The main differences between the pilot recruitment process and the current recruitment process are as follows: -

- Prospective subpostmaster seminars are being conducted
- The recruitment process has been split into two stages, the Initial Assessment stage and the Business Operational Stage, and revised timelines introduced
- There are separate application forms and covering letters to cover the two interview stages
- The Criminal Records Check and bank reference authorities will be completed at the seminars
- Post Office Ltd will reject applicants following receipt of an unacceptable criminal Records Authority check or if they do not match the skills profile before an application for a specific branch has been made.

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4. Roles/Responsibilities

C&SM's

- Provide application forms to those delegates who want to apply to become a subpostmaster.
- Ensure the applicants complete the Criminal Records Check and Bank reference authority forms fully in block capitals.
- Complete the delegate list and send this with the completed references to the Pre-vet team at Salford.
- Collect all surplus application packs and folders and give back to Eddie Herbert.

POSC (Pre-vet team)

- Upon receipt of the delegate list from the C&SM's place the applicants details on your Pre-vet database.
- Send for the applicants' references, i.e. Criminal Records Check (CRC), and Bank reference.
- Associate references with the application form once received and set up individual files.
- Chase applicants who haven't sent in an application form.
- Send for character references.
- Issue a rejection letter for those candidates who fail the CRC reference, update the pre-vet database and advise the relevant C&SM. (A copy can be found in the winzip file at the end of this ACC).
- Forward completed interview files to the C&SM's so that interviews can be arranged. NB: applications can only be forwarded to the C&SM once the CRC and Bank references have been received. Files can be sent without character references.

5. Revised timelines

Within the winzip file below is a list of timelines that C&SM's and the POSC should follow to ensure that the applicants are fast tracked through the pilot recruitment process. The Training and Delivery team has already assigned training dates in respect of all 18 seminars, and these dates have also been included for reference purposes.

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6. Management Information

The Pre-vet spmr team at the POSC will be measuring process timescales and will provide a report to Post Office Ltd at various stages when required.

7. Contact

If you have any further questions regarding the content of this ACC please contact either Sue Price or Carola Ramsden of the Service Relationships team.

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