

No. 246/26

15th September 2026

Royal Mail Uniform Update - September 2026

Dear Colleagues,

Branches will recall LTB 090/26 Royal Mail Uniform Update, which was issued on 26th March 2026.

The CWU has continued to engage the business on all associated issues linked to Uniform, as part of the quarterly review meeting with the company's national uniform manager and a representative from the supplier company Dimensions. The latest meeting, as usual, included a general update, review and discussion of all uniform matters. The topics discussed covered:

- Changes to clothing, new items of kit, trials under way or pending;
- Awareness campaigns and initiatives;
- Other business.

Relating to the first of the above bullet points, a new cagoule and hi-viz vest are being introduced and becoming available to order, along with three different trainer styles.

Trials are under way on two hats, a wide brim and a baseball cap, as well as a round-neck T-shirt. Further trials are also planned for a new storm coat with a Gore-Tex fabric that according to its manufacturer '*blocks liquid water while allowing water vapour to pass through*' and a new design for male and female fit trousers.

In relation to the forthcoming trials, the storm coat is to be tested in North West England, Scotland and Ireland and we are seeking to contact CWU Reps in those areas to gather volunteers to be involved in the trial.

A key priority for the CWU, which was expressed during the meeting, was the issue of uniform compliance and advising that managers are being urged to ensure uniforms are being returned by workers who leave.

A further initiative aimed at raising uniform awareness in workplaces was noted and there was concern at a report that, as of June 2026, only 55% of current allocation is being worn and that the non-worn, non-ordered allocation is at a high rate.

While uniform is clearly a subject of major importance to postmen and postwomen, as it is the most often selected item on the company's Robin app, it is also clear that too many of our members do not have sufficient information and may not be aware of what their full allocation is and / or may be struggling with the ordering system. This led to an agreement around these issues and the need for improvement.

As such, the output from the meeting was that the business would produce a proposed pocket-sized fold-out information booklet called a 'Z-Card', which has been presented to us by the company as intended for general distribution.

The general intention, as a handy source of useful advice on the uniform available and how to place orders, is of course something we would welcome and support. However, we have expressed a specific concern, which related to the uniform issue for new starters and not compliant with the Uniform Agreement.

The 2018 National Uniform Agreement is quite clear that *'new starters are entitled to basic uniform from Day One'* (Paragraph 2, Bullet One in the attached national agreement). The section relating to new starters in the Z-Card states that this is *'after four weeks'* rather than *'from Day One'*. The point was made by CWU at the meeting that this was a breach of the National Agreement.

Royal Mail have stated that managers could order uniform before the four-week period via an *'exceptions process'*, however Day One allocation is the norm and not an exceptional circumstance. This was made clear to the business and we confirmed we would subsequently update Branches to ensure full compliance with the 2018 National Uniform Agreement, as outlined below:

1. **New starters are entitled to basic uniform from Day One. This consists of: shoes x1, tops x 5, bottoms x 2, fleece jacket x1, hi-viz waistcoat x1 (plus storm-proof coat x1, if the role involves outdoor working). They will receive information on how to order uniform in their 'welcome pack' and their full allocation can be ordered after six weeks.**
2. **Casual and temporary employees are provided with a hi-viz waistcoat (and safety footwear, if appropriate).**
3. **Nobody should go out / be sent out on a Royal Mail delivery without any Royal Mail apparel.**
4. **Uniform items are Royal Mail property and should be returned if you leave the business and also when uniform items are renewed / replaced.**

Given there are significant issues around attrition rates and the treatment of new entrants, **we are asking Branches and Representatives to familiarise yourselves with the 2018 National Uniform Agreement, particularly the key aspects highlighted above and to challenge any breaches of this agreement. Please report any such instances to Angela Whitter (awhitter@cwu.org), the CWU Postal Executive National Uniform Lead.**

Your support and assistance in this are much appreciated. Any enquiries to the content of this LTB should be directed to the Outdoor Department, email address: Pharacz@cwu.org.

Yours sincerely,

Tony Bouch
Assistant Secretary



Code of Practice between Royal Mail & CWU on Dress Standards

1. Principles and Scope

The principles set out in this agreement are a joint commitment between Royal Mail (excluding Parcelforce and Royal Mail Property & Facility Solutions) and the CWU for modern dress standards, which recognises that the wearing of uniform is fundamental to the image of Royal Mail, whilst also recognising the benefits of having the appropriate work wear for employees that is designed for the job.

This agreement supersedes any uniform agreement, guidance or dress standards previously issued. The joint agreement and standards below stresses a joint approach between Royal Mail, the employee and CWU in three major areas:

1. A commitment from Royal Mail to supply the required uniform to all customer facing employees, with the option for non-customer facing employees to have a reduced allocation.
2. The ability for employees to self order replacement uniform items within their allocation.
3. A commitment from the employee to wear the uniform to the correct standards.

Royal Mail and CWU are jointly committed to communicating these standards and ensuring that these are consistent of the company values and demonstrate:-

1. Business image
2. Employee comfort
3. Health & Safety
4. Tools for the job

2. Uniform Allocation

The uniform allocation will vary according to the job roles/type to be performed and is detailed in the attached Appendix 1.

- New starters have a basic uniform allocation of: 1 x pair of shoes, 2 x bottoms, 5 x top, 1 x fleece jacket and 1 x high-visibility waistcoat and where job role involves outdoor working a new starter waterproof coat will be provided. New starters are entitled to basic uniform from day one (provided they are going to work for the business for a term of more than 13 weeks)
- New starters will receive information on how to order uniform in their welcome pack and be advised to place their order. If employees have not done this before starting work, line managers should help them to complete the initial order via the helpline and confirm to Royal Mail's uniform provider they will be employed for more than 13 weeks
- After 6 weeks, the new starter can order the full allocation of uniform (excluding the waterproof coat, where a new starter coat has been provided) for their job role. For this to happen line managers will need to contact Royal Mail's uniform provider and let them know that the new starter will be employed for more than 13 weeks (by email royalmail@dimensions.co.uk)

- Casual and temporary employees (up to 13 weeks) are provided with a high-visibility waistcoat and safety footwear (where appropriate). They must dress in smart, appropriate clothing.

(Please Note: The new starters coat referred to in this agreement is subject to a current trial within Royal Mail, which is due for a review in October of 2018. The trial is to review the suitability of the new starters coat and the period of time it is expected to last before a reorder of the current delivery standard Class 2 stormproof coat is required/recommended.)

All uniform is allocated to the individual and any items which are unsuitable should be returned to Royal Mail's uniform provider and a replacement ordered. Failure to return items can adversely impact on a colleague's allocation and their ability to order their uniform.

3. Issue, Replacement, Measurement and Returns Process

All items of uniform have a life expectancy based on certain assumptions on how long each individual item should last and how many of each item are needed to look smart every working day.

If any item of uniform is damaged or worn (beyond simple repair) and is over allocation, then a request should be made by the individual for a replacement order.

It is the responsibility of each individual to ensure dress standards are maintained. To support this, colleagues can order uniform items via the online ***Detail uniform ordering*** facility via myroyalmail.com. Line managers should provide support and guidance to employees to assist with ordering, including enabling access to a local Office computer for an individual to place an order. Any footwear order which is over the colleague's standard allocation will need to be ordered by a line manager. A colleague can place their own non-footwear over-allocation order online, but it is important to provide full details on why the item is required. The order is referred to the Royal Mail Asset team for review against the colleague's order history. Where the order will be approved and delivered or declined with the full reason provided against the order.

Royal Mail recognises that we have colleagues who may not fit the standard sizes available to order online or have specific requirements and therefore offer a made to measure process for both garments and footwear. These items can be ordered using forms available on myroyalmail.com website and sent to the National Uniform Manager.

All uniform items must be returned to Royal Mail when replaced or when the employee leaves Royal Mail to maintain uniform and security standards and to protect Royal Mail's brand and image. Local units can retain some serviceable outer wear uniform items such as waterproofs or fleece jackets that may be used as a short-term solution. Managers and CWU Representatives will work together to ensure stock levels are managed and kept to a minimum to support colleagues, including temporary workers.

4. Maintenance of uniform

Employees will take responsibility for cleaning and maintaining all items in accordance with the instructions for each garment.

Employees will be expected to take reasonable care of all uniform provided and to meet consistently the highest overall standards of appearance as required by the Dress Standards.

5. Dress Standards

Royal Mail and CWU jointly recognise that we operate in an increasingly competitive and more technical workplace and that the uniform is not only a benefit to employees in terms of comfort and a key part of maintaining Health and Safety standards, but is also an essential feature of the Royal Mail brand and image. To maintain the confidence and trust of the external customer, uniform must be worn in such a way as to present a positive brand image.

For non-customer facing employees it is not mandatory to wear uniform but suitable standards of dress must be met, in terms of appropriateness, cleanliness and health and safety standards.

To maintain the confidence and trust of the external customer, the following key points should be maintained:

1. The uniform must be worn correctly when at work (this is not mandatory for non-customer facing employees).
2. The uniform should not be worn when not at work except for during the course of travelling to and from work.
3. PPE (Personal Protection Equipment) should be worn as necessary and in line with the specific safety requirements.

Attached at Appendix 2, is a diagram which outlines the process to be followed for encouraging our colleagues to wear uniform which is underpinned by the aim of always seeking to address any non-compliance issues on an informal basis, first and foremost.

6. Ongoing Development of Uniform

Royal Mail and CWU are committed to ensuring that the uniform remains fit for purpose, whilst maintaining our 'Brand Equity' which has significant value to the company. A continuous review of uniform standards and suitability will be undertaken by the CWU/Royal Mail National Uniform Working Group

Royal Mail will continue to monitor and review the performance of garments and footwear and will seek feedback from the front line colleagues through various communication channels. We will work jointly with the CWU on future uniform development and improvement opportunities.

It is recognised that specific involvement will be needed from time to time from the CWU and employees for ongoing uniform item reviews and trials to reflect the different job roles, environments worked in and tasks employees undertake in their day to day work.

Changes made to the uniform range will be completed jointly and supported with trials that will be conducted in line with the generic approach set out below and in conjunction with the CWU following specific Terms of Reference designed to reflect the nature and objectives of each trial.

Generic Approach to Trials:

Overview

We will form small working groups which will include colleagues from all parts of the business, including Delivery / Processing / Professional Drivers / Union Reps etc to ensure what we develop is fit for purpose across all roles and meets the majority of requirements.

If it is a large scale change we will ensure we trial the garments at a number of sites across all job types. If it's a small scale change it may not require a trial but in those circumstances we will agree the changes as part of the National Uniform Working Group.

Scope of Trial

If a trial is required the National Uniform Working Group will agree the trial sites and number of colleagues to take part in the trial.

Both parties will acknowledge that there is a lead time of approximately 18 months from concept to deployment of new items of Royal Mail uniform, and this needs to be considered for any trials of new garments and subsequent national deployment activity.

The trial will run for a period of 12 weeks, unless otherwise recommended by the Royal Mail uniform provider, and the trial evaluation process for the items will fully consider the following criteria:

- Fit for purpose and practicality for the different roles performed within RM
- Comfort
- Durability
- How the item performs through frequent washing cycles (if appropriate)

All feedback will be taken into account, evaluated and summarised in the final trial report, which will be shared with the agreed working group and the National Uniform Working group.

Out of Scope

Whilst the CWU will always be fully consulted and involved there are some aspects of uniform provision that would not be subject to a trial and where Royal Mail may have to take action. These would include:

- Where we change uniform supplier
- Any supply/product issues arising from a Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) audit
- Any issue linked to Brand or colour changes

Trial Aims, Objectives and Success Criteria

At the outset of each trial Royal Mail and the CWU will agree the aims of the trial, our common objectives and how we will measure success.

Involvement and Feedback

Royal Mail and the CWU nationally commit to jointly working together to bring about the successful introduction of uniform & footwear improvements. The role of local managers, CWU representatives (including H&S reps) and employees will be vital to the success and evaluation of any trials and subsequent deployment activity. They will be fully involved at each site to enable feedback on the trial activity.

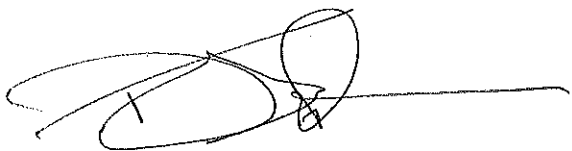
All individuals involved in the trial will be asked for feedback. The feedback will be collated, information gathered, evaluated and summarised into the final trial report, which will be shared with the CWU nationally.

Review of Trial

Royal Mail will share with the National Uniform Working Group any feedback from the trials and will confirm any changes following the review.

7. Joint Review

This code of practice and its aims will be jointly reviewed every 12 months.

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several loops and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

David Dunn
Head of Special Events and Assets

August 2018.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M Baulch', with a horizontal line underneath.

Mark Baulch
Outdoor Secretary

MYTHBUSTER



The Stormcoats leak

- The coat fabric and seams are tested to Gore-Tex waterproof standards
- To prevent water ingress ensure all your pockets & vents are closed and the poppers are secured in place, ensure your hood is pulled tight around your face
- We are reviewing the construction of the storm coat to see if there is anything more that can be done to make it as watertight as possible



Garments are manufactured in cheap factories

- All manufacturing factories are regularly vetted and inspected and results are shared with Royal Mail
- Fabrics used in the range exceed retail durability and colour standards
- The garments are designed to last longer than high street equivalents



Allocation Levels

- Allocation levels are carefully considered and benchmarked against other logistics companies
- The allocations have been agreed in conjunction with the CWU



New starters don't get the uniform because of the process

- PPE can be ordered immediately
- Core products (tops & bottoms / footwear) are available to order after 4 weeks at a reduced allocation, these items can be ordered by the COM prior to the 4 week using the exceptions process.
- Full allocation & the non-essential items i.e. gilet & resistance jacket can be ordered at the wearers 6 month anniversary



Pool stock orders are delivered with no names on the parcel

- This depends on the site type
- The system can't differentiate between multiple Unit Managers based at the same location
- Singleton sites have names; multi-COM sites do not
- We are reviewing the current process as there might be an IT solution



Blue shirts are an integral part of the range

- The blue shirts are not part of the range and blue is not in Royal Mail's brand colour palette
- There are no plans to reintroduce this, and they are not available to order on the ordering portal



Shoes are not waterproof

- For roles that are required to work outdoors, the occupational shoes offer maximum protection against water
- A waterproof liner is integrated into the construction of occupational shoes to protect feet when standing in water
- Independent test reports confirm waterproof standard



Shoes should come in half sizes

- The range includes wide fitting shoes
- Offering a wide fit is more important than half sizes for comfort
- Half sizes only increase length, not width



The resistance jacket is too warm

- We have worked with our uniform supplier and agreed on a lighter more breathable fabric which will improve wearer comfort
- A wearer trial is planned for Spring 2026



The shoes are uncomfortable and lead to plantar fasciitis and back issues

- The shoes in the range are designed to be as comfortable as possible as we know this is extremely important to posties
- Our shoe soles stay supportive for the entire life of the shoe, adapting to the foot's natural shape for maximum comfort
- Independently tested by podiatrists, the technology improves posture, boosts muscle performance, and reduces fatigue
- We also offer various designs and technologies so wearers can choose the fit and style that suits them best
- In 2026, trainers are being added to the range to give more choice



The trousers and shorts wear through too easily

- A small number of trousers have been reported to wear in this way, though all fabrics are tested for high durability and outperform most high-street options
- Return rates for Royal Mail products align with industry standards, showing no major fabric issues



Royal Mail

Uniform Standards Update

dimensions



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