1 Retail Management

11 Introduction

The mission of the United States Postal Service is to provide quality products and services at a reasonable cost. Most retail products and services are purchased at postal facilities. In the past, that has meant local Post Offices. Today, however, there are a variety of innovative channels for selling Postal Service products and services. This chapter outlines the basic types of retail Postal Service outlets and purchasing methods. It also provides an overview of services, from accepting mail at retail service counters to providing temporary philatelic stations at first-day-of-issue stamp ceremonies.

12 Retail Facility Management

121 Retail Analysis Program (RAP)

121.1 Purpose and Scope

The Retail Analysis Program (RAP) is the primary method for determining the staffing of postal retail facilities. It is an operations research and marketing tool that helps local managers make better decisions regarding staffing of postal retail outlets to meet customer needs. Requests to Area Operations management for approval of retail facility establishments, relocations, expansions, consolidations, or discontinuances must be based on data developed from RAP surveys.

121.2 Responsibilities

121.21 Headquarters

Retail Operations, Marketing and Operations Systems Support, Operations Support, Headquarters, develops and refines the retail analysis methods and supports implementation in the field by providing technical support.

121.22 Areas

Area RAP managers develop area programs, approve and coordinate implementation, and monitor results.
121.23 Districts

121.231 District Manager, Customer Service and Sales
Each district manager, Customer Service and Sales, has the following responsibilities:

a. Designates and supports a knowledgeable member of the supervisory staff as the district coordinator. Larger Post Offices within the district may require their own coordinator.

b. Reviews the progress and results of local surveys and is responsible for their success.

121.232 District Coordinator
District coordinators manage the RAP surveys for their areas. Coordinators ensure that data are gathered, processed, analyzed, and presented to management. Coordinators supervise the development of local implementation plans and may also help to implement them.

121.3 RAP Surveys

121.31 General
All district surveys are conducted on a full district basis; that is, all Post Offices within the district are included in the survey. Each district must perform the following tasks:

a. Conduct a full RAP survey at least once every 5 years. A full RAP survey covers all areas of postal service as listed in Exhibit 121.31.

b. Conduct scheduling and staffing surveys (that is, survey of retail transactions) in all Management Operating Data System (MODS) I and II offices at least once every 2 years.

c. Conduct RAP surveys more frequently on an as-needed basis where there has been a significant change that affects revenues, workload, and/or customers (such as establishment of a contract postal unit in the service area).

Note: Some regions of the country may require more frequent surveys because of growth or decline in population.

121.32 Survey Steps

121.321 General
The steps involved in conducting a RAP survey are as follows:

a. Determine survey plan (timetable).

b. Collect data.

c. Prepare and process data.

d. Analyze data.

e. Recommend where retail facilities should be located.

f. Determine projected savings.

g. Determine projected revenue.
Exhibit 121.31

### RAP Surveys and Reports

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Reports</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Retail Service Counter</td>
<td>To relate staff utilization to workload, adequacy of service, and feasibility of self-service equipment.</td>
<td>1. Queuing analysis. 2. Service evaluation. 3. Product mix.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transactions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customer Origin and</td>
<td>To determine the proper location of retail outlets.</td>
<td>Maps showing shopping patterns of postal customers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Destination</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post Office Boxes</td>
<td>To determine the need and locations for Post Office boxes.</td>
<td>Maps showing where customers open and process their mail.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meter Customers</td>
<td>To determine meter demand in high density areas.</td>
<td>Maps showing meter holder locations and meter setting frequencies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vending Equipment</td>
<td>To determine if vending equipment is in the best location for the benefit of customers.</td>
<td>Maps showing areas customers travel from to use vending equipment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customer Attitude</td>
<td>To find out what customers think of the service they receive.</td>
<td>Tabulations of clerk courtesy, housekeeping efficiency, and aspects of service viewed by customers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Projections of 5-Year</td>
<td>To help plan for future growth.</td>
<td>Maps of projected demand.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Growth</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
121.322 Determine Survey Plan
District management determines survey priorities that depend on immediate needs, and the district coordinator develops a timetable based on these priority decisions. The timetable, when approved, serves as the district survey plan.

When the district survey plan (timetable) has been developed and approved, local postmasters describe the intended surveys and their purposes to the press and other media in accordance with applicable regulations governing such announcements (see Administrative Support Manual (ASM) 33).

121.323 Collect Data
A profile of each Post Office, station, and branch is determined from the existing Post Office and community records. This information includes population served, revenue (meter, bulk mailings, and walk-in), the number of Post Office boxes assigned, and other pertinent data. Data on population growth trends, building and construction permits, and so forth are obtained from local municipal and governmental authorities. Official maps for locating customer demand and postal facilities are obtained from the U.S. Geological Survey. This information is used to identify facility sites.

121.324 Prepare and Process Data
See Exhibit 121.31, which identifies the various RAP surveys, their purposes, and the reports resulting from each.

121.325 Analyze Data
Two major analyses are conducted in a RAP survey:

a. One analysis uses data on customer shopping patterns and future growth both to support planning for the retail outlets that will meet future customer needs and to adjust the current retail network to improve its effectiveness.

b. The other model uses data on the transactions conducted at each retail facility to assess retail service counter scheduling and staffing requirements.

121.326 Make Recommendations
Generally, the recommendations are made to district and Post Office management in two major presentations — one on facility deployment and the other on scheduling and staffing.

a. Deployment. RAP surveys show where facilities are needed to meet customer demand. RAP lets local managers begin actions to establish, close, consolidate, relocate, or enlarge postal retail facilities.

b. Staffing. RAP surveys may indicate the need for additional personnel, or the need for a reduction in workhours in certain facilities. Local managers should take appropriate action in accordance with Handbook EL-901, Agreement Between United States Postal Service and American Postal Workers Union, AFL-CIO, and National Association of Letter Carriers, AFL-CIO (1994–1998).
Types of Retail Facilities

The Postal Service operates numerous types of retail facilities. Part 123 contains the definitions of each type of facility and the procedures for their establishment, naming, and discontinuance.

Post Offices, Stations, Branches, Contract Postal Units, and Nonpersonnel Units

Definitions and Classification

Post Offices

Post Offices are established and maintained at locations deemed necessary to ensure that complete postal services are available to all customers within specified boundaries of named geographic places. As of October 1 of each year, Post Offices are categorized through a cost ascertainment grouping (CAG) process based on allowable postal revenue units for the second proceeding fiscal year as follows:

a. CAG A–G, Post Offices having 950 or more revenue units.
b. CAG H–J, Post Offices having at least 190 but fewer than 950 revenue units.
c. CAG K, Post Offices having at least 36 but fewer than 190 revenue units.
d. CAG L, Post Offices having fewer than 36 revenue units.

Subordinate Units

General

Stations, branches, contract postal units (CPUs), and nonpersonnel units are subordinate units located within main Post Offices’ service areas to provide one or more services at sites more convenient to customers.

Classified Units

Classified units are stations and branches operated by postal employees in quarters owned or leased by the Postal Service.

Stations

Stations are located within the corporate limits or city carrier delivery area of the city or town in which the main Post Office is located.

Branches

Branches are located outside the corporate limits or city carrier delivery area of the city or town in which the main office is located.

Contract Postal Units

Contract postal units (CPUs) are stations, branches, and community Post Offices (CPOs) operated under contract by persons who are not postal employees. The quarters are provided by the contractor. Contracts to operate contract units provide that the contractor will transact specified postal business.
123.126 **Community Post Offices**

*Community Post Offices* (CPOs) are contract units that provide service in small communities where an independent Post Office has been discontinued. A CPO bears its community’s name and ZIP Code™ as part of a recognized mailing address.

123.127 **Nonpersonnel Units**

Nonpersonnel units are small nonstaffed stations and branches that are serviced by a rural carrier in quarters provided by a contractor. The contractor also furnishes custodial and security support. A nonpersonnel unit provides on a self-service basis essential mail services such as the collection and delivery of mail and the sale of stamps. Rural carriers, who are required to remain at nonpersonnel units for a minimum of 15 minutes each day their routes operate, provide other services such as the sale of Money Orders and the acceptance and delivery of Certified Mail™, Insured Mail, Registered Mail™, Delivery Confirmation™, and COD Mail, and all other special services.

123.13 **Military Post Offices**

123.131 **Description**

A *military Post Office* (MPO) is a branch of a United States civil Post Office, operated by the Army, Navy, Air Force, or Marine Corps to serve military personnel aboard ships or overseas. The term includes Army and Air Force Post Offices (APOs) and Navy and Marine Corps Post Offices (FPOs). MPOs provide postal service for military personnel where the United States civil Postal Service does not operate and in other places where the military situation requires.

123.132 **Establishment and Discontinuance**

A military Post Office is established or discontinued only upon request of the military department by which it is operated. These units are authorized and discontinued by the Postal Service, and changes are published in the *Postal Bulletin*.

123.2 **Establishment**

123.21 **General**

Post Offices, stations, branches, and contract postal units are established and maintained for the convenience of postal customers and are operational as needed.

123.22 **Post Offices**

Although there is no fixed minimum population requirement for establishing an independent Post Office, new Post Offices are established only when the Postal Service cannot provide adequate service through the Post Offices, stations, branches, or CPUs currently serving the area; through a new station, branch, or CPU; or by an extension of city, rural, or highway contract delivery. Post Offices are not established solely for community identity. New offices must be recommended by the vice president, Area Operations, for final approval by the Chief Marketing Officer and Senior Vice President.
123.23 **Classified Units**
Vice presidents, Area Operations, or their designees have the authority to approve the establishment of classified stations and branches where needed within the service areas of Post Offices.

123.24 **Contract Units**

123.241 **Authority**
Vice presidents, Area Operations, or their designees have the authority to establish contract units; however, approval authority may not be delegated below the district manager level.

123.242 **Requirements**
Postmasters or installation managers identify the need and request approval to solicit contracts, evaluate business proposals submitted by offices, and supervise performance under the contract.

123.243 **Purchasing**
Purchasing and material service centers (P&MSCs) solicit offers and award contracts for contract postal units. All contracts are awarded through negotiation and are for an indefinite period.

123.244 **Bonds**
Generally, contract postal unit bonds are required before a postal unit contract may be awarded, but in certain circumstances the contracting officer may waive this requirement.

123.245 **Payment**
Upon contract award of the contract postal unit, the contracting officer must send a completed Contract Unit Payment Authorization (see Exhibit 123.245) to the St. Louis Accounting Service Center, which will issue payments to the contractor.
Exhibit 123.245
Payment Authorization

U.S. Postal Service Contract Unit Payment Authorization

1. Contract Number: ____________________________

2. a. Issued by: ____________________________
   U.S. Postal Service
   b. ACO Code: ____________________________
   c. For Information Call: ____________________________

3. Performance Requirements:
   a. Administrative Post Office: ____________________________
   b. COR Name: ____________________________
   c. Telephone: ____________________________

4. a. Payee/Owner: ____________________________
   b. Contract Name: ____________________________
   c. Telephone: ____________________________
   d. TIN: ____________________________
   e. Parent TIN: ____________________________

5. Accounts Payable Data: (Completed by Contracting Office)
   Type of Action: ____________________________
   Budgetary Finance No: ____________________________
   Account No: 52301
   Total Hours of Operation per Week: ____________________________
   Annual Rate: ____________________________
   Days of Operation per Week: ____________________________
   Hours of Operation each Day: ____________________________
   Contract Unit Name: ____________________________
   Remarks: ____________________________
   Unit Designation: ____________________________
   Begin Date: ____________________________
   End Date: ____________________________
   (Not) Minimum Wage ____________________________
   Location: ____________________________

Completed by Accounting Service Center

FAC S Loc ____________________________ VDF Code ____________________________

6. Signature of U.S. Postal Service Contracting Officer:
   Signature ____________________________ Name ____________________________ Date Submitted ____________________________

This document may be issued at the time of award or later with a modification, if necessary, to inform the Accounting Service Center that operations have begun. The original document should be mailed to the Accounting Service Center, U.S. Postal Service, Attn: Rent and Lease Section, P.O. Box 80103, St. Louis, MO 63180-0103. Copies should be placed in the Contract File and mailed to the COR.
123.3 Location of Postal Units

123.31 General

The specific site for a new or relocated facility providing retail services to the public is determined, to the extent possible, through community current and projected needs and the RAP Facilities Deployment and Staffing Survey. The Customer Service Support manager at the district level should recommend location based on customer accessibility and convenience.

123.32 Prohibited Locations

Postal units may not be located in, or directly connected to, a room in which intoxicating beverages are sold for consumption on the premises.

123.4 Names and ZIP Code Assignments and Changes

123.41 Post Office Names

123.411 General

A Post Office normally should bear the official name of the incorporated city, town, or borough in which it is located, as shown in its charter. A Post Office located in an unincorporated place should generally bear the approved name of the principal community served (normally the community in which located) or the approved name of the town or township, if it serves a number of communities within a town or township.

123.412 Changes in Names of Post Offices

Requests for a change to a Post Office name should be initiated by the local postmaster. This request should be submitted through the district manager, Customer Service and Sales, to the vice president, Area Operations, for transmittal with a recommendation to the manager, Address Management, at Headquarters.

123.413 Designations of Stations, Branches, Community Post Offices, and Other Named Postal Facilities

Community Post Offices, stations, branches, and other named postal facilities generally are given names recognized by the public that indicate their locations, using the following policies:

a. Station Designations. A station’s name should describe its location (neighborhood or section of city, for example) to the general public. There must be no duplication of station names within a single city, county, or three-digit ZIP Code area.

b. Community Post Office (CPO) and Branch Designations. CPO and classified branch names are valid mailing addresses. Therefore, each CPO or classified branch must bear the name of the principal community it serves. There must be no duplication among CPO, classified branch, and Post Office names within a state. Each contract branch also must bear the name of the principal community it serves. Exceptions are historic sites, etc. (e.g., Grand Canyon Branch), which must be approved by the vice president, Operations Support. When there is a proposal to discontinue a Post Office and establish a CPO in
the same community, the name of the CPO is the same as the name of the discontinued Post Office.

c.  *Permanent Numbers and Letters.* The use of permanent number and letter designations for branches or classified stations is prohibited, unless the number or letter signifies a location, as in M Street Station, 3rd Avenue Station, or Fourth of July Plaza Station. Number and letter designations in use at the time of the establishment of this regulation may continue to be used permanently.

d.  *Temporary Numbers and Letters.* Number and letter designations for branches and classified stations that do not signify locations, such as Station A or Branch #4, may be used for a period not to exceed 1 year. These designations may be used beyond 1 year only by written approval of the vice president, Area Operations.

e.  *Facilities Named for Individuals.* A postal facility may be named for an individual only with the approval of the Postmaster General and only if the individual has been deceased for at least 10 years, with the exception of deceased U.S. Presidents, Postmasters General, or former members of the Board of Governors. Official commitments announced prior to the establishment of this regulation will be fulfilled. Occasionally, Congress honors an individual by passing a law naming a postal facility after that individual. For the procedures to be followed in such cases, see ASM 519.2.

f.  *Changes in Designations of Stations, Branches, or Other Named Postal Facilities.* A local request for a change in the name of a station, branch, or other named postal facility must be submitted to the vice president, Area Operations. A request that results from an official change in the community’s name is handled as a change in the name of a Post Office (see 123.412). The vice president, Area Operations, has authority, subject to the policies established in this section, to approve all other changes in designations of facilities, except for those discussed in 123.413a.

**123.42 Names and ZIP Code Assignments and Changes**

Vice presidents, Area Operations, are responsible for the review of all ZIP Code assignments and changes within their respective areas. See 439 for procedural guidelines for the assignment of ZIP Codes. Postmasters and other field officials will not authorize or change ZIP Code numbers or boundaries without prior area and Headquarters approval.
123.5 Reporting Requirements

123.51 Change in Post Office and ZIP Code Status

Immediately on approval of a change in status or detection that a previous reporting was erroneous, areas will ensure that PS Form 1362, Post Office Status Change Report, is completed and submitted to Address Management, Operations Support, at Headquarters. Instructions for completion are on the reverse of the form. The actions to be reported are as follows:

a. Establishment or discontinuance of a postal unit (including contract units) or a ZIP Code delivery area.

b. Conversion of a postal unit from one type to another.

c. A change in the name of a postal unit or the ZIP Code for a delivery area.

d. Establishment of city delivery service.

e. Relocation of a postal unit to a building with a different owner status (from a privately owned to a Postal Service-owned building).

f. Detection that information reported from the National ZIP Code Information System files is in error.

123.6 Discontinuance of Post Offices

123.61 Introduction

123.611 Coverage

This section establishes the rules governing the Postal Service’s consideration of whether an existing Post Office should be discontinued. The rules cover any proposal to replace a Post Office with a community Post Office, station, or branch by consolidation with another Post Office and any proposal to discontinue a Post Office without providing a replacement facility.

123.612 Legal Requirements

Under 39 United States Code (U.S.C.) 404(b), any decision to close or consolidate a Post Office must be based on certain criteria. These include the effect on the community served; the effect on employees of the Post Office; compliance with government policy established by law that the Postal Service must provide a maximum degree of effective and regular postal services to rural areas, communities, and small towns where Post Offices are not self-sustaining; the economic savings to the Postal Service; and any other factors the Postal Service determines necessary. In addition, certain mandatory procedures apply:

a. The public must be given 60 days’ notice of a proposed action to enable the persons served by a Post Office to evaluate the proposal and provide comments.

b. After public comments are received and taken into account, any final determination to close or consolidate a Post Office must be made in writing and must include findings covering all the required considerations.
c. The written determination must be made available to persons served by the Post Office at least 60 days before the discontinuance takes effect.

d. Within the first 30 days after the written determination is made available, any person regularly served by the affected Post Office may appeal the decision to the Postal Rate Commission.

e. The Commission may affirm the Postal Service determination or return the matter for further consideration, but may not modify the determination.

f. The Commission is required by 39 U.S.C. 404(b)(5) to make a determination on the appeal no later than 120 days after receiving the appeal.

g. A summary table of the notice and appeal periods under the statute for these regulations is in Exhibit 123.612.

Exhibit 123.612
Public Notice of Proposal

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Public Notice of Proposal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>60-day comment period</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>As long as needed for consideration of comments and internal review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Public Notice of Final Decision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>30 days for filing any appeal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>At least 60-day wait before closing Post Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>120 days for appeal and consideration</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
123.613 Additional Requirements
Section 123.6 includes the following:

a. Rules to ensure that the community’s identity as a postal address is preserved.

b. Rules for consideration of a proposed discontinuance and for its implementation, if approved. These rules are designed to ensure that the reasons leading a district manager, Customer Service and Sales, to propose the discontinuance of a particular Post Office are fully articulated and disclosed at a stage that enables customer participation to make a helpful contribution toward the final decision.

123.62 Preservation of Community Address

123.621 Policy
The Postal Service permits the use of a community’s separate address to the extent practicable.

123.622 ZIP Code Assignment
The ZIP Code for each address formerly served from the discontinued Post Office should be kept, wherever practical. In some cases, the ZIP Code originally assigned to the discontinued Post Office may be changed, if the responsible district manager, Customer Service and Sales, submits a request with justification to the appropriate vice president, Area Operations, before the proposal to discontinue the Post Office is posted.

a. In a consolidation, the ZIP Code for the replacement community Post Office, station, or branch is the ZIP Code originally assigned to the discontinued Post Office.

b. If the ZIP Code is changed and the parent Post Office covers several ZIP Codes, the ZIP Code must be that of the delivery area in which the facility is located.

123.623 Post Office Name in Address
If all the delivery addresses using the name of the Post Office to be discontinued are assigned the same ZIP Code, customers may continue to use the discontinued Post Office name in their addresses instead of the new delivering Post Office name.

123.624 Name of Facility Established by Consolidation
If a Post Office to be discontinued is consolidated with one or more Post Offices by establishing in its place a community Post Office, classified or contract station, or branch affiliated with another Post Office involved in the consolidation, the replacement unit is given the same name as the discontinued Post Office.

123.625 List of Discontinued Post Offices
Publication 65, National Five-Digit ZIP Code and Post Office Directory, lists all Post Offices discontinued after October 1, 1992, for mailing address purposes only if they are used in addresses. The ZIP Codes listed for discontinued offices are those assigned under 123.622.
123.63 **Initial Proposal**

**123.631 General**

If a district manager, Customer Service and Sales, believes that the discontinuance of a Post Office within his or her responsibility may be warranted, the manager:

a. Must use the standards and procedures in 123.63 and 123.64.
b. Must investigate the situation.
c. Must propose the Post Office be discontinued.

**123.632 Consolidation**

The proposed action may include a consolidation of Post Offices to substitute a community Post Office or a classified or contract station or branch for the discontinued Post Office if either of the following conditions applies:

a. The communities served by two or more Post Offices are being merged into a single incorporated village, town, or city; or
b. A replacement facility is necessary for regular and effective service to the area served by the Post Office considered for discontinuance.

**123.633 Views of Postmasters**

Whether the discontinuance under consideration involves a consolidation or not, the district manager, Customer Service and Sales, must discuss the matter with the postmaster (or the officer in charge) of the Post Office considered for discontinuance and with the postmaster of any other Post Office affected by the change. The manager should make sure these officials submit written comments and suggestions as part of the record when the proposal is reviewed.

**123.634 Preparation of Written Proposal**

The district manager, Customer Service and Sales, must gather and preserve for the record all documentation used to assess the proposed change. If the manager thinks the proposed action is warranted, he or she must prepare a document titled *Proposal to (Close) (Consolidate) the (Name) Post Office*. This document must describe, analyze, and justify in sufficient detail to Postal Service management and affected customers the proposed service change. The written proposal must address each of the following matters in separate sections:

a. *Responsiveness to Community Postal Needs.* It is the policy of the government, as established by law, that the Postal Service will provide a maximum degree of effective and regular postal services to rural areas, communities, and small towns where Post Offices are not self-sustaining. The proposal should contrast the services available before and after the proposed change; describe how the changes respond to the postal needs of the affected customers; and highlight particular aspects of customer service that might be less advantageous as well as more advantageous.

b. *Effect on Community.* The proposal must include an analysis of the effect the proposed discontinuance might have on the community served, and discuss the application of the requirements in 123.62.
c. **Effect on Employees.** The written proposal must summarize the possible effects of the change on the postmaster, supervisors, and other employees of the Post Office considered for discontinuance. (The district manager, Customer Service and Sales, must suggest measures to comply with personnel regulations related to Post Office discontinuance and consolidation.)

d. **Savings.** The proposal must include an analysis of the economic savings to the Postal Service from the proposed action, including the cost or savings expected from each major factor contributing to the overall estimate.

e. **Other Factors.** The proposal should include an analysis of other factors that the district manager, Customer Service and Sales, determines necessary for a complete evaluation of the proposed change, whether favorable or unfavorable.

f. **Summary.** The proposal must include a summary that explains why the proposed action is necessary and assesses how the factors supporting the proposed change outweigh any negative factors. In taking competing considerations into account, the need to provide regular and effective service is paramount.

g. **Notice.** The proposal must include the following notice:  
THIS IS A PROPOSAL. IT IS NOT A FINAL DETERMINATION TO (CLOSE) (CONSOLIDATE) THIS Post Office.

(1) If a final determination is made to close or consolidate this Post Office, after public comments on this proposal are received and taken into account, a notice of final determination will be posted in this Post Office.

(2) The final determination must contain instructions on how affected customers may appeal that decision to the Postal Rate Commission. Any such appeal must be received by the Commission within 30 days of the posting of the final determination.

### 123.64 Notice, Public Comment, and Record

#### 123.641 Posting Proposal and Comment Notice

A copy of the written proposal and a signed invitation for comments must be posted prominently in each affected Post Office. The invitation for comments must do the following:

a. Ask interested persons to provide written comments, within 60 days, to a stated address offering specific opinions and information, favorable or unfavorable, on the potential effect of the proposed change on postal services and the community.

b. State that copies of the proposal with attached optional comment forms are available in the affected Post Offices.

c. Provide a name and telephone number to call for information.

#### 123.642 Proposal and Comment Notice

Exhibit 123.642 is a sample format that may be used for the proposal and comment notice.
UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE

Proposal to (Close) (Consolidate) the (Name) Post Office and Optional Comment Form

Attached is a proposal that we are considering for providing your community with more economical and efficient postal service, while also providing regular and effective service. Please read the proposal carefully and then let us have your comments and suggestions. If you choose, you may use the form below. Your comments will be carefully considered and will be made part of a public record. If you use the form below and need more space, please attach additional sheets of paper. Return the completed form to __________________________ by __________________________.

In considering this proposal, if you have any questions you want to ask a postal official, you may call __________________________ whose telephone number is ___.

I. Effect on Your Postal Services

Please describe any favorable or unfavorable effects that you believe the proposal would have on the regularity or effectiveness of your postal service.

_________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________

II. Effect on Your Community

Please describe any favorable or unfavorable effects that you believe the proposal would have on your community.

_________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________

III. Other Comments

Please provide any other view or information that you believe the Postal Service should consider in deciding whether to adopt the proposal.

_________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________

(Signature of Postal Customer) (Date)

(Mailing Address)    (City)    (State)    (ZIP Code)
123.643 **Other Steps**

In addition to providing notice and inviting comment, the district manager, Customer Service and Sales, must take any other steps necessary to ensure that the persons served by the Post Office affected understand the nature and implications of the proposed action (e.g., meeting with community groups and following up on comments received that seem to be based on incorrect assumptions or information).

a. If oral contacts develop views or information not previously documented, whether favorable or unfavorable to the proposal, the district manager, Customer Service and Sales, should encourage persons offering the views or information to provide written comments to preserve them for the record.

b. As a factor in making his or her decision, the district manager, Customer Service and Sales, may not rely on communications received from anyone unless submitted in writing for the record.

123.644 **Record**

The district manager, Customer Service and Sales, must keep as part of the record for his or her consideration and for review by the Chief Marketing Officer and Senior Vice President all the documentation gathered about the proposed change.

a. The record must include all information that the district manager, Customer Service and Sales, considered, and the decision must stand on the record. No information or views submitted by customers may be excluded.

b. The docket number assigned to the proposal must be the ZIP Code of the office proposed for closing or consolidation.

c. The record must include a chronological index in which each document is identified and numbered as filed.

d. As written communications are received in response to the public notice and invitation for comments, they are included in the record.

e. A complete copy of the record must be available for public inspection during normal office hours at the Post Office proposed for discontinuance or at the Post Office providing alternative service, if the office to be discontinued was temporarily suspended under 123.7, Emergency Suspension of Service, beginning no later than the date on which notice is posted and extending through the comment period.

f. Copies of documents in the record (except the proposal and comment form) are provided on request and upon payment of fees as listed in ASM 352.7.
123.65 Consideration of Public Comments and Final Local Recommendation

123.651 Analysis of Comments
After waiting not less than 60 days after notice is posted under 123.641, the district manager, Customer Service and Sales, must prepare an analysis of the public comments received for consideration and inclusion in the record. If possible, comments subsequently received should also be included in the analysis. The analysis should list and briefly describe each point favorable to the proposal and each point unfavorable to the proposal. The analysis should identify to the extent possible how many comments support each point listed.

123.652 Reevaluation of Proposal
After completing the analysis, the district manager, Customer Service and Sales, must review the proposal and reevaluate all the previously made tentative conclusions in light of any additional customer information and views in the record.

a. Discontinuance Not Warranted. If the district manager, Customer Service and Sales, decides against the proposed discontinuance, he or she must post, in the Post Office considered for discontinuance, a notice stating that the proposed closing or consolidation is not warranted.

b. Discontinuance Warranted. If the district manager, Customer Service and Sales, decides that the proposed discontinuance is justified, the appropriate sections of the proposal must be revised, taking into account the comments received from the public. After making necessary revisions, the manager must take the following steps:

1. Forward the revised proposal and the entire record to the vice president, Delivery and Retail, for final review.

2. Attach a certificate that all documents in the record are originals or true and correct copies.

123.66 Postal Service Decision

123.661 General
The vice president, Delivery and Retail, or a designee, must review the proposal of the district manager, Customer Service and Sales. This review and the decision on the proposal must be based on and supported by the record developed by the district manager. The vice president, Delivery and Retail, can instruct the district manager to provide more information to supplement the record. Each such instruction and the response must be added to the record. The decision on the proposal of the district manager, which must also be added to the record, may approve or disapprove the proposal, or return it for further action as set forth below.

123.662 Approval
The vice president, Delivery and Retail, or a designee, may approve the proposal of the district manager, Customer Service and Sales, with or without further revisions. If approved, the term Final Determination is substituted for Proposal in the title. A copy of the Final Determination must be provided to
the district manager. The Final Determination constitutes the Postal Service
determination for the purposes of 39 U.S.C. 404(b). The Final Determination
must include the following notices:

a. **Supporting Materials.** “Copies of all materials on which this Final
   Determination is based are available for public inspection at the (Name)
   Post Office during normal office hours.”

b. **Appeal Rights.** “This Final Determination to (close) (consolidate) the
   (name) Post Office may be appealed by any person served by that
   office to the Postal Rate Commission. Any appeal must be received by
   the Commission within 30 days of the date this Final Determination was
   posted. If an appeal is filed, copies of appeal documents prepared by
   the Postal Rate Commission, or the parties to the appeal, must be
   made available for public inspection at the (name) Post Office during
   normal office hours.”

123.663 **Disapproval**
The vice president, Delivery and Retail, or a designee, may disapprove the
proposal of the district manager, Customer Service and Sales, and return it
and the record to the manager with written reasons for disapproval. The
manager must post a notice in each affected Post Office that the proposed
closing or consolidation has been determined to be unwarranted.

123.664 **Return for Further Action**
The vice president, Delivery and Retail, or a designee, may return the
proposal of the district manager, Customer Service and Sales, with written
instructions to give additional consideration to matters in the record, or to
obtain additional information. Such instructions must be placed in the record.

123.665 **Public File**
Copies of each Final Determination and each disapproval of a proposal by
the district manager, Customer Service and Sales, must be placed on file in
the Postal Service Headquarters Library.

123.67 **Implementation of Final Determination**

123.671 **Notice of Final Determination to Discontinue Post Office**
When giving notice of a Final Determination, the district manager, Customer
Service and Sales, must do the following:

a. Provide notice of the Final Determination by posting a copy prominently
   in the affected Post Office or offices. The date of posting must be noted
   on the first page of the posted copy as follows:

   “Date of posting: __________, 19__.”

   The district manager, Customer Service and Sales, must notify the vice
   president, Delivery and Retail, in writing of the date of posting.

b. Ensure that a copy of the completed record is available for public
   inspection during normal business hours at each Post Office where the
   Final Determination is posted, for 30 days from the posting date.

c. Provide copies of documents in the record on request and payment of
   fees under ASM 352.7.
123.672 **Implementation of Determinations Not Appealed**

If no appeal is filed pursuant to 39 U.S.C. 404(b)(5), the official closing date of the office must be published in the *Postal Bulletin*, effective the first Saturday 90 days after the Final Determination was posted. A district manager, Customer Service and Sales, may request a different date for official discontinuance in the Post Office change announcement document submitted to the vice president, Delivery and Retail. However, the Post Office may not be discontinued sooner than 60 days after the posting of the notice required by 123.671.

123.673 **Actions During Appeal**

The procedures for appeal are as follows:

a. **Implementation of Discontinuance.** If an appeal is filed, only the vice president, Delivery and Retail, may direct a discontinuance. However, the Post Office may not be discontinued sooner than 60 days after the posting of notice required by 123.671.

b. **Display of Appeal Documents.** Classification and Customer Service, Postal Service General Counsel, must provide the district manager, Customer Service and Sales, with copies of all pleadings, notices, orders, briefs, and opinions filed in the appeal proceeding.

   (1) The district manager must ensure that copies of all these documents are prominently displayed and available for public inspection in the Post Office to be discontinued. If that Post Office has been suspended, the manager must display copies in the affected Post Offices.

   (2) All documents except the Postal Rate Commission’s final order and opinion must be displayed until the final order and opinion are issued. The final order and opinion must be displayed for 30 days.

123.674 **Actions Following Appeal Decision**

The procedures following an appeal decision are outlined below.

a. **Determination Affirmed.** If the Commission dismisses the appeal or affirms the Postal Service’s determination, the official closing date of the office must be published in the *Postal Bulletin*, effective the first Saturday 90 days after the Commission renders its opinion, if not previously implemented under 123.673a. However, the Post Office may not be discontinued sooner than 60 days after the posting of the notice required under 123.671.

b. **Determination Returned for Further Consideration.** If the Commission returns the matter for further consideration, the vice president, Delivery and Retail, must direct either (1) notice to be provided under 123.663 that the proposed discontinuance is determined not to be warranted or (2) the matter to be returned to an appropriate stage under these regulations for further consideration following such instructions as the vice president may provide.
123.7  Emergency Suspension of Service

123.7.1  Authority and Conditions

A district manager, Customer Service and Sales, may suspend the operations of any Post Office under his or her jurisdiction when an emergency or other conditions require such action. Circumstances that justify a suspension include but are not limited to a natural disaster, the termination of a lease when other adequate quarters are not available, the lack of qualified employees for the office, severe damage to or destruction of the office, and the lack of adequate measures to safeguard the office or its revenue. The district manager must provide written notice of any suspension by fax to the vice president, Delivery and Retail.

123.7.2  Suspension Review Team

When a district manager, Customer Service and Sales, suspends operations at a Post Office, a suspension review team must be formed to review the decision. The suspension review team members must include the district Post Office review coordinator; the manager of Post Office operations or his/her designee; state presidents of each postmaster organization or their designees; and a representative from the facility services office (FSO) or administrative services office.

a. The suspension review team must conduct an onsite visit to the suspended Post Office.

b. Within 10 business days of the onsite visit, the suspension review team must notify the district manager, Customer Service and Sales; the national postmaster organizations; and the vice president, Delivery and Retail, of its recommendation to suspend or not suspend the office.

c. If the suspension team recommends suspension, the formal discontinuance process should be initiated.

d. If the suspension team finds that there is insufficient justification to suspend the office, the office should be reopened.

123.7.3  Discontinuance of Suspension

If it is proposed to discontinue a suspended Post Office rather than restore operations, the procedures outlined in 123.6 must be followed. All notices and other documents required to be posted or kept in the office to be discontinued must be posted or kept in the Post Office or offices temporarily serving the customers of the suspended Post Office.

123.8  Station, Branch, and Community Post Office Discontinuance

123.8.1  Notice to Postal Officials

If a district manager, Customer Service and Sales, determines that it is necessary to discontinue a classified station, classified branch, or contractor-operated community Post Office administratively attached to a Post Office, the manager must provide immediate written notice with the reasons for the proposed discontinuance to the vice president, Delivery and Retail.
123.82 **Authorization**

The vice president, Delivery and Retail, or a designee, may approve the proposed discontinuance or may disapprove it for insufficient justification. No final action on a proposed discontinuance may be taken without the approval of the vice president, Delivery and Retail.

123.9 **Reporting Requirements for Station, Branch, and Contract Postal Unit Discontinuance**

Upon the discontinuance of a station, branch, community Post Office, or contract postal unit, a report of change in status must be made on PS Form 1362, *Post Office Status Change Report*, as required by 123.5. Additionally, when a contract unit is discontinued, a contract modification must be completed to show the contract termination date, and submitted to the following address:

ACCOUNTING SERVICE CENTER
US POSTAL SERVICE
PO BOX 14678
ST LOUIS MO  63180-9400

124 **Conduct on Postal Property**

124.1 **General**

The rules and regulations outlined in 124.2 through 124.6 apply to all real property under the charge and control of the Postal Service, to all tenant agencies, and to all persons entering in or on such property, except as may be provided in the lease. Space leased to private tenants will be covered only to the extent that requirements are incorporated in the lease agreement. Poster 7, *Rules and Regulations Governing Conduct on Postal Property*, sets forth these rules and regulations and must be kept posted at a conspicuous place on all such property.

124.2 **Admission to Postal Property**

124.21 **Inspection**

Purses, briefcases, and other containers brought into, while on, or being removed from the property are subject to inspection. However, items that are brought directly to the customer mailing acceptance area of a facility and that are properly mailed are not subject to inspection, except as provided by ASM 274. A person arrested for violation of this section may be searched incident to that arrest.

124.22 **Identification**

Except as otherwise ordered, properties must be closed to the public after normal business hours. Properties also may be closed to the public in emergency situations and at such other times as may be necessary for the orderly conduct of business. Admission to properties during periods when such properties are closed to the public may be limited to authorized individuals who may be required to sign the register and to display identification documents when requested by security force personnel or other authorized individuals.
124.3 **Preservation of Postal Property**

Improperly disposing of rubbish, spitting, creating any hazard to persons or things, throwing articles of any kind from a building, climbing upon the roof or any part of a building, or willfully destroying, damaging, or removing any property or any part thereof is prohibited.

124.4 **Conformity With Signs and Directions**

124.41 **Pedestrian Traffic**

All persons in and on postal property must comply with official signs of a prohibitory or directory nature and with the directions of postal police officers or other authorized individuals.

124.42 **Vehicular Traffic**

Regulations for driving on postal property are as follows:

a. Drivers of all vehicles in or on property shall be in possession of a current and valid state or territory issued driver’s license and vehicle registration, and the vehicle shall display all current and valid tags and licenses required by the jurisdiction in which it is registered.

b. Drivers who have had their privilege or license to drive suspended or revoked by any state or territory shall not drive any vehicle in or on property during such period of suspension or revocation.

c. Drivers of all vehicles in or on property shall drive in a careful and safe manner at all times and shall comply with the signals and directions of security force personnel, other authorized individuals, and all posted traffic signs.

d. The blocking of entrances, driveways, walks, loading platforms, or fire hydrants in or on property is prohibited.

e. Parking without authority, parking in unauthorized locations or in locations reserved for other persons, or continuously in excess of 18 hours without permission, or contrary to the direction of posted signs is prohibited. This section may be supplemented by the postmaster or installation head from time to time by the issuance and posting of specific traffic directives as may be required. When so issued and posted such directives shall have the same force and effect as if made a part hereof.

124.5 **Specific Restrictions**

124.51 **Disturbances**

Disorderly conduct; loud and unusually noisy conduct; conduct that obstructs the usual use of entrances, foyers, corridors, offices, elevators, stairways, and parking lots; or conduct that otherwise tends to impede or disturb public employees while working or that impedes or disturbs the general public in transacting business on postal property is prohibited.
124.52 Gambling

Participating in games for money or other personal property, operating gambling devices, conducting a lottery or pool, and selling or purchasing lottery tickets are prohibited on postal premises. This prohibition does not apply to the vending or exchange of state lottery tickets at vending facilities operated by licensed blind persons where such lotteries are authorized by state law.

124.53 Alcoholic Beverages and Drugs

124.531 Restrictions

A person under the influence of an alcoholic beverage or any drug that has been defined as a controlled substance may not enter postal property or operate a motor vehicle on postal property. The possession, sale, or use of any controlled substance (except when permitted by law), or the sale or use of any alcoholic beverage on postal premises is prohibited (except as authorized by the Postmaster General or designee). The term controlled substance is defined in 21 U.S.C. 802.

124.532 Smoking

Smoking (having a lighted cigar, cigarette, pipe, or other smoking material) is strictly prohibited in all buildings or office space (including service lobbies).

124.54 Soliciting, Electioneering, Collecting Debts, Vending, and Advertising

These regulations apply to the following activities:

a. Soliciting alms and contributions, campaigning for election to any public office, collecting private debts, commercial and nonprofit soliciting and vending (including, but not limited to, the vending of newspapers and other publications), the display or distribution of commercial advertising and soliciting of signatures on petitions, polls, or surveys on postal premises (except as authorized by 39 CFR part 259) or impeding the access to or egress from Post Offices are prohibited. This prohibition does not apply to the following:

   (1) Commercial or nonprofit activities performed under contract with the Postal Service or pursuant to the provisions of the Randolph-Sheppard Act.

   (2) Posting notices on bulletin boards as authorized by 39 CFR 243.2(a).

   (3) The solicitation of Postal Service and other federal military and civilian personnel for contributions by recognized agencies as authorized by the Manual on Fund Raising Within the Federal Service, issued by the Chairman of the United States Civil Service Commission under Executive Order 10927, March 13, 1961.

b. Leafletting, picketing, demonstrating, and other similar conduct by members of the public is prohibited in lobbies and other interior areas of postal premises otherwise open to the public. Public assembly and public address, except when conducted or sponsored by the Postal Service, are also prohibited in lobbies and other interior areas open to the public.
c. Solicitations and other actions that are prohibited by 124.54a when conducted on Postal Service property should not be directed by mail or telephone to postal employees on Postal Service property. The Postal Service will not accept or distribute mail or accept telephone calls directed to its employees when such contacts are believed to be contrary to 124.54a.

d. Except as part of postal activities or as permitted under 17, Public Services, no tables, chairs, freestanding signs or posters, structures, or furniture of any type may be placed in postal lobbies or on postal walkways, steps, plazas, lawns or landscaped areas, driveways, parking lots, or other exterior spaces.

124.55 Prohibited Postings

Except for official postal and other governmental notices and announcements, no handbills, flyers, pamphlets, signs, posters, placards, or other literature may be deposited on the grounds, walks, driveways, parking and maneuvering areas; exteriors of buildings and other structures; or on the floors, walks, stairs, racks, counters, desks, writing tables, window ledges, or furnishings in interior public areas on postal premises. This prohibition does not apply to posting notices on bulletin boards as authorized by 39 CFR 243.2 or to interior space assigned to tenants for their exclusive use. Bulletin boards and other posting space in Post Office lobbies and other public access areas may not be used for posting or display of the following:

a. Private business or nonprofit organization advertisements.

b. Photographs of an incumbent or former U.S. President or Postmaster General.

c. Photographs or likenesses of any elected officials.

d. Political cartoons or other matter designed to influence an election.

e. Religious symbols or matter including but not limited to nativity scenes and the Star of David. This section applies to seasonal displays by the Postal Services, its employees and agents, and nothing in this section prohibits the display of stamps and stamp art or use of secular holiday decorations such as evergreen trees (provided that only nonreligious ornaments are used), menorahs (when displayed in conjunction with other seasonal matter), wreaths, holly, candy canes, Santa Claus, dreidels, and Kwanzaa symbols such as mkeka (a straw mat), kikombe cha umoja (unity cup), or mishumaa saba (a seven-place candle holder with three red, three green, and one black candle). Printed expressions “Season’s Greetings,” and “Happy Holidays” must be used in lieu of “Merry Christmas” or “Happy Hanukkah.”

124.56 Authorized Actions

Postal Service employees are welcome to share the spirit of the season with customers, and may do so by extending appropriate greetings such as “Merry Christmas,” “Happy Hanukkah,” “Happy Kwanzaa,” “Happy New Year,” etc.
124.57 **Seasonal Displays**

Seasonal displays on postal property concern events or seasons that have a substantive impact upon mailing patterns. The following guidelines apply to seasonal displays by the Postal Service, its employees, or agents:

a. Displays should relate to the business of the Postal Service, such as promoting the use of postal products and services and encouraging customers to send greetings and gifts.

b. The Postal Service must avoid the appearance of favoring any particular religion or religion itself.

c. Symbols identified with a particular religion, including but not limited to nativity scenes, crosses, or the Star of David, shall not be displayed on postal property. Examples of permissible displays include: stamps and stamp art, evergreen trees bearing nonreligious ornaments, menorahs (when displayed in conjunction with other seasonal matter), wreaths, holly, candy canes, Santa Claus, reindeer, dreidels, snowmen, stockings, candles, carolers, hearts, colored lights, and Kwanzaa symbols such as mkeka (a straw mat), kikombe cha umoja (unity cup), or mishumaa saba (a seven place candle holder with three red, three green, and one black candle).

d. Printed expressions “Season’s Greetings” and “Happy Holidays” should be used in lieu of “Merry Christmas” or “Happy Hannukkah.”

124.58 **Photographs for News, Advertising, or Commercial Purposes**

Photographs for news purposes may be taken in entrances, lobbies, foyers, corridors, or auditoriums when used for public meetings, except as prohibited by official signs, the directions of postal police officers, other authorized personnel, or a federal court order or rule. Other photographs may be taken only with the permission of the local postmaster or installation head.

124.59 **Dogs, Other Animals, and Weapons and Explosives**

a. Dogs and other animals: Dogs and other animals, except those used to assist persons with disabilities (service animals), may not be brought on postal property for other than official reasons. A “service animal” may be any species, breed, or size and may or may not be licensed, certified, or marked as a service animal. Service animals can assist persons with a wide range of disabilities, whether a disability is visible or not, including physical and mental disorders.

b. Weapons and explosives: No one on postal property may carry or store firearms, other dangerous or deadly weapons, or explosives, whether openly or concealed, for other than official reasons.

*Note:* All classified postal units must display in lobbies Poster 7, *Rules and Regulations Governing Conduct on Postal Property.* No other signage referring to dogs or service animals should be posted in lobbies or on entry doors. See 125.342.
124.6  **Nondiscrimination**

There must be no discrimination by segregation or otherwise against any person or persons because of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age (persons 40 years of age or older are protected), reprisal (discrimination against a person for having filed or for having participated in the processing of an EEO complaint — 29 CFR 1613.261–262), or physical or mental handicap, in furnishing or by refusing to furnish to such person or persons the use of any facility of a public nature, including all services, privileges, accommodations, and activities provided thereby on postal property.

124.7  **Enforcement and Violations**

124.71  **Enforcement**

124.711  **Postal Police Officers**

Office of Inspector General Special Agents, and other persons designated by the Chief Postal Inspector are responsible for enforcing the regulations in this part in a manner that will protect Postal Service property.

124.712  **Agreements**

Pursuant to 40 U.S.C. 318b and with the approval of the Chief Postal Inspector or designee, local postmasters, installation heads, and postal inspectors may enter into agreements with state and local enforcement agencies to ensure that these rules and regulations are enforced in a manner that will protect Postal Service property.

124.72  **Violations**

124.721  **Court**

Alleged violations of these rules and regulations are heard and the penalties prescribed in 124.722 are imposed either in a federal district court or by a federal magistrate in accordance with applicable court rules. Questions regarding such rules should be directed to the Managing Counsel for the area involved.

124.722  **Fines and Imprisonment**

Anyone found guilty of violating the rules and regulations in this part while on property under the charge and control of the Postal Service is subject to a fine of not more than $50, or imprisonment of not more than 30 days, or both. Nothing contained in these rules and regulations is to be construed to abrogate any other federal laws or regulations or any state or local laws or regulations applicable to any area in which the property is situated.

125  **Lobby Management**

125.1  **Image**

125.11  **General**

The Post Office lobby is the principal business office of the Postal Service. For many customers, the lobby is their only close-up view of postal operations; therefore, its appearance, convenience, and efficiency directly affect the Postal Service’s public image. Consequently, to enhance corporate identity and continue the standardization process, lobbies must be maintained according to established postal guidelines (e.g., painting, redecorating, etc.).
125.12 Responsibility

To effectively manage lobbies, postal managers must allocate and use available resources as necessary to ensure that postal retail services are available and accessible to customers in a timely, efficient manner and in an orderly, clean, and attractive environment.

Lobby and retail services must be scheduled during hours most appropriate to the needs of the majority of customers in the local area. Postal units located in a business area normally will be open during hours maintained by that business community. Stations and branches are not required to maintain the same hours as main offices when the needs of their respective local customers are different.

125.2 Service Levels

125.21 General

It is not economically possible for the Postal Service to provide instantaneous service for each customer entering the lobby. Instead, the Postal Service goal is to provide a level of service that produces a waiting time of less than 5 minutes for those customers who cannot be served immediately. Postmasters achieve this goal through the following:

a. Proper training and staff scheduling.

b. Using procedures and equipment that expedite customer transactions, such as making maximum use of integrated retail terminals (IRTs), staff scheduling, the Lobby Director Program (see 125.4), vending equipment maintained in working order, and other line management techniques (see 125.43).

c. Using the retail analysis staffing and scheduling model to determine how many employees should be on duty during all periods to maintain service levels within these guidelines.

125.22 National Holidays

Post Offices are kept open on holidays for the time that is needed to meet reasonable customer requirements (see Exhibit 125.22). Mail is received, collected, and dispatched by holiday schedules. Incoming mail is distributed to Post Office boxes at the main office. Generally, this is also done at stations and branches. The Postal Service observes these holidays:

a. New Year’s Day.

b. Martin Luther King, Jr.’s Birthday.


d. Memorial Day.

e. Independence Day.

f. Labor Day.

g. Columbus Day.

h. Veterans Day.

i. Thanksgiving Day.

j. Christmas Day.
Exhibit 125.22
Holiday Service Levels

A. Holidays Widely Observed

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Window</th>
<th>Post Office Box</th>
<th>Firm Call</th>
<th>Delivery Business</th>
<th>Delivery Residential</th>
<th>Express Mail</th>
<th>Collection</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Friday Holiday</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Holiday Schedule</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Holiday Schedule</td>
<td>Time Decal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturday</td>
<td>Limited</td>
<td>Normal</td>
<td>Normal</td>
<td>Normal</td>
<td>Normal</td>
<td>Normal</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunday</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Normal</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Normal</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturday Holiday</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday</td>
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<td>Normal</td>
<td>Normal</td>
<td>Normal</td>
<td>Normal</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturday</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Holiday Schedule</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Holiday Schedule</td>
<td>Time Decal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunday</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Normal</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Normal</td>
<td>Time Decal</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

B. Holidays Not Widely Observed
Veterans Day — movable holiday
(All Monday holidays: Martin Luther King, Jr.’s Birthday; George Washington’s Birthday; and Columbus Day)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Window</th>
<th>Post Office Box</th>
<th>Firm Call</th>
<th>Delivery Business</th>
<th>Delivery Residential</th>
<th>Express Mail</th>
<th>Collection</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Saturday</td>
<td>Normal</td>
<td>Normal</td>
<td>Normal</td>
<td>Normal</td>
<td>Normal</td>
<td>Normal</td>
<td>Normal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunday</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Normal</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Normal</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday²</td>
<td>Limited</td>
<td>Sunday Schedule</td>
<td>Limited</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Holiday Schedule</td>
<td>Time Decal</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Exceptions to these service levels must be approved by the Chief Operating Officer and Executive Vice President.

1 When a holiday is observed on Monday and no residential collection is scheduled on Sunday, a full residential collection may be provided on the Monday holiday. Consecutive days without collections should be avoided.

2 Veterans Day, November 11, is the only movable holiday in the group of holidays designated as not widely observed; the other three holidays listed in section B are always observed on Mondays. When Veterans Day falls on any day except Sunday, the services provided on that holiday are the same as those shown for Monday. When Veterans Day falls on Sunday, the service levels are the same as those shown for Sunday, but the holiday is observed on Monday by the Postal Service and treated as a Monday holiday.

Definition of Terms
Normal - Service normally provided on that particular day of the week.
Time Decal - Collections from boxes with last pickup-time decals identifying the boxes.
Limited - Service adjusted to meet the limited needs of a community on that particular day.
125.3 Space Utilization

125.31 General
The first priority for use of space in lobbies is to make postal services and products available to the public in an orderly, efficient, attractive, and convenient manner. It is also important to display postal services and products in a manner that effectively markets those services to customers, following standard established postal guidelines. Any space that is not needed for that purpose may be made available for purposes prescribed by law or for use by other government agencies under the conditions explained in this subchapter.

125.32 Furnishings and Fixtures

125.321 General
Lobby furniture and fixtures aid customers in the conduct of their business, expedite their movements while in the lobby, and provide them with materials and information. Postmasters should ensure that the selection, placement, and daily maintenance of lobby furnishings conform to the lobby standards and enhance the overall appearance of the lobby. All lobby furniture and equipment must be properly secured to the floor to prevent them from tipping over.

125.322 Writing Tables and Customer Forms
Tables, ledges, and shelves are provided for customers to use while addressing mail and completing forms related to postal transactions. Postmasters are responsible for obtaining the proper number and type of these items to serve customer needs at each unit. These items should be placed carefully within the lobby so that they do not impede the movement of customers to the queuing line, and they should be kept adequately lighted. Tables, ledges, shelves, etc., must be securely anchored to the wall and/or floor. Publication 65, National Five-Digit ZIP Code and Post Office Directory, should be available for customer use in the lobby. Unit supervisors should ensure that pens are available and all required customer forms are available on the tables or in appropriate “Take One” racks. Such forms must be kept neatly arranged at all times and resupplied as necessary on a daily basis.

125.323 Checking Retail Scales for Accuracy

Retail Lobby Scales
Retail scales used to rate single piece mail: Verify scale accuracy each day and field calibrate using certified test weights if scale is not accurate. Follow current procedures for verifying and calibrating.

Repaired scales and new scales: Use certified test weights to field calibrate scales before placing into service.

Ascom Hasler/Triner electronic scales: Refer to the user’s operation manual for these units for verification and calibration procedures. The manufacturer or existing maintenance contract handles calibration for these units.

Mechanical scales: Refer to current maintenance management orders or visit http://www.mtsc.usps.gov for information on verification and calibration.
Retail Counter Scales

POS ONE: Refer to POS ONE web site at http://retail.usps.gov/posone or contact your Area/District POS ONE coordinator for verification and calibration procedures. Retail unit managers or their designees handle calibration for POS ONE units.

IRT, MOS, UNISYS: Refer to current maintenance management orders or visit http://www.mtsc.usps.gov for information on verification and calibration. Your local field maintenance office handles calibration for these units.

125.33 Queuing Systems Criteria

Wherever possible, queuing systems should be used to ensure that an orderly flow of lobby traffic is maintained and that customers are served on a first-come, first-served basis. Queuing systems should be installed when two full-time and one or more part-time (4 hours per day) retail service counters are in operation. There are many variations in equipment design and quality. District managers, Customer Service and Sales, should plan procurement of queuing systems to take advantage of price discounts for quantity purchases. A proper plan includes the following:

a. A parcel slide, if space permits.
b. An adequate number of stanchions and rope footage.
c. The proper number of correctly worded signs.
d. Sufficient queuing area for the number of peak-period customers.
e. Installation of the system during nonbusiness hours.
f. Placement of queuing systems to ensure free and unobstructed access to the principal entrance and exit doors used by the public. Also, ensure that all retail service counters have an unobstructed view of the head of the queue.

125.34 Lobby Displays and Promotions

125.341 General

The amount of lobby space suitable for posters and signs varies, and the total amount of space needed for all postings approved at any one time may exceed the amount of space available in some offices. Local managers should display postings according to the following priorities:

a. Mandatory Postal Service postings are Notice 107, Poster 7, Poster 76, Poster 158, Poster 296, and other forms on a space-available basis.
b. Postal Service mailing forms to facilitate conduct of retail operations, including rate charts.
c. Specialized Postal Service displays, such as promotional material for revenue-generating products and services, packaging, and stamp collecting product displays.
d. Postal Service announcements and consumer information.
e. Notices by members of Congress.
f. Postings for other government agencies.
125.342 **Lobby Displays**

Certain mandatory notices, posters, and signs must be posted clearly and continuously in the lobbies of all classified postal units. Some mandatory postings may be for temporary periods. Many optional posters and displays are also provided. A list of lobby displays is contained in Exhibit 125.342.

Offices must display the following decals, labels, notices, posters, publications, and signs. Except for those indicated with an asterisk, these items are available from the material distribution centers (MDCs).

Exhibit 125.342
**Mandatory Lobby Displays**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Poster</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Rules and Regulations Governing Conduct on Postal Property</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>76</td>
<td>Some Things Were Never Meant To Be Mailed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>107</td>
<td>Let’s Keep The Mail Safe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>158</td>
<td>Possession of Firearms and Other Dangerous Weapons on Postal Property Is Prohibited by Law</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>296</td>
<td>Notice of Reward</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

125.343 **Mandatory Public Information to be Available**

Mandatory posters, notices, and signs must be available in Post Offices for customer access. These items may be placed in a binder or posted behind the counter. A list of information that must be made available is contained in Exhibit 125.343.

Exhibit 125.343
**Mandatory Public Information to be Available**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FBI Most Wanted Poster</td>
<td>Kept in binder behind counter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Notice 123</td>
<td>Ratefold</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Notice 4314-C</td>
<td>We Want to Know</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poster SSS46</td>
<td>Selective Service Poster</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PUB 65¹</td>
<td>National Five-Digit ZIP Code and Post Office Directory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PUB 66¹</td>
<td>ZIP+4 State Directory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PUB 201</td>
<td>Consumer’s Guide to Postal Services and Products</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sign 145</td>
<td>Payment Policies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Signs²</td>
<td>Hours of operation, Time when all First-Class™ Post Office box mail normally distributed, Letter drops and dispatch times</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹ Publications 65 and 66 are available through the National Customer Support Center, U.S. Postal Service, 6060 Primacy Parkway, Suite 101, Memphis, TN 38188-0001.

² Available through the direct vendor signage contract.
Scheduled Use

General
Retail Operations at Headquarters is responsible for policy guidance over the use of lobby floor and poster space for nonpostal purposes. Advertising and Promotion is responsible for scheduling and controls point of purchase advertising for the Postal Service as well as that of other agencies. All requests from government agencies for scheduled use of lobby space on a multiregional, statewide, or larger basis must be forwarded to the area manager, Sales and Account Management, for approval. Requests for scheduled use of space on a less-than-statewide basis must be forwarded to area Sales and Account Management for evaluation and final approval. Scheduled use of lobby space by government agencies is provided in the following order:

a. Federal agencies.
b. State agencies.
c. County and municipal agencies.

Terms and Conditions
The scheduled use of available space in Post Office lobbies by other government agencies is subject to the following terms and conditions:

a. Each user must pay a fee, to be established by the Postal Service based on the cost and value of the space involved, plus any direct costs incurred by the Postal Service. The amount of the fee to be charged at each type of facility is published periodically in the Postal Bulletin.

b. The user agency must arrange for the distribution of any literature or display material to the facility with available space and must pay all costs involved.

c. Floor space is allotted in increments of eight square feet and for predetermined periods, normally one calendar month. Use of floor space is restricted to kiosks or other semipermanent display stands of stable construction, located where they will not impede normal customer traffic or pose a security problem and must meet safety requirements.

d. Examples of counter cards, posters, and other display material must be available for Headquarters, Advertising and Promotion review, as appropriate, at least 3 weeks before the distribution date. Headquarters, Advertising and Promotion or Sales and Account Management will determine the suitability of the material for display in postal lobbies and will provide the user with specific distribution instructions on the available sites.

e. Counter cards must measure no more than 11 by 14 inches.

f. Posters must be of standard dimension (24 by 36 inches, 14 by 21 inches, or 11 by 14 inches), must be approved by Advertising and Promotion prior to printing, and must bear a printed expiration date, usually one month from the date of posting, unless specific exceptions have been granted by the approving office.
125.36

Unscheduled Use

125.361 Bulletin Boards

The following guidelines apply to the use of bulletin boards:

a. Postmasters may install bulletin boards in public areas of Post Offices or set apart a convenient place to display official government notices, notices of public assemblies, judicial sales, official election notices issued by state or local government, and similar announcements. These display privileges must be afforded without discrimination.

b. Bulletin boards may not display private business advertisements; placards, cards, or notices; photographs or likenesses of any member of state legislature or Congress; or political pictures, cartoons, or other material designed to influence an election.

c. Notices by members of Congress are limited to public announcements of pending competitive civil service examinations and pertinent information about application for appointment to the U.S. service academies. These notices are displayed only if current and within the district of the sponsoring representative or the state of the sponsoring senator. Such displays must conform to the specifications in this section. If a postmaster believes that a notice does not conform to these specifications, the postmaster may display the poster pending the decision of the area manager, Customer Service and Sales. Notices that include the member’s picture must be returned to the member with an explanation of why they cannot be displayed. Such displays must:
   (1) Be no larger than 9 by 12 inches.
   (2) Contain no photograph, picture, or likeness of the member of Congress.
   (3) Contain no signature and/or printed name of the member of Congress larger than 1/2-inch (48-point) type.
   (4) Contain the closing date for submission of applications.

d. If space is available, one recruiting notice (no larger than 8 1/2 by 11 inches) of each branch of the armed services may be placed on bulletin boards.

125.362 Voting Information

The following guidelines apply to voting information:

a. Any notices posted regarding voting may not contain any partisan political messages or symbols designed to influence the outcome of an election, including, but not limited to, photographs or other likenesses of incumbents or candidates for any public office. The notices must be no larger than 8 1/2 by 11 inches. Names and addresses of federal legislators may not appear in larger than 1/4-inch (18-point) type.
b. Such notices must be displayed in lobbies that have public bulletin boards. Each notice must remain posted only as long as it contains current information applying to customers served by the displaying postal facility and must be removed not more than 2 years from the date of receipt for posting. At locations where there is no public bulletin board or there is not enough space on the board for individual display, the notices should be assembled for public inspection in a binder or on a clipboard. Nothing in this section precludes postmasters from displaying additional material on public bulletin boards as space permits, as provided in 125.361.

125.37  Blind Vendor Facilities

The Randolph-Sheppard Act (20 U.S.C. 107–107f) requires that preference be given to certified blind persons for installing and operating vending facilities on postal property. A state licensing agency designated by the Department of Health and Human Services must apply on behalf of a blind vendor to the officer in charge of the postal facility where the space is desired. The Postal Service determines if a permit for the vending facility should be granted. Handbook EL-602, Food Service Operations, provides guidance for Postal Service compliance with the Randolph-Sheppard Act.

125.4  Lobby Director Program

125.41  Description

The lobby director is a friendly, knowledgeable clerk in the lobby who greets customers, determines what they need, and assists them in selecting services and preparing paperwork before they reach the service counter. Lobby directors perform the same duties as the clerks behind the counter, except that they do not handle money.

125.42  Purpose and Scope

The program’s objective is to reduce the average customer waiting time by assisting many customers before they reach the retail service counter. In addition, it aims to reduce customers’ perceived waiting time by demonstrating that the Postal Service intends to provide prompt, efficient, and courteous service. The lobby director should be used during peak traffic periods during the day.

The lobby director program is appropriate for high-traffic offices that:

a. Might otherwise have long lines at several periods of the day, month, or year.

b. Receive customer complaints about long lines, waiting time, or employee discourtesy.

c. Have two full-time and at least one part-time retail service counters in operation.

Note: To implement the lobby director program, there must be enough lobby space for an extra person to work the line.
125.43 **Implementation**

125.431 **Notify Employees**
Managers should provide all clerks with a program overview that describes the program and its objectives as well as benefits for customers, retail clerks, and employees acting as the lobby director.

125.432 **Encourage Volunteers**
All employees with retail responsibilities in a unit may volunteer for the lobby director program. Each volunteer will be given the opportunity to serve as a lobby director.

125.433 **Provide Training**
Each lobby director receives 8 hours of training that focuses on communications and human relations skills, salesmanship, and knowledge of Postal Service products and services.

125.434 **Uniforms**
Lobby directors must wear a standard retail clerk uniform blouse, slacks, skirt, or jumper, and black or navy blue shoes.

125.435 **Obtain Supplies and Equipment**
Lobby directors may work from a mobile cart or a table. The following supplies should be available:

a. Letter scale.
b. Mailing forms and labels.
c. Tape.
d. Packaging products for sale to customers.
e. Bad check list.
f. Zone chart.
g. Rate charts (giveaways).
h. Publication 201, *Consumer’s Guide to Postal Services and Products*.
i. Other brochures (giveaways).

125.5 **Articles Found in Lobbies or Public Areas**
When articles found in lobbies or in public areas around a Post Office are turned in to employees, the employees follow these procedures:

a. Ask the finder to write down on a Postal Service routing slip (Item 0-13) name, address, telephone number, and a description of the article. Unless the article is Postal Service or government property or a money order, it can be returned to the finder if the loser does not claim it within 30 days.

b. If the finder does not leave a name, want the article, or claim the article within 30 days after being notified that it is available, dispose of it in the same manner as unidentified material found loose in the mail. Do not return government property or money orders to the finder. Dispose of government property as prescribed by 691.54. Money orders should be mailed to the St. Louis Accounting Service Center.
Note on the routing slip the date and disposition of the article. Also note the name of the employee handling the disposition. File the routing slip for 3 months, then destroy it. The postmaster should make sure that the article is not lost or damaged.

126 Retail Services Management

126.1 Purpose and Scope

In addition to operations involving direct contact with customers, retail clerks must report cash, sales of items, and stock on hand. They must also maintain records, complete data collection forms, and perform other related tasks as required. This section explains administrative responsibilities and applicable regulations.

126.2 Stamps and Accountable Stock Activities

126.21 General

The majority of all retail unit transactions involve the sale of stamps or postal stationery items. Therefore, all employees who provide or supervise retail service must have a thorough working knowledge of the accounting instructions for these materials. Further, it is essential for these employees to understand the requirements for ordering accountable stock (see Handbook F-1, Post Office Accounting Procedures).

126.22 Requisitioning Stamps and Accountable Stock

Retail units requisition stamp and accountable stock on schedules established by stamp distribution offices. Adjust requisitions whenever possible to permit ordering stamps in full sheets or packaged lots and postal cards or envelopes in full boxes or packaged lots. Detailed instructions are contained in Handbook F-1.

126.23 Counting Stamps and Accountable Stock

Retail employees count and verify stamp stock as it is received from the supply source and during audits. Recommended systematic methods for performing these tasks are described in Handbook F-1.

126.24 Protecting Stamps and Accountable Stock

Vaults, security containers of various types, and security cages are installed in postal facilities as needed for protective storage of accountable items. The Postal Inspection Service determines the amount and type of security equipment that is required. Details on the use and care of this equipment may be found in Handbook F-1.

Stamps, postal stationery, blank money orders, and other accountable items must be protected at all times. They may be stored in a locked cash drawer or cabinet for short periods during the duty day. At other times they must be stored in the main vault or security container that affords the best available protection. Detailed instructions for safeguarding accountable items are contained in Handbook F-1.
126.25 **Destroying Stamps and Accountable Stock**

During handling, postage stock items frequently become damaged or soiled to the extent that they are no longer salable. Retail employees turn in such items to the person who fills their stamp requisitions in return for full credit. Periodically, all nonsalable postage items are sent to a designated committee at the stamp distribution office (SDO) or accountable paper depository for verification and destruction. Complete details on the destruction of postage stock are contained in Handbook F-1.

126.3 **Financial Activities**

126.31 **Purpose and Scope**

Window clerks must account on a daily basis for all funds received for the sale of stamps and other postal products and services.

This section highlights selected elements of cash management and bookkeeping activities for quick reference. Detailed instructions on required accounting procedures are contained in the *Financial Management Manual* (FMM) and in Handbook F-1.

126.32 **Security**

126.321 **Cash**

The following procedures safeguard the security of Postal Service employees and the cash they handle:

a. Window employees’ cash drawers have compartments that separate the different denominations of coins and bills, blank money orders, and the postage stock items of highest demand. The drawers are designed to keep these items beyond the sight and reach of customers. They must be locked for security during temporary clerk absences from the retail service counter and must be removed from their cabinets for overnight storage in a vault or security container. Retail employees must never have access to one another’s cash drawers.

b. Postal Service policy on the deposit of retail cash receipts is based on requirements for employees’ safety, security of funds, availability of revenue, and retention of adequate change.

c. Retail clerks turn in cash periodically during the day to a designated employee to avoid keeping unnecessary amounts at the retail service counter, where the risk of loss is high.

d. Generally, funds retained overnight by clerks for use on the next business day must not exceed $100, or 10 percent of a clerk’s credit, whichever is the lesser amount.

e. Detailed instructions for disposition of postal funds are contained in Handbook F-1.
126.322 **Money Orders**
Retail personnel who issue money orders must have on hand a sufficient number of blank money orders to accommodate the expected daily volume of business. Further details concerning the maintenance of blank money orders may be found in Handbook F-1.

126.323 **Advance Deposits**
Guidelines for handling advance deposits are as follows:

a. The advance deposit system encompasses the acceptance, accounting, and file maintenance procedures applying to the operation of Trust Fund Accounts. A large percentage of all postal revenue is deposited in such accounts.

b. Each person involved in the maintenance and management of this complex system must be thoroughly familiar with the established procedures. In general, funds received for use in customers' advance deposit accounts are handled as any other postal funds, subject to the same limitations, procedures, and accountability requirements.

c. Details concerning the handling of advance deposits are contained in Handbook F-1.

126.33 **Daily Financial Report**
Individual retail clerks and all stations, branches, and main office retail units must report all financial transactions at the end of each business day on the appropriate version of PS Form 1412-A, *Daily Financial Form*, or PS Form 1412-B, *Daily Financial Report*. The report shows the total amount received for each type of transaction conducted during the day and provides a running record of stamp accountability for each clerk and unit.

Each report is checked and verified by a designated employee other than the person who prepared it. Information from the forms is used by the designated accounting unit in preparing the Statement of Account.

All retail employees must keep fully informed on current reporting procedures. The details are explained in Handbook F-1.

126.4 **Retail Hours**

126.41 **Nonholiday Weekdays**

126.411 **Retail Service**
Postmasters provide all retail services for 8½ or more hours on nonholiday weekdays, unless otherwise authorized by the district manager, Customer Service and Sales. Retail service hours are scheduled to meet the needs of local postal customers. When the postmaster determines that additional service hours are necessary to meet community needs, employee work schedules are adjusted to provide such service. Postmasters must obtain approval of the next higher management level for increasing workhour usage if additional costs are involved.
126.412 **Main Post Office and Units in Business Areas**

Main Post Offices and other postal units in business areas are usually open during the hours kept by that business community. Stations and branches are not required to be open at the same scheduled hours as main offices. Stations and branches can adjust retail service hours to meet the needs of the local community. Stations and branches in suburban communities and/or large shopping centers may provide late evening service for customer convenience if needed and approved by the district manager, Customer Service and Sales. Postmasters must inform customers of service hours, using any available means to advertise those hours.

126.413 **Self-Service Units**

Where installation criteria can be met, self-service centers or stamp vending machines are placed in lobbies to reduce retail transactions and for postal customer use when retail service is not available. Postmasters must inform postal customers of the availability, locations, advantages, and products available from self-service vending equipment and encourage their use. Vending equipment must be operable and available for customers when the lobby is open.

126.414 **Consolidation of Retail Counter Service**

Windows and services must be consolidated so that each retail service counter is used fully. Windows offering specialized service are opened only if conditions warrant and if approved by the district manager, Customer Service and Sales, or designee. All approved specialized retail service counters must also offer stamps and postal stationery.

126.415 **Specified Postal Business**

Contract stations or branches handle specified postal business during normal business hours or hours designated by the postmaster. Contractors on their own initiative may conduct postal business beyond those designated by the postmaster.

126.42 **Saturdays**

Window service is provided on Saturdays if there is a demonstrated need. Normally, such service does not exceed 4 hours. Postmasters must obtain approval from the next higher management level if more hours are necessary to meet customer needs. At financial units serving business areas, or facilities serving communities where many residents leave on weekends, retail service may be closed if service is available at other postal units, contract stations, or self-service postal centers. Postmasters must post signs telling customers of locations and hours of such services.

126.43 **Sundays**

Post Offices are normally not open on Sunday to deliver mail to the general public. Sunday duty schedules cover only employees needed to collect and prepare mail for dispatch, deliver Express Mail®, make incoming mail distribution considered necessary, and avoid congestion and delays in Monday delivery.
126.44 **Lobby Hours**
As a minimum, customers must have access to their Post Office boxes during all retail service counter hours. Normally, separate Post Office box lobbies should remain open when someone is on duty in the postal unit. At the postmaster’s discretion, when no one is on duty, lobbies may remain open to allow customers access to Post Office boxes and self-service equipment, provided that customer safety, security provisions, and police protection are deemed adequate by the Inspection Service.

126.45 **Local or State Holidays**
Post Offices may not be closed solely for a local or state holiday. Window or other services may be reduced if warranted by lessened demand. Otherwise, customers must receive normal levels and types of service.

126.46 **Signs**
Postmasters must use available standard signs to publicize the services and hours at each postal unit.

### 13 Retail Services at Counters

131 **Overview**

131.1 **Counter Transactions**
Counter transactions consist of the sale of postage stamps, postal stationery items, mail services, postal-related products, and other services.

All products and services should be offered at every retail service counter position. This permits full utilization of clerks during their duty tour and is a prerequisite for the successful use of queuing systems as described in 25.33.

131.2 **High-Volume Retail Units**
Postmasters of high-volume retail units are authorized to activate a stamps-only retail service counter during peak mailing periods such as noon (lunch time), late afternoon, late December, and after general rate changes. Additional staffing is neither authorized nor warranted for this procedure.

Windows offering other specialized services may be opened where local needs dictate.
132 Stamp and Postal Stationery Sales

132.1 Stamps

132.11 General

Stamp collecting is a source of pleasure for millions of people and sales of postage exclusively for retention are very beneficial to the Postal Service. That is why, to the extent possible, the Postal Service must ensure that stamps, stationery, and other stamp collecting products and services are available at or through all Post Offices. All retail employees must be able to transact philatelic sales, advise customers on mail order procedures, or direct them to the nearest philatelic sales unit. Details on the types of philatelic products available and the procedures for handling them are contained in chapter 2.

132.12 Types of Stamps

The Postal Service currently offers three types of adhesive-backed stamps that are used for postage and collecting. Each office and, to a lesser degree, each retail clerk should have available sufficient quantities of each type of stamp normally needed to conduct each day’s business and should maintain postage stock neatly to facilitate rapid counting, auditing, and replenishment.

The three basic types of stamps are described below:

a. Regular (Definitive) Stamps, issued in denominations ranging from 1¢ to $14, are generally kept in constant supply for ordinary postal needs. They are issued when the postage rates change or a new series is introduced. Included in this category are Priority and Express Mail stamps.

b. Commemorative Stamps are issued in observance of historical events, in honor of noted persons, and on topics of national importance. Each commemorative issue is printed in limited quantities and sold for a limited time.

c. Special Stamps supplement each year’s regular issues. They include the Love and Holiday stamps.

132.13 Types of Stamp Sales

132.131 Loose Stamps

Loose stamps should be presented to the customer with the glue side up for cleanliness and convenience in moistening and application. Customers are expected to verify the denomination and affix their own stamps.

132.132 Panes or Partial Panes

Panes of stamps may be broken into strips or blocks for sale to customers. Glassine or a similar material may be required between layers of full panes of stamps when sold. A customer’s request to have stamps placed in a nonofficial (glassine) envelope should be honored, although many collectors provide their own stamp storage envelopes. The Postal Service stocks three sizes of glassine envelopes in MDCs for regular requisitioning. These envelopes are to be provided as a customer convenience and service to protect their purchases of loose stamps and sheets of stamps.
132.14 **Purchase Receipts**

If the customer wants a receipt for purchases and has prepared it in advance, the Postal Service employee stamps it on payment. If the customer has not prepared a receipt but wants one, PS Form 1096, *Receipt*, is used for postage and other services for which a record of payment is not already provided. The Postal Service employee fills in the total amount of the purchase and then stamps the form on payment. IRTs also have the capability of printing customer receipts after the transaction is completed.

132.2 **Postal Stationery**

132.21 **General**

The term *postal stationery* includes items such as stamped envelopes, postal cards, and aerogrammes.

132.22 **Rejection of Personalized Envelopes**

132.221 **General**

Customers may reject personalized envelope orders for defective manufacture, mistakes in printing, denomination, size, or other defects. Postage value only is refunded if it is the buyer’s mistake; full invoice value is refunded if the Postal Service is at fault.

132.222 **Purchase Error**

Postage value only may be refunded. Such a refund may be made at a Post Office or by returning the envelopes to the Philatelic Fulfillment Service Center (PFSC). Refunds at Post Offices are processed under 145.1 and DMM P014. Rejected envelopes are disposed of in the same manner as unused meter stamps under 145.22 (see 132.224).

132.223 **Postal Service Error**

The PFSC refunds the total cost of the envelopes. The envelopes must be returned to the PFSC with an explanation of the error. Only customers whose names appear in the return address, or their representatives, may submit rejected personalized envelopes for a refund (see 132.224).

132.224 **Replacement**

The procedure for replacing personalized envelopes is as follows:

a. When the error is the fault of the Postal Service, the customer may request that the envelopes be replaced. Customers return the envelopes to the PFSC with an explanation of the errors and information needed for a corrected replacement order.

b. When erroneous information on the original order caused the mistake, the customer must remit the manufacturing fee for the replacement order. That fee is the difference between the full selling price of the envelopes and the postage value.

c. When returning an order, the customer must include an explanation for rejecting the envelopes and a request for replacement or refund.
132.225  Returning Envelopes
Post Offices should help customers return rejected envelopes to the PFSC; this includes providing customers with postage-paid labels for returning the envelopes.

132.3  Bulk Quantities

132.31  General
Some offices designate a specific individual to handle bulk sales of stamps and postal stationery. When bulk transactions are handled by retail clerks, customers may be requested to give advance notice of their requirements to ensure that the desired type and quantity of items are available. Detailed instructions are contained in DMM P021, P022, and P023.

132.32  Stamps
Each retail postal facility must provide postage stamps (except precanceled stamps at Standard Mail® rates) in quantities, denominations, and configurations desired by customers. There are no discounts for bulk purchases of postage stamps.

132.33  Bulk Sales to Customers
Postal cards, aerogrammes, stamped envelopes, precanceled envelopes, window envelopes, and other items are available for bulk sale to customers. In most instances, the customer places advance orders for bulk purchases.

The unit price established for regular stamped envelopes is slightly lower when sold in multiples of 500 than when sold in broken lots. This reflects only a reduction in handling costs and is not a discount on postage.

132.4  Unlawful Use of Stamps

132.41  By Postal Employees
It is unlawful for Postal Service employees entrusted with the sale or custody of postage stamps to do any of the following:

a. Use stamps in payment of debts or purchase of salable items.
b. Sell stamps except for cash.
c. Sell stamps for more or less than face value.
d. Give stamps away.

132.42  Counterfeit Stamps
Counterfeit stamps must be confiscated and sent to the postal inspector in charge of the district where the Post Office is located. A receipt identifying the stamps must be given to persons from whom counterfeit stamps are confiscated.
Postal Money Order Sales

133.1 General
Postal money orders provide a safe and convenient method for customers to make payments or to transfer cash. Postal money orders are sold for a fee. Official money order imprinting machines are provided by the Postal Service for the sale of money orders. Money order imprinting machines, together with blank money order forms, are accountable items that must be safeguarded at all times to prevent unauthorized use and to protect the integrity of the money order system. Money order equipment is provided to Post Offices on the basis of local need. PS Form 7381, Requisition for Supplies, Services, or Equipment, is used for requisitioning additional equipment from the material distribution centers. Procedures for obtaining replacement equipment in case of breakage or defects are contained in the Model 8100 Paymaster’s Imprinter Operator’s Manual. There are two types of postal money orders:

a. Domestic money orders.

b. International money orders.

Note: Detailed instructions concerning the management and operations of the postal money order system are contained in DMM S020 and International Mail Manual (IMM) 371.

133.2 Domestic Money Orders
All Post Offices sell and cash domestic money orders.

133.3 International Money Orders
International money orders are issued to addressees in those countries whose postal administrations have agreements with the U.S. Postal Service to conduct such business.

134 Packaging Products Sales
The Postal Service provides certain packaging products for sale to customers to facilitate safe processing and transportation of the mail and as a convenience to customers. These products are mail preparation items such as padded mailing bags, flat-size envelopes, corrugated boxes, tape, and cushioning materials that provide added protection for contents in transit. In addition, unit prices must be established at or slightly above prevailing prices for similar items sold by private retailers in the local community. Applicable sales taxes are included in any price comparison. Postmasters with questions about whether requirements for the procurement and sale of packaging products are being met at their offices should contact the manager, Customer Service and Sales, at the district. This procedure is in addition to the daily reporting of sales revenue (see 135.3). Detailed instructions are contained in Handbook F-1, Post Office Accounting Procedures.
Postal-Related Merchandise Sales

General

Restrictions
Postal-related merchandise must not be sold in lobbies, except in conjunction with first-day-of-issue ceremonies or special events or opportunities of limited duration. Post Offices may sell merchandise containing actual U.S. postage stamps and metallic stamp lapel pins, but the emphasis must be on stamp collecting products. Managers, Customer Service Support, are responsible for approving the sale of postal-related merchandise.

Licensees
Postal-related merchandise should be purchased from authorized licensees of the Postal Service. However, prospective offerers who do not yet hold a license may be solicited with the understanding that, should they be awarded a contract, they must be licensed before they may begin performance.

Unit Pricing
Just as for retail packaging products, unit prices must be established at or above prices prevailing, including sales taxes, for similar items sold by private retailers in the local community.

Local Markets
Postal-related merchandise is developed for sale in local markets. It should not be sold outside the district where it is developed.

Accounting
Districts purchase all postal-related merchandise. Costs are recorded in AIC 494, Postal-Related Merchandise Costs.

Postal-Related Merchandise Revenue Reports
Offices must record revenues from all postal-related merchandise sales in AIC 098, Postal-Related Merchandise Sales, on PS Form 1412-A, Daily Financial Form. In addition, sales of postal-related merchandise must be recorded on PS Form 8133, Postal-Related Merchandise Inventory Report. At the end of each quarter, the selling unit must total each PS Form 8133 and record it on PS Form 8134, Postal-Related Merchandise Quarterly Report. Credit and debit (ATM) cards may be accepted in payment for postal products and services at most Post Offices. Exceptions: Credit cards may not be used to pay for money orders, collect on delivery (COD) articles, or passport application fees; debit cards may not be used to pay for passport application fees. See Handbook F-1, 317.
136 Methods of Payment

136.1 General
Payment for postage items may be made in cash or by postal money order at the time of purchase or by advance deposit to a postage meter or advance deposit account. Checks may be accepted in payment for postal products and services, except for money orders and collect on delivery (COD) items, in accordance with Handbook F-1. Checks must be made payable to U.S. Postal Service or to Postmaster (title only) for the exact amount of the transaction. Credit and debit (ATM) cards may be accepted in payment for postal products and services at most postal offices. Exceptions: Credit cards may not be used to pay for money orders, collect on delivery articles, or passport application fees; debit cards may not be used to pay for passport application fees. All payments for postage are made for the full face value. There are no discounts for the purchase of postage in any amount.

136.2 Prepaid Mail
Postage must be prepaid on all mailings, except business reply mail, merchandise return mail, official (including franked) mail, and items authorized for mailing as free matter for the blind and other handicapped persons under DMM E040. The requirement for prepayment means that postage must be paid before mail is accepted, transported, or processed.

136.3 Business Reply and Merchandise Return
At the time of delivery, the delivering office collects business reply and merchandise return postage plus a per-piece handling charge.

136.4 Official Mail
For official mail, federal agencies generally pay postage directly to Postal Service Headquarters.

136.5 Rates
Consolidated tables of rates, in forms ranging from wall posters to brochures and scale charts, are distributed for use by postal personnel and the public and for display in service lobbies and at self-service postal centers. In general, appropriate rates for classes of mail and other services appear in the DMM module R in chapters related to the specific class or service in question. Changes in rates and their respective implementation dates are announced in the Postal Bulletin. Personnel who provide retail services must familiarize themselves with all such rates and rate changes.
137 Mail Acceptance and Handling

137.1 Policy

137.11 Overview

This section contains general information concerning acceptance and handling of domestic and international mail and is provided as a convenient guide for use by postal employees involved in retail and retail-related services. In no instance should these general guidelines be construed to supersede the rules and regulations contained in the DMM and IMM.

137.12 Retail Employees

It is Postal Service policy for retail employees to accurately advise customers on the rules of mail acceptance and to assist them in selecting the type of service best suited to their needs. Generally, retail employees must refuse prohibited mail matter, except as provided by the DMM, and items that are not properly packed, packaged, addressed, and labeled for safe handling to destinations. Regulations governing mailability are contained in DMM C010 and Publication 2, *Packaging for Mailing*.

137.13 Mail Categories

All categories of mail are accepted at retail service counters. Employees at retail service counters must be prepared to classify the mail and rate it for postage according to type, class, and special services desired by customers. Single pieces of mail are normally accepted at retail service counters or through collection boxes.

137.14 Bulk Mail

Mailings having postage paid through advance deposit accounts are generally accepted at business mail entry units. Postmasters must designate the times and places of business mail acceptance and ensure that it is properly accepted. Refer to Handbook DM-109, *Business Mail Acceptance*.

137.15 Endorsements

Postal employees at receiving retail service counters must ensure that the mail they accept is properly endorsed. Details on the requirements for canceling and postmarking each class of mail and endorsing mail for each type of service are found in appropriate chapters of the DMM. Requirements for philatelic purposes are explained in chapter [2].

137.2 Size and Packaging Standards

137.21 Size Standards

DMM C010 contains the established standards for minimum size limitations on all mailable matter.
137.22 **Packaging Standards**

Publication 2 contains the established standards for packing, packaging, and marking mail. Acceptability of packaging is a principal criterion of mailability. Items should be packaged so that contents do not harm mailhandling personnel, other mail, or equipment. Fragile items must be packaged to withstand mail processing and transportation. Heavy items must be braced and cushioned to prevent damage to other mail.

137.3 **Addressing**

137.31 **General**

Mail should be properly addressed before acceptance. Addresses should normally contain the following information on three separate lines:

a. Line 1: Name of intended recipient.

b. Line 2: House or building number with street name, plus apartment number if appropriate; or a Post Office box number; or a rural route designation with a box number; or general delivery.

c. Line 3: City name, state or state abbreviation, and ZIP Code or ZIP+4. Detailed rules and standards of addressing are contained in DMM A010 and A040. See also Publication 28, *Postal Addressing Standards*.

137.32 **Simplified Addressing**

A *simplified address* is a delivery instruction for general distribution without individual names and addresses. Simplified addressing is authorized under certain conditions for certain classes of mail, as described in DMM A040.

137.4 **Domestic Mail Acceptance**

137.41 **General**

137.411 **Jurisdiction and Service Levels**

Postal laws and regulations on domestic mail apply to mailings in the United States, its territories, commonwealths, and possessions, and to the mailings of overseas agencies of the United States government.

There are several classes, subclasses, and special services for domestic mail. They sometimes overlap, because it is intended that customers have a choice of service levels. Rating mail for postage requires careful study and application to the prescribed rules and regulations in the DMM. Rulings and detailed mail classification information must be provided only by qualified personnel (see DMM G020).

137.412 **Nonmailable Matter and Hazardous Materials**

The conditions for preparation and packaging under which such materials are accepted are stated in 138-139, DMM C020, and Publication 52, *Hazardous, Restricted, and Perishable Mail*. Particular conditions applicable to mailings of hazardous materials to foreign addresses are stated in the IMM. The Postal Service will accept for mailing, in limited quantities and with proper packaging, many potentially hazardous materials that are not outwardly or of their own force dangerous or injurious to life, health, or property.
137.42 Classes of Mail

137.421 Express Mail

Express Mail is a premium expedited service with a postage refund guarantee if delivery is not made within a specified time. All mailable matter presented to the Postal Service properly prepared may be entered as Express Mail. Express Mail includes a variety of services for domestic, military, and foreign addresses, as specified in the DMM and IMM.

137.422 Priority Mail

First-Class Mail weighing more than 11 ounces and not more than 70 pounds is called Priority Mail; however, customers may opt to mail matter less than 11 ounces as Priority Mail. It may not measure more than 108 inches in combined length and girth. Detailed instructions governing Priority Mail and applicable rates are found in DMM modules E and R.

137.423 First-Class Mail

All mailable matter presented to the Postal Service and properly prepaid may be entered as First-Class Mail. First-Class Mail weighing more than 11 ounces is called Priority Mail. Customers may opt to mail First-Class Mail weighing less than 11 ounces at the Priority Mail rate. Instructions and regulations governing First-Class Mail are found in the DMM. Regulations require that handwritten or typed mail, bills and statements of account, actual and personal correspondence, and all matter sealed or otherwise closed against inspection be sent as First-Class Mail.

137.424 Periodicals

Periodicals include newspapers, magazines, and other periodical publications meeting certain eligibility requirements. Eligibility requirements, application procedures, verification procedures, and preparation requirements are contained in DMM E200, DMM M200, Handbook DM-202, and Handbook DM-701, Chapter 2. Periodicals rates are restricted to authorized publishers and news agents. Members of the general public may mail individual copies of Periodicals publications only at the Express Mail, First-Class Mail, or Standard Mail rates.

137.425 Standard Mail

Printed matter, including circulars, catalogs, merchandise, and books, weighing less than 16 ounces may be mailed as Standard Mail. Qualifications and requirements are found in the DMM.

137.426 Package Services

Material such as merchandise, printed matter, mailable live animals, and similar items may be mailed at the Package Services Parcel Post rates. In addition, there are specific Package Services rates for books, sound recordings, manuscripts, bound printed matter, and other items described in the DMM. Items that are mailable at Package Services rates also may be mailed as Priority Mail, Express Mail, or, if less than 16 ounces, Standard Mail. See DMM C022 for additional instructions about mailing live animals and other perishables.
137.427 **Mixed Classes**
First-Class Mail and Standard Mail matter may be enclosed in or attached to Periodicals, Standard Mail, or Package Services by a customer. The general requirement is that the appropriate rate of postage be paid for each piece. Instructions for rating and payment of postage for mixed-class situations are contained in DMM D070, E070, and M070.

137.43 **Other Categories of Mail**

137.431 **Mail for the Blind or Other Handicapped Persons**
Mail for blind and certain other handicapped persons is mailable under certain conditions without payment of domestic postage. Such mail is marked “Free Matter for the Blind or Handicapped” in the upper right corner, address side. Detailed instructions are contained in DMM E040.

137.432 **Official Mail**

*Official mail* is material that is authorized by law to be transmitted in the mail without prepayment of postage. Official mail weighing 11 ounces or less is considered First-Class Mail unless otherwise endorsed by the sender. Unendorsed official mail that weighs more than 11 ounces but less than 16 ounces is considered Standard Mail; if it weighs 16 ounces or more it is considered Package Services.

There are two types of official mail:

a. *Franked mail* consists of material relating to the business of Congress that is sent by members of Congress or other congressional officials specified by law. Limited other officials including former Presidents and surviving spouses of former Presidents are also entitled to send franked mail. Instead of postage, these items bear a written or facsimile signature of the authorized sender and other required indicia as appropriate.

b. *Penalty mail* consists of material relating exclusively to the business of the government of the United States that is sent by agencies of the United States government. All material sent under this privilege must bear a complete agency return address, the preprinted phrases “Official Business” and “Penalty for Private Use, $300,” and one of the required penalty indicia formats described in DMM E060.

137.44 **Accountable Mail**

137.441 **General**
Special services are available that provide proof of mailing, proof of delivery, or indemnification for loss or damage. These services include Certified Mail, Registered Mail, Collect on Delivery (COD), Insured Mail, Return Receipt, and Merchandise Return Service. Because records are kept concerning each item of mail receiving these special services, such mail is called *accountable mail*.

137.442 **Certified Mail**

*Certified Mail* provides a record of delivery maintained by the U.S. Postal Service. When the mailpiece is accepted at the Post Office counter, a postmarked sender’s receipt of mailing must be provided. No record is kept at
the office of origin. Return receipts and restricted delivery are provided for additional fees in accordance with DMM S915 and S916.

137.443 **Registered Mail**

*Registered Mail* provides added protection for valuable or important mail. All mailable matter prepaid with postage at First-Class Mail or Priority Mail rates may be registered in accordance with DMM S911. Registered Mail provides a receipt to the sender, special security between shipment points, a record of acceptance and delivery maintained by the U.S. Postal Service, and, at the option of the mailer and for an additional fee, indemnity in case of loss or damage. Postal employees are not permitted to assist customers in the preparation or sealing of mail to be registered. Return receipts and restricted delivery are provided for additional fees in accordance with S22 and S23.

137.444 **Collect on Delivery (COD) Mail**

*Collect on Delivery (COD)* provides a method whereby the Postal Service delivers the mail only upon receipt of the funds to be collected. The recipient pays by check payable to the sender or by cash transmitted via a U.S. Postal Service money order. First-Class Mail and Standard Mail and Package Services may be sent as COD mail. Checks may be accepted for payment of COD mail in accordance with S15 and DMM S921.

137.445 **Insured Mail**

Insurance is available for Package Services mail upon payment of an additional fee. Insurance covers loss, rifling, or damage to mailed items. Priority Mail and items sent at the First-Class Mail rate that contain Package Services matter, and official mail (U.S. government) bearing the “Postage and fees paid” endorsement also may be insured. Return Receipt and Restricted Delivery Service are provided for additional fees in accordance with S22 and S23. See DMM S913 for detailed information.

137.45 **Special Services Mail**

137.451 **Certificate of Mailing**

A *certificate of mailing* provides proof that an item was mailed. A fee is charged for this service. No duplicate record of acceptance is maintained by the Post Office, and the certificate provides no insurance for damage or loss. See S21 for detailed information.

137.452 **Special Handling**

*Special handling* provides preferential handling to the extent practicable in dispatch and transportation. See DMM S930 for detailed information.

137.453 **Delivery Confirmation**

*Delivery Confirmation* provides the customer with information about the date and time an article was delivered or, if delivery was attempted but not successful, the date and time of the delivery attempt. Delivery information can be obtained from an electronic file, via the Postal Service Internet at [http://www.usps.com/shipping/epstrac.htm](http://www.usps.com/shipping/epstrac.htm), or by calling the toll-free number noted in 816.24. No acceptance record is kept at the office of mailing. See 816 and DMM S918 for detailed information.
137.454 **Signature Confirmation**

*Signature Confirmation* provides the customer with information about the date and time an article was delivered or, if delivery was attempted but not successful, the date and time of the delivery attempt. The delivery record, including the recipient’s signature, is available via fax or mail, upon request. Delivery information can be obtained from an electronic file, via the Postal Service Internet at [http://www.usps.com/shipping/epstrac.htm](http://www.usps.com/shipping/epstrac.htm), or by calling the toll-free number noted in §17.24. No acceptance record is kept at the office of mailing. See §17 and DMM S919 for detailed information.

137.46 **Mailable Matter Not Bearing Postage Found in or on Private Mail Receptacles**

If the person, firm, or distributor responsible for the impermissible use of the private mail receptacles is within an area served by another Post Office, a sample piece is sent with a report of the facts to the postmaster at that location with a request for action under DMM P011.

137.47 **Additional Information**

For information on mailing to offshore/noncontiguous domestic destinations, to overseas military Post Offices, and through the Department of State to U.S. Foreign Service personnel abroad and for a list of the areas affected, see DMM A010, E010, E020, and G011.

137.5 **Express Mail Acceptance**

137.51 **Description**

Express Mail is available for sending any mailable matter meeting the eligibility standards in DMM E500, the size and weight standards in DMM C500, the preparation standards in DMM M500, and the postage payment standards in DMM P500. DMM D500 provides standards for service objectives, postage guarantees, and refund conditions. The *International Mail Manual* contains the mailing standards for Express Mail International Service and the available destination countries.

Express Mail is available in five basic service offerings (Same Day Airport Service, Custom Designed Service, Next Day Service, Second Day Service, and Express Mail Military Service). [Same Day Airport Service was suspended in 1995 and is not available until further notice.]

Under DMM D071, Express Mail Custom Designed Service, Next Day Service, and Second Day Service may be used to expedite movement of any other class of mail from one domestic postal facility to another.
137.52 Express Mail Same Day Airport Service

137.521 Acceptance

[Express Mail Same Day Airport Service, part of the Domestic Mail Classification Schedule under title 39, Code of Federal Regulations, was suspended in 1995. The Postal Service will not accept items for this service until further notice. The following procedures are included only for completeness.]

Express Mail Same Day Airport Service items are accepted only at designated airport mail facilities (AMFs) at the hours specified by the Postal Service for delivery between those designated AMFs. Any item mailed under this service may not be collected or dropped into a collection box, and pickup service is not available. A Same Day Airport Service item must be dispatched on the next available transportation to the destination AMF. Upon arrival at the destination AMF, the item must be made available for claim by the addressee by the time determined for the item when accepted at the origin AMF.

137.522 Security

A Same Day Airport Service item is dispatched on a specific airline and a specific flight number, depending on the acceptance time and destination. Because of aviation security and the dispatch of hazardous and other materials having potential risk to personal safety, additional procedures are required for the acceptance of a Same Day Airport Service item.

Under no circumstance may the Postal Service acceptance employee tell the mailer or write on the Label 11-C (or Label 11-H), Express Mail Airport to Airport, or on the article itself any of the following information:

- Route (airline code).
- Trip (flight number).
- Leave time (flight departure time).
- Arrive time (flight arrival time).
- TRF (transfer point, if any).

137.523 Mailer Designation

Any mailer of a Same Day Airport Service item is classified and handled as follows:

- A known mailer is any holder of an Express Mail Corporate Account (EMCA), or a holder of a federal government agency account, or any customer who mails items regularly and is known to the acceptance clerk. Shipping, transfer, business, commercial, or other organizations may adapt PS Form 3801, Standing Delivery Order, to identify their employees presenting Same Day Airport Service items at an AMF.

- An unknown mailer is any customer who is not considered a known mailer under 137.523a. An unknown mailer must sign the “From” portion of the Label 11-C (or Label 11-H) and provide photo identification. The signature on the identification must match the signature on the Label 11-C (or Label 11-H). The source of the identification must be written on the Label 11-C (or Label 11-H).
A Same Day Airport Service item must not be accepted from an unknown mailer who does not provide photo-identification or whose signature does not match the signature on the identification.

137.53 **Express Mail Custom Designed Service**

Express Mail Custom Designed Service items are accepted only on a scheduled basis between designated postal facilities or other designated locations for mailable matter presented under a service agreement between the Postal Service and the mailer as described in DMM E500.

137.54 **Express Mail Next Day Service**

137.541 **Acceptance**

Express Mail Next Day Service items are accepted at designated postal facilities, at designated Express Mail collection boxes, and by pickup service, for overnight service to designated destination 3-digit ZIP Code delivery areas, facilities, or locations. Next Day Service items must be presented by the times authorized by the postmaster.

Each designated acceptance facility must keep an Express Mail Next Day Service directory showing, for the 3-digit ZIP Code area in which the facility is located, the following information:

a. The 5-digit ZIP Code areas to which next-day delivery service by noon is offered.

b. The 5-digit ZIP Code areas to which next-day delivery service by 3 p.m. is offered.

c. A list of facilities at which Next Day Service mail can be claimed.

137.542 **Verification**

Any Next Day Service item must be verified at the time of mailing to ensure that the appropriate label is completed, the correct postage is paid, and the item is destined to a 3-digit or 5-digit ZIP Code area to which next-day delivery is offered from that point of origin. Any such item deposited in a collection box or handed to a carrier must be verified only at an Express Mail unit designated by the postmaster.

If a Next Day Service item that is brought to an acceptance unit is found not to have the appropriate label completed or the sufficient postage affixed, the mailer must be notified so that the label can be corrected or the insufficient postage paid. For an insufficiently paid item that is undeliverable for any reason, the item is returned to the mailer on payment of the deficient postage. An undeliverable Express Mail item not bearing a return address must be disposed of under the procedures in 68 and 69.
137.55 **Express Mail Second Day Service**

**Acceptance**
Express Mail Second Day Service items are accepted at designated postal facilities, at designated Express Mail collection boxes, and by pickup service. Second Day Service items must be presented by 5 p.m. or such later time as authorized by the postmaster. Second Day Service is available to and from 3-digit and 5-digit ZIP Code destinations not listed in the Express Mail Next Day Service directory.

137.552 **Verification**
Any Second Day Service item must be verified at the time of mailing to ensure that the appropriate label is completed, the correct postage is paid, and the item is destined to a 3-digit or 5-digit ZIP Code area to which second-day delivery is offered from that point of origin. Any such item deposited in a collection box or handed to a carrier must be verified only at an Express Mail unit designated by the postmaster.

If a Second Day Service item that is brought to an acceptance unit is found not to have the appropriate label completed or the sufficient postage affixed, the mailer must be notified so that the label can be corrected or the insufficient postage paid. For an insufficiently paid item that is undeliverable for any reason, the item is returned to the mailer on payment of the deficient postage. An undeliverable Express Mail item not bearing a return address must be disposed of under the procedures in 68 and 69.

137.56 **Express Mail Military Service**

**Acceptance**
Express Mail Military Service (EMMS) items are accepted at designated retail postal facilities for 2-day or 3-day service to designated Army Post Office/ Fleet Post Office (APO/FPO) 5-digit ZIP Codes and at designated APO/FPO facilities for 2-day or 3-day service to designated 3-digit destination ZIP Code areas, facilities, or locations in the United States. Any 2-day EMMS acceptance office may accept EMMS items for 3-day service after the local cutoff time for normal 2-day service. Designated APO/FPO facilities overseas may accept 3-day service EMMS items for 3-digit destination ZIP Code areas in the United States not included on their 2-day service network. Service to or from an APO/FPO not designated as an EMMS area, location, or facility is prohibited. EMMS Custom Designed Service and drop shipment are available to authorized APO/FPO destinations. EMMS must be presented by the time authorized by the local postmaster.

Each designated facility must keep an EMMS directory showing both 2-day and 3-day service areas for the 3-digit or 5-digit ZIP Code area in which the facility is located. The directory must include the following information:

a. For U.S. Post Offices, the 5-digit APO/FPO ZIP Codes to which EMMS is offered.

b. For overseas APOs and FPOs, the 3-digit U.S. Post Office ZIP Code areas to which EMMS is offered.
137.562 Verification
Any EMMS item must be verified at the time of mailing to ensure that the appropriate label is completed, the correct postage is paid, and the item is destined to a 5-digit ZIP Code area to which EMMS is offered from that point of origin. Any such item deposited in a collection box or handed to a carrier must be verified only at an Express Mail unit designated by the postmaster.

If an EMMS item that is brought to an acceptance unit is found not to have the appropriate label completed or the sufficient postage affixed, the mailer must be notified so that the label can be corrected or the insufficient postage paid. For an insufficiently paid item that is undeliverable for any reason, the item is returned to the mailer on payment of the deficient postage. An undeliverable Express Mail item not bearing a return address must be disposed of under the procedures in 138 and 139.

137.6 International Mail Acceptance
137.61 General
The United States Postal Service exchanges mail with other countries in accordance with U.S. domestic laws and regulations and with international postal treaties and conventions.

Mailing conditions and operational procedures adopted to implement the provisions of these laws, treaties, and conventions are set forth in the IMM.

137.62 Classes of Mail
Classes and types of international mail resemble those of domestic mail, but with country-by-country variations on rates, mailability, special services, sizes, and sealing limitations (see IMM 141).

Persons engaged in retail operations must know how to use the IMM efficiently to look up the special destination country requirements and rates applicable to any particular mailing.

137.63 Suspension of International Service
It is Postal Service policy to accept mail for foreign destinations in accordance with all applicable laws, regulations, and treaty or convention provisions.

From time to time, because of war, disaster, civil disturbance, or other cause, it may be necessary to suspend (embargo) mail service to certain foreign destinations. When this is done, public announcements are made in the Postal Bulletin, and it is the responsibility of persons engaged in retail operations not to accept such mail, citing the public announcement as the reason.

Signs announcing suspensions of service must be placed prominently in the retail service lobby and on or near mail acceptance units.
137.7 Mailhandling

137.71 Access to Mail and Mailhandling Areas
Authority for access to mail and mailhandling areas in postal facilities is restricted to duly sworn postal employees and postal contractors on official business. Nonpostal maintenance personnel are permitted access to mailhandling areas only when postal employees are on duty there. All other persons (including former employees and off-duty employees) must be specifically authorized access by the postal supervisor of the area involved.

137.72 Recall of Mail
Mail matter may be recalled after acceptance only by the addressee, the sender, or the lawful designee of either. Regulations governing recall of mail are contained in DMM D030.

137.73 Requests for Surrender of Mail
Postal employees served with legal process (for example, a state court order, search warrant, or other legal notice) purporting to require the surrender of mail should respectfully refuse to surrender the mail and should explain that the mail came into their custody by reason of their official employment, and direct the matter to the Inspection Service.

Exception: A search warrant duly issued (by a federal court or served by a federal officer) under Rule 41 of the Federal Rules of Criminal Procedures (see ASM 274.6).

138 Nonmailable Matter — Written, Printed, and Graphic

138.1 Advice to Mailers — Mailability Decisions

138.11 General Advice
When a postal customer seeks advice on whether, or under which conditions, particular matter described in DMM C010 and DMM C030 may be mailed, the customer’s attention should be called to any relevant provisions of those standards, and the customer may be assisted in using and understanding those provisions.

138.12 Mailer’s Responsibility
The mailer is responsible for complying with applicable postal laws and regulations governing mailability and preparation for mailing, as well as nonpostal laws and regulations on the possession, treatment, transmission, or transfer of particular matter. The general requirements applicable to preparation, packaging, and packing of mailable matter are in DMM C010. Special requirements applicable to preparing, packaging, and packing of potentially dangerous matter are explained in DMM C020.
138.13 Certain Mailability Decisions Not Authorized
Postmasters are not authorized to decide whether written, printed, or graphic matter is, because of its content, nonmailable. Postmasters are not permitted to deny entry to such matter or exclude it from the mail. As stated in 138.11, postmasters should call the attention of prospective mailers of such matter to all apparently relevant provisions of DMM C030. After being so informed, if the mailer requires that matter described in DMM C030 be accepted, it must be treated under 138.14. Written, printed, or graphic matter not properly prepared for mailing can be refused.

138.14 Referral to Inspection Service
A report about written, printed, or graphic matter found in the mail that appears nonmailable must be sent to the Inspection Service. Such matter may not be withheld from dispatch or delivery unless the Inspection Service, acting under ASM 274, instructs such withholding.

138.15 Opening or Inspecting Mail
Mail may not be opened, detained, delayed, or inspected, except under ASM 274.

138.16 Applicability to Military Postal System
DMM C010 and DMM C030 apply to the military postal system, its employees, and undelivered mail that is or has been in the official custody of the system and its employees. References in 138 to the Inspection Service refer to the Postal Inspection Service and its authorized personnel, not to military investigative services.

138.2 Sexually Oriented Advertisements
138.21 Application for Listing
138.211 Completion of Postal Service Form
A person may invoke the protection of 39 U.S.C. 3010 by completing and filing, with any postmaster or other designated Postal Service representative, PS Form 1500, Application for Listing and/or Prohibitory Order. This form may be obtained at any Post Office.

138.212 Authorized Filers
A person may file in his or her own behalf and in behalf of any of his or her children under the age of 19 years who reside with that person or are under that person’s care, custody, or supervision. An authorized officer, agent, fiduciary, surviving spouse, or other representative may file in behalf of a corporation, firm, association, estate, or deceased or incompetent addressee.

138.213 Weekly Transmission of Applications
Postmasters must send all completed applications weekly to the Prohibitory Order Processing Center (POPC).

138.214 Entry on Postal Service List
After receiving a PS Form 1500, the POPC enters the customer’s name and address (and the names and addresses of minor children) on the application into the Postal Service’s computerized list of persons who do not want to
receive sexually oriented advertisements. This information is processed and
the list updated monthly. The 30-day period under section 3010(b) starts on
the effective date of the list on which the person's name first appears.

138.215 Five-Year Retention on List
A person's name and address are kept on the list for 5 years, unless a
request for revocation is filed sooner by that person. A person must file a new
application at the end of the 5-year period to remain on the list. The names
and addresses of minor children are removed automatically from the list
when they reach 19 years of age. A minor must file an original application in
his or her own behalf if that person wants to continue his or her name on the
list after reaching 19 years of age.

138.216 Separate Applications for Different Addresses
The filing of a single application results in the listing of a single address for
the person filing. A person who receives mail at more than one address and
who wants the protection of 39 U.S.C. 3010 at more than one address should
file a separate application for each. A person who moves must file a new
application to receive the protection of 39 U.S.C. 3010 at the new address.
The submission of PS Form 3575, Change of Address Order, is not effective
for this purpose. It is not a violation of 39 U.S.C. 3010 to mail a sexually
oriented advertisement to a person at an address other than that which is
shown for him or her on the list. It is a violation, however, to mail such an
advertisement to that person at the address shown for him or her even
though that person has moved from that address.

138.22 Violations
138.221 Partial Listing
The following is a partial list of conduct that can violate 39 U.S.C. 3010 or
18 U.S.C. 1735:

a. The mailing of a sexually oriented advertisement in an envelope or
other wrapper that does not bear the name and address of the sender
and the legend “Sexually Oriented Ad,” under DMM C032.5.

b. The mailing directly or indirectly of a sexually oriented advertisement to
a person whose name and address have been on the list for more than
30 days.

c. The sale, loan, lease, or licensing of the use of the list or a copy thereof
in whole or in part.

d. The use of the list or a copy of it in whole or in part for any other
purpose than to ensure that no mailings of sexually oriented
advertisements are made to persons on the list.

138.222 Compliance With Law
No person who mails sexually oriented advertisements only to persons who
have requested to receive the same is deemed to have violated the statute or
regulations, if that person is otherwise in compliance with the law, whether or
not that person purchased and used the Postal Service list.
138.223 **Customer Reporting of Unsolicited Advertisements**

A person who wants to report receipt of unsolicited sexually oriented advertisements after his or her name and address are on the list for more than 30 days should submit the entire mailpiece, including the envelope or other wrapper, to any postmaster. The mailpiece must have been opened by the addressee. When submitting the mailpiece, the addressee must endorse the envelope or other wrapper and the contents thereof in substance as follows: “I received this mailpiece on (date),” and sign the statement. He or she should also state the identifying number appearing on his or her application if it is known (see 138.211). The postmaster of the installation to which the mailpiece is submitted must send it without delay to the inspector in charge of the Inspection Service division with geographical jurisdiction over the address of the mailer.

138.224 **Postal Service Employee Reporting of Unsolicited Advertisement**

If a violation of DMM C032 comes to the attention of any Postal Service officer or employee, that person must, through his or her postmaster, report such violation to the postal inspector whose territory includes that postal installation. Mail of a mailer in violation or apparent violation of 39 U.S.C. 3010 may not be refused for dispatch or delivery without a proper court order. Instructions to postmasters must be issued if a court order is obtained.

138.225 **Customer Inquiry of Name on Postal Service List**

A customer who wants to know whether his or her name is on the list should write to the Prohibitory Order Processing Center at the following address:

NATIONAL CUSTOMER SUPPORT CENTER
US POSTAL SERVICE
PO BOX 3744
MEMPHIS TN  38173-0744

139 **Nonmailable Matter — Articles and Substances: Special Mailing Rules**

139.1 **General Provisions**

139.11 **Rules and Procedures**

139.111 **Mailer’s Responsibility**

The mailer must comply with applicable postal laws and regulations on mailability and mail preparation, as well as nonpostal laws and regulations on the shipment of particular matters. General requirements for preparation, packaging, and packing of mailable matter are in DMM C010.

139.112 **Dangerous Materials Notices**

Postmasters and other managers of postal facilities must prominently display in Post Office lobbies, acceptance areas, and at self-service postal centers a notice containing the following language: “Mailing extremely dangerous materials, and potentially dangerous materials that are prepared improperly, is prohibited by law. You must ensure that your mailings comply with the law. Ask about postal requirements before you deposit any questionable materials into the mail.”
139.113 **Procedure for Acceptance Clerks**

Acceptance clerks must follow these procedures:

a. If the content of an article presented for mailing is described by the mailer or otherwise revealed to be nonmailable, the acceptance clerk must refuse to accept the article and must explain the reasons to the mailer (see Publication 52, *Hazardous, Restricted, and Perishable Mail*, and the IMM).

b. Acceptance clerks must watch for substances that are nonmailable as packaged and, where such substances are identified, must advise the customer of the preparation and packaging requirements that must be satisfied before such substances are acceptable for mailing (see Publication 52 and the IMM). If the customer fails to show that the matter is mailable as packaged, the employee must refuse to accept the article and must explain the reasons to the mailer.

139.114 **General Advice to Mailers**

When a customer seeks advice about whether or how to mail particular matter, or where it appears likely that a customer is to mail dangerous matter (as described in DMM C020), the customer’s attention must be called to the relevant provisions of those standards and any official Postal Service guides to mailing such as Publication 52. Technical questions about the proper preparation or packaging of matter may be referred to the RCSC. The scope of a postmaster’s authority to decide whether particular matter is nonmailable under DMM C020 and to exclude such matter from the mail under that decision is determined by 139.116. Mail may not be opened, detained, delayed, or inspected except under ASM 274.

139.115 **Other Laws and Regulations**

Other laws and regulations can apply to the mailings:

a. Particular matter may be mailable under postal statutes and regulations, but customers may have responsibilities under nonpostal statutes and regulations concerned with possession, treatment, transmission, or transfer of such matter. See, for example, 49 CFR, parts 100 through 177 (Department of Transportation Regulations); the Comprehensive Drug Abuse Prevention and Control Act of 1970 (Public Law 91-513), 21 U.S.C. 801, *et seq.*; and the Gun Control Act of 1968 (Public Law 90-618), 18 U.S.C. 921, *et seq.* Postmasters must not give opinions about whether mailing particular articles and substances (see DMM C020) would violate or comply with nonpostal laws and regulations administered by agencies other than the Postal Service. Postmasters who know the existence of such laws or regulations should refer the customer to the appropriate government agency. For example, postal customers with questions about the interstate shipment of rifles or shotguns should be referred to the nearest regional administrator of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms or to the Director, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms.
139.116 **Authorized Mailability Decisions**

Postmasters may decide whether articles and substances other than written, printed, or graphic matter are nonmailable and must, where appropriate, refuse to accept for mailing such matter determined to be nonmailable. Where necessary, the RCSC should be consulted in determining mailability. If the mailer wants to review the postmaster’s decision, the postmaster must, with the mailer’s consent, refer a sample and send a complete statement of the facts to the RCSC manager. After the manager’s decision is made, further appeal may be made by the mailer under 39 CFR 953, Rules of Practice in Proceedings Relative to Mailability. Postmasters are authorized to take any steps reasonable and necessary to protect Postal Service employees and equipment from the effects of potentially dangerous or injurious materials or substances found in the mail (see ASM 223.4).

139.117 **Referral to Inspection Service**

Matter within the following categories, when found in the mail, should be held temporarily, and the Inspection Service should be advised immediately. Such matters should thereafter be disposed of under instructions promptly furnished by the Inspection Service. These categories of matter are nonmailable firearms and switchblade knives (see DMM C024); controlled substances (see DMM C024); motor vehicle master keys and locksmithing devices (see DMM C024); alcohol (see DMM C024); and explosive, incendiary, or hazardous materials or devices that may present an immediate threat to persons or property (see DMM C023). This provision does not authorize the opening or inspection of any mail.

139.118 **Referral to RCSC**

All matter found in the mail and believed to be nonmailable under DMM C020 and DMM C030, except matter described in 139.117, must not be withheld from dispatch or delivery, but a report fully describing such mailing should be referred to the RCSC manager.

139.119 **Administrative Appeals**

A mailer aggrieved by any mailability decision by the RCSC manager may file a written notice of appeal with the Postal Service Recorder, Judicial Officer Department, with a copy or description of the determination or ruling in question. See 39 CFR 953, Rules of Practice in Proceedings Relative to Mailability.
139.2 Firearms, Knives, and Sharp Instruments
(18 U.S.C. 1715, 1716)
Postmasters are not authorized to give legal opinions about the shipment of rifles or shotguns, knives, or sharp instruments (see 139.115).

14 Other Retail Services Management

141 Delivery Services

141.1 General
This section concerns mail delivered by clerks at postal facilities. These types of delivery services involve significant volume and include general delivery, Post Office box and caller service, and, in some instances, firm holdout service. Additionally, clerks often deliver mail to customers who present notices of attempted delivery.

For detailed regulations concerning the availability of these services, customer and Postal Service obligations, and the appropriate rates, see DMM D900, Handbook M-39, Management of Delivery Services, and 142 and 84 of this book.

141.2 General Delivery Service
General delivery is intended primarily for use at offices without carrier delivery and for residents not eligible for carrier delivery service, to serve transients, and for other customers who are not permanently located. Mail endorsed “Transient, to be called for, general delivery” or with other suitable words will be placed in the general delivery case to be delivered to the addressee upon request at a retail service counter and with proper identification. Persons living permanently in cities having carrier delivery service and who have good and sufficient reasons satisfactory to the postmaster may receive their mail at general delivery retail service counters.

141.3 Firm Holdout Service
Customers who normally receive 50 or more letters on the first delivery trip and who request to pick up mail may be provided firm holdout service. Firm mail may be a direct holdout or may be withdrawn from the carrier’s case. For each customer, employees complete a PS Form 3801, Standing Delivery Order. Indicate on the form the type of mail (i.e., letter, Parcel Post, or all mail the firm will pick up) and obtain the signature of each firm employee or the designated agent authorized to pick up the mail. Carriers cannot make a first delivery to customers receiving holdout service, but may make subsequent delivery of mail where such service is provided by multiple trip routes. This service does not withdraw established service.

No charge is made for firm holdout service under these provisions.
In all other cases, customers requesting to call for their mail will be afforded service in accordance with 841, 842, or 843.

141.4 Post Office Box and Caller Services

141.41 General

Post Office box and caller services are premium services provided for the convenience of customers for a fee.

141.42 Post Office Box Service

141.421 General

Post Office box service consists of delivery to Post Office boxes assigned to customers. These boxes are located at postal facilities, subject to customer demand and the Postal Service’s ability to provide them. They are arranged in different configurations and must follow certain equipment and numbering requirements (see 141.423).

141.422 Configurations

Post Office box service is provided through the following configurations:

a. A Post Office box unit is any number of Post Office box sections that comprise the total Post Office boxes in a facility that is under one particular five-digit ZIP Code.

b. Any configuration of standard-sized boxes having the same overall dimensions as an assembly of the smallest size configured two high and six wide is a Post Office box module.

c. Five Post Office box modules arranged vertically comprise a Post Office box module unit. (In some cases, this will exceed 72 inches in height.)

d. Two Post Office box module units side by side (a maximum width of approximately 48 inches) form a section. For series 700, 1300, and others, a maximum width of 48 inches should apply.

A box section should not exceed 120 boxes or be wider than 48 inches.

In cases where the physical layout of a Post Office box section unit involves inside corners or outside corners (from the viewpoint of the box clerk) that separate two box module units that would normally make up a box section, consider the following:

(1) In the case of an inside corner, if one of the walls contains an odd number of module units, include the odd module unit with the adjacent two units to form the box section. If both walls contain an odd number of module units, the units adjacent to the corner, if within arms’ reach of each other, may be combined to form a box section. If an odd module unit is not within arms’ length of an adjacent unit, it should be designated as a box section by itself.
141.423 **Requirements**

Equipment and numbering requirements are as follows:

a. **Equipment**

   (1) Key-locking models of Post Office boxes are the only types available for installation in new facilities or for expansion or replacement of existing Post Office box sections. Surplus key-locking equipment may be used to match styles upon expansion of currently existing Post Office box sections.

   (2) The 1800 series of Post Office box equipment should not be used in the same Post Office box section as 1500 series or earlier equipment models.

   (3) Antique call box equipment may no longer be used for the provision of Post Office box service, but may be used as an adjunct to general delivery.

   (4) Damaged Post Office boxes must never be rented to customers, and Post Office boxes that have already been rented but suffer damage must be repaired as soon as possible.

b. **Numbering**

   (1) Number all Post Office boxes sequentially.

   (2) Number all Post Office boxes vertically from top to bottom. The top box of each column of boxes should end in the number 1 (for example, 1, 11, 21, 31, 41, 51, 61, and so forth). Do not use alphabetical designations.

   (3) The district address management office must approve, in advance of the installation and customer notification, numbering deviations where columns contain more than 10 boxes.

   (4) Post Office box numbers must all be numeric and must not be repeated within a finance number.

141.43 **Caller Service**

*Caller service* is provided at all offices to customers with a large volume of mail, to customers needing multiple separations, or to customers who need a Post Office box number address when no Post Office boxes are available. Postmasters must do the following:

a. Determine the times and locations for the provision of caller service.

b. Establish a series of box numbers for callers that is completely separate and apart from the numbers assigned to physical Post Office boxes. Assign a series of numbers that is beyond the range used on Post Office boxes. This series of numbers must not be repeated within the area represented by one finance number. Do not use alphabetical designations.
142 Metered Postage Services

142.1 General

142.11 Description
There are two primary categories of metered postage:

a. Metered postage imprinted by machines that are privately rented by mailers.

b. Metered postage imprinted by Postal Service-owned machines.

142.12 Security of Equipment
Postal-owned postage meters are restricted items that must be handled securely in accordance with Handbook AS-701, Material Management. This meter equipment must not be assigned to contract stations, branches, or community Post Offices. Contractors may rent a postage meter at their own expense, however, subject to the same rules and regulations that apply to private mailers.

142.13 Exceptions
Postage may be paid by meter stamps on any class of mail other than Periodicals. Metered mail is entitled to all the privileges and subject to all the conditions applying to the various classes of mail.

142.2 Customer-Operated Metered Postage
Mailers usually find it more efficient to imprint metered postage directly on large-volume mailings or on metered tapes that are affixed to each piece, rather than to use adhesive stamps for this purpose. Mailers rent postage meter machines from manufacturers authorized to distribute meters by the Postal Service. Applications for licenses for their use are accepted at the Post Office where the metered mail will be deposited. After approval of an application, the postmaster issues a license, for which there is no fee.

142.3 Postal Service-Operated Metered Postage
The Postal Service provides postage meters for use at retail service counters where the volume and type of mail being accepted justifies their use, such as to dispense postage for parcels and other purposes.

142.4 On-Site Meter-Setting Service
Postage meter-setting service may be provided by retail employees at business locations of customers who may find it inconvenient to bring their meters into the Post Office for setting. Fees are charged for this service. Postmasters decide when and where to offer the on-site service based upon customer demand and location, plus the cost and revenue considerations of providing the service. Postmasters may obtain assistance in making such decisions from Retail Systems and Equipment, Headquarters.
143 Photocopy Service

143.1 Policy
The Postal Service permits the installation of coin-operated photocopying machines in the lobbies of offices for customer use in many areas. The machines are owned and maintained by commercial firms, which are selected on a competitive basis. A portion of the proceeds from these machines is paid to the Postal Service. Details on how and where to provide photocopying service may be obtained from the district manager, Customer Service Support, or Handbook PO-208, Part 263.

143.2 Noncompetitive Requirement
The Postal Service does not compete unfairly with private coin-operated photocopy services. The distance between the Post Office premises in which a photocopy machine installation is proposed and a private coin-operated photocopy service must be at least one block or 500 feet. For these purposes, a block is defined as the entire unit where the Post Office structure is located and the opposite sides of the streets around that structure. In small communities (10,000 or less population), the distance should be extended to two or three blocks. When applying this rule, do not consider machines located in libraries, schools, or other public buildings. If the Post Office machine was installed before a private concern put in a machine, the Post Office machine may remain in service.

144 Self-Service Vending

144.1 General

144.11 Description
Many customer needs are met faster and more efficiently by self-service vending equipment that offers basic postal products and services in areas convenient to the public. Such equipment may be installed in postal facilities or at nonpostal locations. The configurations range from a single small stamp vending machine to large self-service postal centers. See Handbook PO-102, *Self Service Vending Operational and Marketing Program*, for specific details regarding self-service vending.

144.12 Responsibilities
Self-service vending equipment, when installed in postal facilities, must be kept operable and available to customers during all business and box lobby hours. Each manager in whose postal facility a self-service unit is located is responsible for ensuring the operability of the equipment. Postmasters are also responsible for informing customers of the advantages, locations, and products available from self-service and vending equipment. In nonpostal locations, self-service vending equipment must also be kept operable and available to customers during all times the mall or other operating location is open for business.
144.13 **Value**

All stamps and products vended by self-service equipment owned by the Postal Service are sold at face value.

144.14 **References**

The following are sources of information on self-service vending equipment:

a. Sections 144.2 through 144.5 describe the various configurations of self-service vending equipment in use and the policies underlying their installation and operation.


c. Numerous technical manuals are available concerning the operation and maintenance of particular pieces of equipment. The principal handbook that addresses the management of self-service retailing operations is Handbook PO-102.

144.2 **Stamp Vending Machines**

Stamp vending machines vend stamps off large coils and are normally installed in smaller Post Offices, stations, and branches where there is a need for service after closing hours or to alleviate the wait in line for single stamp sales. A single stamp vendor may be used in conjunction with a booklet vendor if the traffic warrants. This type of machine is to be used where there is not enough business to justify a postal commodity machine. In larger locations, a small stamp vendor may be placed near a postal commodity machine. Criteria for placement are found in Handbook PO-102.

144.3 **Booklet Vending Machines**

Booklet vending machines can hold approximately a box of booklets in a criss-crossed stack and are normally installed in smaller Post Offices, stations, and branches where there is a need for service after closing hours or to alleviate the wait in line for stamp booklet sales. This type of machine is to be used when sales exceed the revenue required for a single small stamp vendor but where there is not enough business to justify a postal commodity machine. Criteria for placement are found in Handbook PO-102.

144.4 **Booklet/Stamp Combination Machines**

Combination machines selling four selections of booklets and two single stamp selections may be used in both postal and nonpostal locations. This type of machine is used when sales exceed single stamp and single booklet vendors but where there is not enough business to justify a postal commodity machine.
144.5 **Postal Commodity Machines**

Postal commodity machines provide stamp booklets, commemorative and definitive vending packets, aerogrammes, long and short stamped envelopes, stamp coils of 100, Express Mail packets, and Priority Mail packets. The types of products to be sold in these machines are outlined in the specific maintenance series handbook designated for the postal commodity machine. These machines are installed in postal facilities where there is a need for more service than is provided by small stamp vendors and/or booklet vendors but where a full self-service postal center (SSPC) is not warranted. They may also be installed at nonpostal locations where adequate protection exists. Criteria for placement are found in Handbook PO-102.

144.6 **Self-Service Postal Centers**

144.61 **Criteria**

Self-service postal centers (SSPCs) are installed in postal facilities where there is a need for more service than is provided by a single postal commodity machine, booklet/stamp combination machine, small stamp vendor, or booklet vendor. SSPCs may be installed at nonpostal locations where adequate protection exists. See Handbook PO-102 for deployment criteria.

144.62 **Equipment Configuration**

Self-service postal centers generally contain the following items:

a. A stamp vending machine providing one or more stamps of the most commonly used denominations.

b. A postal commodity machine providing the designated vending items for that type of machine.

c. A booklet/stamp combination machine can be used in lieu of stamp vendor or commodity machine.

d. A currency changer that changes $1 bills into quarters, dimes, and nickels for use in vending machines. Currency changers are to be used only if the vending equipment does not already take bills.

e. A parcel depository, when available.

f. An automatic computing parcel scale and/or letter scale.


h. Customer information signs providing information on postage rates and mailing procedures only if this information is not available on the scale.

i. A letter collection receptacle.

j. Telephone for customer use in case equipment is out of order.

k. Claims for refunds.

All claims for refund of money lost through self-service retail vending equipment must be handled expeditiously. All retail service and other employees who handle such claims or complaints must acquire a thorough working knowledge of the refund procedures contained in Handbook PO-102.
Exchanges and Refunds for Payment of Excess Postage

Processing Refunds for Postage Stamps on Business Reply Mail, Postage Meter Stamps, Meter Impressions, Permit Imprints, or Rejected Personalized Envelopes

Authorizing Refunds

a. The requester submits a completed PS Form 3533, Application and Voucher for Refund of Postage, Fees, and Services, with postage stamps on business reply envelopes, postage meter stamps, envelopes, or other evidence requested for refund to the Post Office.
b. A Post Office employee reviews the application and supporting papers.
c. A Post Office employee and a witness destroy the postage stamps on business reply envelopes, postage meter stamps, envelopes, or other evidence submitted.
d. The Post Office employee calculates the amount to be refunded on Part 3, Postage or Meter Stamps, of PS Form 3533 (for postage meter stamps, follow instructions outlined in Part 3, of PS Form 3533).
e. A Post Office supervisor and a witness must certify the destruction and sign on PS Form 3533, Part 3.
f. If no witness is available (CAG H–L offices only), the postmaster follows steps 2, 3, and 4 and signs PS Form 3533, Part 3.
g. The postmaster or a supervisor authorizes the amount to be refunded, ensures that the approved amount is entered in PS Form 3533, Part 2, Verification of Refund, and signs.
h. If the refund amount exceeds the authorized limit for local payments, the Post Office employee check marks PS Form 3533, Part 6, Refund not Processed at Local Post Office, and forwards it to the designated location (see Disbursements).
i. For local payments, if paid in cash (limited to $10), the payee signs PS Form 3533, Part 5, Receipt for Refund; if paid with a no-fee money order, enter the serial number and the date issued.
j. The Post Office checks off the type of refund in PS Form 3533, Part 1, Refund Requested For, and ensures the amount of refund is reported into the appropriate AIC account number in the unit’s PS Form 1412.

Disbursements

Standard Field Accounting Procedures (SFAP) and Statement of Account (SOA) Offices

Refunds up to $1,000 may be issued locally. If the refund amount is more than $1,000, the Post Office enters the amount into the corresponding disbursement AIC account number and enters the offset amount into AIC 075, Advance Deposit Refunds Awaiting Payment. The Post Office submits the original PS Form 3533 to the district finance office for payment.
145.122 **Standard Accounting for Retail (SAFR) Offices**
Refunds up to $500 may be issued locally. If the refund amount is more than $500, the Post Office enters the amount into the corresponding disbursement AIC account number and enters the offset amount to AIC 280, Disbursements Sent to SS/A. The Post Office submits the original PS Form 3533 to Shared Services/Accounting (SS/A) for payment to the following address:

USPS SCANNING AND IMAGING CENTER
PO BOX 9000
SIOUX FALLS SD  57117-9000

145.2 **Processing Refunds for Metered Postage**

145.21 **Meters Checked Out of Service**

The procedure for issuing refunds for meters checked out of service is as follows:

a. **Verification at All Offices.** The accepting employee does the following:
   
   (1) Verifies the amount by examining meter registers.
   
   (2) Fills out Part 5, PS Form 3533, if a refund is due.
   
   (3) If the manufacturer’s meter checkout form has all the required documentation, uses it instead of PS Form 3533.
   
   (4) Refunds the full value of the unused postage under 145.21b(1) or 145.21b(2).

b. **Refund.**
   
   (1) At offices with 950 or more revenue units, the employee handles the refund of metered postage under 145.11.
   
   (2) At other offices, the employee handles a refund of metered postage following 145.11.

145.22 **Evidence of Unused Meter Stamps at Office of Meter Setting**

Instead of submitting bulky evidence of unused meter stamps, postmasters at the office of meter setting may certify the amount and destruction of these stamps in Part 4 of PS Form 3533 and forward the application to the Post Office where the meter is licensed.

145.23 **Computing Fraction of Cent**

In computing the amount to be refunded for unused meter stamps, resolve a fraction of a cent in favor of the Postal Service. For example, if 90 percent of the postage value of impression is $4.187, the amount refunded is $4.18.

145.3 **Refund Application for Retail Services**

Application for refund of fees collected for retail services must be initiated by the customer on PS Form 3533. Applications are processed as follows:

a. The application and any supporting papers are reviewed by an authorized Postal Service employee. If the mailer is due a refund for services not rendered (as stated in DMM P014.2.0), the Postal Service employee completes and witnesses the approval part of PS Form 3533.
PS Form 3533 is then returned to the mailer for submission to the retail services section for payment.

b. The refund is issued under the provisions of Handbook F-1, 730.

c. If the application is not approved, it is returned to the applicant with the supporting papers and an explanatory statement.

d. When the amount due the Postal Service because of faulty postage meter mechanical operation is less than $1, it is not collected. When the amount due the customer is less than $1, it is refunded only on request.

146 Indemnity Claims

146.1 General Instructions for Filing Claims

146.11 How to File

146.111 Customer Action

The following actions apply to customers who file indemnity claims for Insured Mail, Registered Mail, COD, or Express Mail articles. (See Exhibit 146.11 and the IMM for international Insured Mail and Registered Mail claims.)

a. **Claims for Loss.** Only the mailer may file an indemnity claim for the complete loss of an unnumbered Insured Mail article. Either the mailer or addressee, who is in possession of the original mailing receipt, may file an indemnity claim for the complete loss of a numbered Insured Mail, Registered Mail, COD, or Express Mail article by presenting evidence of insurance and evidence of value. (Proof of loss is not required for numbered Insured Mail, Registered Mail, COD, or Express Mail claims.)

   **Note:** If the article was mailed with Express Mail COD or Registered Mail COD service, the claimant must provide the original COD receipt with either the Express Mail or the Registered Mail receipt.

b. **Claims for Damage.** Either the mailer or addressee may file a claim for damage or for missing contents by presenting evidence of insurance and evidence of value. The addressee must present the article and mailing container, including any wrapping, packaging, and any other contents that were received, to the Postal Service for inspection. If the mailer filed the claim, the St. Louis ASC will notify the addressee by letter to present the article and mailing container, including any wrapping, packaging, and any other content that were received to the Postal Service for inspection.

c. **Time Limits.** Claims for complete loss must be filed within the time frames prescribed in DMM S010.2.2 and POM Exhibit 146.11. Claims for damage or missing contents should be filed immediately, but no later than 60 days from the date of mailing.

d. **PS Form 1000.** The customer must complete the applicable spaces on PS Form 1000 April 2004, Domestic Claim or Registered Mail Inquiry, for all domestic indemnity claims.
General Instructions for Filing Claims

ELIGIBLE TYPES OF MAIL SERVICES
Insured Mail (unnumbered/numbered), Registered Mail, COD, Express Mail, Express Mail COD, and Registered Mail COD service.

WHO MAY FILE
For complete loss: Only mailer for unnumbered Insured Mail/mailer or addressee, whoever is in possession of the mailing receipt for numbered Insured Mail, Registered Mail, COD, or Express Mail service.
For damage or loss of contents: Mailer or addressee.

WHEN TO FILE
A customer should file a claim immediately, but no later than 60 days from the date of mailing, when the contents of an article are damaged or missing from the mailing container.
For a lost article, a customer must file a claim within the time limits in the chart below.

Filing Time Periods for PS Form 1000

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mail Type or Service</th>
<th>When to File (From Mailing Date)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No Sooner Than</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insured Mail</td>
<td>21 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COD</td>
<td>45 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Registered Mail</td>
<td>15 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Registered COD</td>
<td>45 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Express Mail</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Express Mail COD</td>
<td>45 days</td>
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<tr>
<td>APO/FPO Insured Mail (First-Class Mail, SAM, PAL, or COD)</td>
<td>45 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APO/FPO Insured (Surface Only)</td>
<td>75 days</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

DOCUMENTATION REQUIRED FROM CUSTOMER

A. Evidence of Insurance (at least one):
For a claim involving Insured Mail, Registered Mail, COD, or Express Mail service, the customer must present any one of the following evidence showing that the particular service was purchased:
1. The original mailing receipt issued at the time of mailing (Insured Mail, Registered Mail, and COD receipts must contain a Postal Service postmark). Reproduced copies are not acceptable.
2. The wrapper showing the names and addresses of the mailer and the addressee and the proper mail endorsement, tag, or label showing that the article was sent Insured Mail, Registered Mail, COD, or Express Mail service. If only the wrapper is submitted, indemnity can be limited to $100 for Insured Mail, $50 for COD, $100 for Registered Mail, and $100 for Express Mail items.
3. For Express Mail items accepted for mailing under an Express Mail Manifesting agreement in P910, a copy of the manifest page showing the Express Mail label number for the item in question; the manifest summary page for the date the piece was mailed; a copy of PS Form 3152-E, Express Mail Manifesting Certification, round-dated by the accepting Post Office; and a copy of the EMCA monthly statement that lists the label number and postage for the mailpiece. If the customer purchased additional insurance, a copy of the round-stamped PS Form 3877, Firm Mailing Book for Accountable Mail, must also be submitted.
4. The original sales receipt from the Postal Service listing the mailing receipt number and insurance amount, only if the original mailing receipt is not available. Reproduced copies of the Postal Service sales receipt are not acceptable.
Exhibit 146.11 (p. 2)

General Instructions for Filing Claims

B. Evidence of Value (at least one):

1. Sales receipt, invoice or bill of sale, or statement of value from a reputable dealer.

2. For items valued up to $100, the customer’s own statement describing the lost or damaged article and including the date and place of purchase, the amount paid, and whether new or used (only if a sales receipt or invoice is not available). If the article mailed is a hobby, craft, or similar handmade item, the statement must include the cost of the materials used in making the item. The statement must describe the article in sufficient detail to determine whether the value claimed is accurate.

3. Picture from a catalog showing the value of a similar article (only if a sales receipt, invoice, or statement of value from a reputable dealer is not available). The date and place of purchase must be included.

4. Paid repair bills; if the claim is for partial damage, estimates of repair costs or appraisals from a reputable dealer. Repair costs may not exceed the original purchase price.

5. Receipt or invoice for the costs incurred to buy a surety bond required to reissue a lost item.

6. Receipt or invoice of costs incurred for the reconstruction of nonnegotiable documents.

7. A copy of a canceled check, money order receipt, credit card statement, or other documentation including the amount paid. For Internet purchases, a copy of the front and back of the canceled check, money order, or a copy of the credit card billing statement is required.

8. For Internet transactions conducted through a Web-based payment network that offers payment services through a stored value account, a computer printout of an online transaction identifying the purchaser and seller, price paid, date of transaction, description of item purchased, and assurance that the transaction status is completed. The printout must clearly identify the Web-based payment network provider through which the Internet transaction was conducted.

C. Proof of Loss (required for unnumbered Insured Mail only):

The mailer must provide proof of loss for unnumbered Insured Mail items only. Proof of loss is not required for numbered Insured Mail, Registered Mail, COD, or Express Mail claims. The mailer must present written and signed documentation from the addressee (such as a letter), dated at least 21 days after the date of mailing, stating that the addressee did not receive the article.

Note: The documentation or a copy of it must be attached to the claim. On the back of the mailing receipt, write “claim filed,” round date stamp, photocopy for the file, and return to customer, except unnumbered Insured Mail and Express Mail receipts. Instruct the customer to keep the original receipts until the claim is settled.
146.112 **Accepting Post Office**
When accepting a customer’s claim, handle it as follows:

a. If necessary, assist the customer in completing the applicable spaces on PS Form 1000.

b. Date-stamp immediately on receipt and sign in the appropriate spaces.

c. Ensure that the customer presents evidence of insurance.

d. For damage claims, indicate the location of the damaged article and handle under 146.3. Describe any damage to the outside of the container. Provide any other information that may help in the adjudication of the claim.

e. (For numbered Insured Mail, Registered Mail COD, or Express Mail claims) Detach copy 2 of PS Form 1000 and give it to the customer to retain until the claim is settled. Forward copy 1 of the claim form and supporting documentation to the St. Louis Accounting Service Center for processing. For unnumbered Insured Mail, mail copy of PS Form 1000 to the St. Louis Accounting Service Center after processing locally as described in 146.122.

f. Endorse the original insurance receipt and/or wrapper “Claim Filed [date]”, date-stamp, and initial it. Return the receipt or wrapper to the customer (except unnumbered Insured Mail and Express Mail Receipts). Instruct the customer to keep the receipts until the claim is settled.

146.113 **Claims and Inquiry Employee**
Detach copy 3 of PS Form 1000 and file it alphabetically by mailer’s name. Process the claim as explained in 146.12.

146.12 **Processing Claims at the Post Office**

146.121 **Loss of Numbered Insured Mail, Registered Mail With Postal Service Insurance, COD, or Express Mail Items**
Process the claims as follows:

a. When PS Form 1000 is presented at a Post Office for the purpose of filing a claim, check for completeness, mailer and addressee address, customer signature, complete article receipt number, and supporting documentation.

b. Mail PS Form 1000 and supporting documentation, evidence of insurance and evidence of value (as defined in DMM S010) to the St. Louis Accounting Service Center at the following address:

CLAIMS SERVICING SECTION
ACCOUNTING SERVICE CENTER
PO BOX 80143
ST LOUIS MO 63180-0143

Claims forms submitted with an APO/FPO mailing address must include the unit or ship designation.
146.122 Loss of Unnumbered Insured Articles
When PS Form 1000 is presented at a Post Office for the purpose of filing a claim, check for completeness, customer signature, and supporting documentation. Complete section B of the claim form and indicate claim was paid or denied. After processing locally, mail the original copy 1 of the form to the St. Louis Accounting Service Center at the following address:
CLAIMS SERVICING SECTION
ACCOUNTING SERVICE CENTER
PO BOX 80143
ST LOUIS MO  63180-0143

146.123 Damage Claim Filed by Mailer
If the mailer files a damage claim for an article still in the possession of the addressee, the St. Louis ASC will notify the addressee by letter to present the damaged article and mailing container, including any wrapping, packaging, and any other contents that were received, to the Postal Service for inspection. Failure to do so will result in denial of the claim.

Note: When the mailer receives notification from the addressee of receipt of a damaged article, the mailer must advise the addressee to await notification from the Postal Service to present the damaged article and mailing container, including any wrapping, packaging, and any other contents they received to the Postal Service for inspection if the mailer elects to file the claim.

146.124 Damage Claim Filed by Addressee
If the addressee files a damage claim, part B of PS Form 1000 (April 2004) must be completed to show that the damaged article and mailing container, including any wrapping, packaging, and any other contents they received, were presented for inspection when the claim was filed. If additional space is needed, attach a separate sheet to the claim form describing the damage. The St. Louis ASC will make payment to the person designated in section A 3a of PS Form 1000 provided the original proof of insurance is submitted with claim. If a dual claim is filed, the claim with the original mailing receipt will be honored.

146.125 Estimates and Appraisals
If necessary, return the article to the customer so that the customer may obtain an appraisal or estimate. Use PS Form 3831, Receipt for Article(s) Damaged in Mails, to give and take receipts for damaged articles. Note the condition of the article on the form.
Exhibit 146.124
Processing Claims for Damage or Partial Loss of Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>All Claims for Damaged/Missing Contents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Complete PS Form 1000, part B, to show that the damaged article and mailing container, including wrapping, packaging, and any other contents that were received, were presented for inspection when the claim was filed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Attach a separate sheet to the claim form describing the damage.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- If necessary, return the article to the customer so that an appraisal or estimate can be obtained.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Use PS Form 3831, Receipt for Article(s) Damaged in Mails, to give receipts for damaged articles. Note the condition on the form.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Payment is made to the customer presenting the mailing receipt or to the addressee when designated by the sender as payee.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Exception:* (For numbered Insured Mail articles only) If the addressee paid for repair to a partially damaged article and the endorsement on the wrapper shows that enough insurance was bought to cover the cost of repairs, payment will be made to the addressee unless a claim payment has already been made on the numbered Insured Mail article.

| - If the article has no salvage value (below $10.00), allow the customer to keep it if the customer wants it; otherwise, destroy it. |
| - If the completely damaged Insured Mail, COD, or Express Mail article has salvage value, retain it for 60 days, and then forward it to the appropriate mail recovery center on the next weekly dispatch. |
| - For Registered Mail claims, retain the article and the packaging until released by notification from the St. Louis ASC. |

146.13 Inquiries and Duplicate Claims

146.131 Time Limits
Customers file duplicate claims within the time limits shown in DMM S010. If a customer asks about the status of a claim and the required time has elapsed, process a duplicate claim under 146.132.

146.132 Customer Filing
Customers may file claims as follows:

a. *In Person.* To file a duplicate claim, the customer must either (1) submit a photocopy of the customer’s completed part of the claim form or (2) request the Post Office where the claim was filed to process a photocopy of the Post Office’s receipt copy of the claim form.

b. *By Telephone.* Obtain information about the mailing from the customer and check the file for a record of the original claim. If a copy of the claim is found, photocopy it, mark “Duplicate” on the top left corner immediately above the title (do not write in the barcode area), and process the form as in 146.12.

146.133 Claim Form Copy Not on File
If a copy of PS Form 1000 is not on file, advise the customer that no record exists. If the customer kept a copy of the claim form, ask the customer to bring or send a copy to the Post Office. If neither the customer nor the Post Office has a copy of the claim form, the customer must file an original claim on PS Form 1000. Ask the customer to present the original mailing receipt to the Post Office. When the customer presents the mailing receipt and the receipt is annotated to show that a claim was filed, follow original claim procedures and attach a note to the claim indicating that a previous claim was filed.
Completing Duplicate Claims

Complete these duplicate claims as follows:

a. Do not use a new PS Form 1000 when filing a duplicate claim.

b. Use either a photocopy of the customer’s original copy or the Post Office’s original copy and mark “Duplicate” on the top left corner of the form immediately above the title.

c. Process the form as described in 146.11.

Reimbursements

Tendered

If a customer reimburses the Postal Service for an incorrectly paid claim, Postal Service personnel must accept it and issue a receipt using PS Form 1096, Receipt. Annotate the receipt to indicate the form of payment received, such as, cash, personal check, money order, and record the number of any negotiable instrument received. If cash is received from the customer, issue a no-fee money order payable to the U.S. Postal Service for transmittal to the Eagan ASC. Do not send cash. Send all reimbursements to the Eagan ASC with all claim-identifying information to the following address:

DISBURSING BRANCH
2825 LONE OAK PKWY
EAGAN MN  55121-9600

Personal checks, money orders, or other negotiable instruments should be made payable to the U.S. Postal Service. If the instrument is made payable to the postmaster, the postmaster must sign and restrictively endorse it “Pay to U.S. Postal Service” and forward as above.

Not Tendered

When it is determined that a claim was paid improperly and repayment is not tendered, report it to the St. Louis ASC by memorandum so it may be placed under accounts receivable control.

Disposition

Damaged Article

For a completely damaged article with little or no salvage value (under $10.00), allow the customer to keep the article if the customer wants it; items that may be of a hazardous nature to employees must be destroyed. If the completely damaged Insured Mail, COD, or Express Mail article has salvage value, retain it for 60 days, and then forward it to the appropriate mail recovery center on the next weekly dispatch.

Provide the customer with PS Form 3831, Receipt for Article(s) Damaged in Mails. The status of a claim can be obtained by calling the St. Louis ASC Help Desk at 866-974-2733. If the customer’s claim is denied, return the article upon request. St. Louis ASC will notify the customer in writing that the claimant has 30 days from the date of denial action to recover the article and that he/she has no recourse if, subsequently, the item is disposed of after the 30 days. Articles on which claims are paid, on which the customer has not
filed an appeal, or on which the customer fails to recover after the final denial action, should be forwarded to the appropriate mail recovery center on the next weekly dispatch. Articles being sent to the mail recovery center should not be stripped of the insured labels and must include a copy of the paid claim letter or notice that the item is ready for auction. Always document disposition of damaged article. For Registered Mail damage claims, retain the article and packaging at the Post Office until released by notification from the St. Louis ASC. Make sure the disposition of the damaged article is clearly annotated on PS Form 1000.

146.32 Disposition of Recovered Articles
When a lost Registered Mail, Insured Mail, COD, or Express Mail article is recovered undamaged after payment of a claim, the payee may reimburse the Postal Service for the full amount paid in exchange for the article. If the article is damaged, has depreciated in value, or is missing contents, the payee may accept it and reimburse the Postal Service an amount set by the St. Louis ASC.

146.4 Quarterly Review
146.41 Responsibility
The consumer affairs and claims manager (district) coordinates the review of claims and inquiry functions at the main Post Offices, stations, and branches. The review must be conducted quarterly or when the St. Louis ASC reports or other evidence indicates that delinquent or delayed forms exist at any location accepting claims. Conduct the reviews as follows:

a. Count the claims forms; duplicate claims, PS Form 1510, Mail Loss/Refiling Report; and PS Form 3811-A, Request for Delivery Information/Return Receipt After Mailing. Note the dates when the forms were received in the unit. Delivery information must be provided within 5 days of receipt of the request. Requests not processed within 5 days are delinquent. Determine the percentage of delinquent requests.

b. Check the COD file, comparing dates of money orders with dates of delivery, and note any delays.

c. Check the files of Forms 3849 for proper completion. Compare date of receipt and date of return of each COD article to determine whether held beyond the maximum 30-day retention period. Note any irregularities.

d. Determine the accessibility of delivery records to all employees who conduct searches.

e. Select a representative sample of delivery units each quarter. Check on-hand COD articles, noting the dates when received in the unit. Articles held more than 30 days must be recorded as irregularities.
f. Discuss the findings with the postmaster, station/branch manager, or other supervisor who manages the claims and inquiry function. Jointly develop a plan of action to correct any irregularities.

g. Provide a summary report for each site to the district manager, Customer Service and Sales, as well as the employee in charge of the unit reviewed. The report must list all noted irregularities and delinquent forms. Determine the cause of noted irregularities and delinquent forms and include a summary of the jointly developed plan of corrective action to be taken within a specified time. The manager, Customer Service and Sales, is responsible for ensuring that the plan is immediately implemented. When an accumulation of delinquent forms exists, it must be corrected immediately.

h. Conduct a followup review after 15 days to determine the effectiveness of the action taken. If no irregularities are detected, schedule the next review semiannually.

146.42 **Survey Form**

Photocopy Exhibit 146.4 and use it to help complete the quarterly review. After the review is done and the survey form completed, file it at the consumer affairs and claims office.
Exhibit 146.4

Quarterly Review

At the Claims & Inquiry Unit (Count any requests over 5 days old as irregularities.)

Delivery information must be provided within 5 days after the request is received. Requests not processed within 5 days are delinquent. Determine the number of forms in the claims & inquiry unit that are more than 5 days old and not processed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Number of Claim Forms</th>
<th>Number of Claim Forms over 5 days old</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Number of Duplicate Claims</td>
<td>Number of Duplicate Claims over 5 days old</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Number of Forms 1510</td>
<td>Number of Forms 1510 over 5 days old</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Number of Forms 3811-A</td>
<td>Number of Forms 3811-A over 5 days old</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Delivery Records (Count any “No” responses as irregularities.)

Are delivery records accessible to all employees who conduct searches?  

Check the files of delivery records. Are Forms 3849 properly completed?  

On Forms 3849, compare the date of receipt with the date of return to determine whether COD articles are held beyond the maximum 30-day retention period. Are COD articles returned promptly?  

Check the COD file, comparing dates of money orders with dates of delivery. Are money orders sent to the COD mailer by the next business day after the date of delivery?  

At the Delivery Unit (Count all articles held past the retention period as irregularities.)

Select a representative sample of delivery units each quarter. Check on-hand accountable mail articles, noting the dates when received in the unit.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of COD articles held past the 30-day retention period</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of Insured Mail articles held past the 15-day retention period</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Registered Mail articles held past the 15-day retention period</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Certified Mail articles held past the 15-day retention period</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
15 Easy Stamp Services

151 Stamps by Mail

151.1 Description

151.11 City Delivery Areas — PS Form 3227

Stamps by Mail (SBM) service allows postal customers in city delivery areas only to purchase postal products, such as booklets, sheets, and coils of stamps, postal cards, and stamped envelopes by ordering through the mail. The Postal Service order forms are incorporated in self-addressed, postage-paid envelopes. Customers obtain order envelopes (PS Form 3227, Stamps by Mail) from letter carriers, in Post Office lobbies, or by telephoning the local delivery unit to request its delivery. After completing an order form and enclosing a check or money order, the customer drops the sealed envelope in a collection box or his or her mailbox. Mail orders are returned to the customer within 3 to 5 business days. Postmasters must requisition Forms 3227 from their material distribution center and maintain a supply for use in filling customers’ telephone requests for the form, for customer use in the Post Office lobby, and for city delivery carriers to use as required. Forms that are requisitioned from the material distribution centers must be overprinted with the local address and barcode before distributing. Handstamping on this form is no longer acceptable.

151.12 Rural Delivery Areas — PS Form 3227-R

Stamp purchase orders allow postal customers in rural delivery areas only to purchase all postal products, such as booklets, sheets, and coils of stamps, postal cards, and money orders directly from the rural carrier or by using PS Form 3227-R, Stamp Purchase Order. Customers obtain PS Form 3227-R from the rural carrier or by telephoning the local delivery unit to request its delivery. After completing an order form and enclosing cash, check, or money order, the customer places the sealed envelope in his or her mailbox with the flag up. Stamp orders are generally filled and returned to the customer either at the time of mail delivery by the rural carrier or within 1 business day. Postmasters must requisition Forms 3227-R from their material distribution center and maintain a supply for use in filling customers’ telephone requests for the form or for rural delivery carriers to use as required.

151.2 Responsibilities

151.21 Managers, Customer Service Support

District managers, Customer Service Support, have primary responsibility for ensuring compliance with these guidelines.

151.22 Postmasters of City Delivery Offices

Postmasters of city delivery offices are responsible for ensuring direct supervision of SBM operations to achieve service standards and to deal effectively with variances.
151.23 **Postmasters of Rural Delivery Offices**

Postmasters with rural delivery are responsible for ensuring that rural carriers maintain a supply of stamp stock sufficient to meet the needs of the customers on the route. Postmasters must ensure that service standards are achieved, and deal effectively with variances.

151.24 **Order Filling Clerks**

The order filling clerks receive all orders and may fill them intermittently throughout the business day. For this reason, early availability is necessary to forecast volume and to plan a day’s work. Orders received by 2:00 p.m. should be filled before the end of the workday. All orders must be filled within 8 hours (and turned around within 24 hours) of the clerk’s receipt.

As each order is opened, the clerk must do the following:

- **a.** Check for the customer’s name and address on both the order form and, especially, on the return address label.
- **b.** Ensure that the order form is properly filled in and includes the quantities and costs of the ordered items. Check the customer’s addition to ensure that the total is correct.
- **c.** Verify that the customer’s check is signed and made payable to “Postmaster” or “United States Postal Service” in the amount shown on the order. Accept the customer’s check in accordance with procedures outlined in Handbook F-1, *Post Office Accounting Procedures.* Annotate the back of the check with the initials “SBM.”
- **d.** If an error is found, take the following steps before returning the order or order form to the customer:
  - (1) If the value of the order exceeds the amount of the check, fill as much of the order as permitted, deducting postage equal to the value of the shortage.
  - (2) If the check lacks a signature or an amount, or if no check or order was enclosed, return the materials to the customer. Enclose a short descriptive note to the customer, explaining the error. Always include a new order form.
  - (3) If the check’s value exceeds the value of stock ordered, fill the order and have a no-fee money order prepared for the balance. Enclose the money order with the filled stamp order.
- **e.** When filling an order, use a G-10 Permit envelope of the appropriate size to contain it. Enclose another preaddressed PS Form 3227 with the stock. Detach the return address label from the order form and apply it to the G-10 Permit envelope. Seal the envelope.
- **f.** Place filled order forms aside for filing at the end of the day’s order filling. Each form must be round dated, initialed by the person who filled it, and filed according to the customer’s last name. These records must be retained in the unit until the next examination of the clerk’s accountability or 30 days, whichever is greater.
- **g.** Take the orders to the registry unit.
- **h.** Record the number of orders in each dispatch to a delivery unit on an all-purpose ruled form.
151.25 **Registry Unit**

The registry clerk must do the following:

a. Validate the count of orders by delivery unit and return a copy of the ruled form to the clerk, keeping a copy for registry records.

b. Place all orders for one delivery unit in a large envelope addressed to the unit manager, marked, “Open and Distribute.” Record the number of enclosed orders on the envelope’s face.

c. Backstamp each large envelope as though it were a regular registered piece, without a registered article number and without listing it on a registry control sheet.

d. Dispatch the large envelopes by pouch to the appropriate delivery units.

151.26 **Receiving Delivery Unit**

At a receiving delivery unit, the manager must do the following:

a. Remove and open the unit envelope, checking the number of orders against the count appearing on the envelope.

b. Notify the registry section immediately of any discrepancies.

c. Distribute the individual orders to the appropriate carriers. Carriers deliver the orders as regular mail, or Certified Mail, as marked. Managers must leave all orders, except Certified Mail articles, in the delivery receptacle, unless an obvious security risk exists.

151.3 **Filling Orders**

151.31 **PS Form 3227**

Requisition PS Form 3227, *Stamps by Mail*, and PS Form 3227-R, *Stamp Purchase Order*, from the appropriate material distribution center. The MDCs apply limits to order quantities, depending on the CAG level of the requisitioning office. Since actual need may not be determined by such limits, districts must order “buffer” supplies of forms in order to serve those units receiving too few. Each Post Office must overprint the local address and barcode on each form before distributing it to the customer. Do not rely on the customer to correctly complete this address. Placement of the address on the envelope must follow automation guidelines (*Publication 25, Designing Letter and Reply Mail*). Failure to overprint the local address could cause service failures of approximately 2 to 3 weeks and subsequent customer dissatisfaction.

151.32 **Order Fulfillment**

151.321 **General**

The intent is to maximize quality and productivity within the required 24-hour target for order filling. District managers are expected to implement an appropriate mix of SBM operations among city delivery units. With higher volumes, SBM orders may be preaddressed to (and filled at) central locations, such as the main office. Placing the barcode on the envelope and assigning a unique ZIP Code to SBM allows automated sites to save workhours, speed the mail’s availability, and sort directly to the order fulfillment operation. Normally, orders are delivered by regular mail. Certify those valued at $200 or more. Second attempts must be made the next day if the initial delivery attempt is unsuccessful.
151.322 **Clerical Downtime**

If transaction volumes permit, one method of filling SBM orders is to use clerical downtime. Between customers, retail service counter clerks can preaddress and fill orders at the customers’ own delivery units.

151.323 **Centralized Fulfillment Locations**

In centralized fulfillment locations, assign at least one clerk and a designated backup clerk to handle sustained order processing. Avoid service failures by training a third clerk to assist in handling the heavy volumes expected before Christmas and following planned promotions or publicity.

In centralized operations, separate filled orders by delivery unit or route, as appropriate. Certify any envelope containing stock worth $200 or more.

151.324 **Undeliverable as Addressed Orders**

If an order has been misaddressed or is undeliverable as addressed, return it through the registry unit to the SBM section supervisor or SBM clerk. The supervisor or SBM clerk determines from the PS Form 3227 which clerk filled it and if the correct address is on the envelope. The supervisor or SBM clerk notifies the customer to verify the address and explain the delay of the order. If the order is undeliverable and the customer cannot be contacted, the supervisor or SBM clerk returns the order to the stamp credit within a week.  

**Note:** Customer addresses with incorrect or missing ZIP Codes are deliverable.

151.325 **Lost Orders**

SBM orders are rarely lost in the mail. If a customer reports a lost or missing order, replace it immediately as follows:

a. Check the files for a record of the order. It is unnecessary to ask the customer for a copy of a canceled check. Complete a PS Form 1510, *Mail Loss/Rifling Report* (initiated by the SBM clerk or supervisor receiving the nonreceipt report). Retain a copy of the PS Form 1510 with the original order PS Form 3227 for a period of 2 years. Send all replacement orders by Certified Mail, regardless of value. Contact the customer prior to delivery of the replacement order to ensure that the customer will be there to receive the order.

b. Record the customer’s name and the reporting date of the loss on PS Form 1096, *Receipt*, indicating “Duplicate Stamps by Mail order — original reported lost.”

c. The supervisor must clear the issuing clerk’s accountability by initialing the PS Form 1096.

d. The clerk submits the PS Form 1096 as support for the entry to suspense on PS Form 1412-A, *Daily Financial Form*.

e. Return an undeliverable order to the stamp credit out of which it was filled. Increase the stamp credit by reducing AIC 094 and increasing *Trust Funds Received.*
151.326 **Written and Telephone Requests**

Handle written and telephone requests as follows:

a. Unit managers and clerical employees answering customers' telephone inquiries must be aware that customers may order SBM without using PS Form 3227 simply by writing to the local postmaster. The customer should indicate the kind and quantity of stamps desired and must enclose a check or money order payable to “Postmaster” for the amount of the stamps.

b. Postage affixed to such an order is not refundable.

c. After filling orders, employees should always enclose a preaddressed PS Form 3227 for placing the next order.

d. Reporting SBM Revenue:

Report SBM revenue on PS Form 1412-A, *Daily Financial Form*, in AIC 094, *Stamps by Mail Sales*. If orders cannot be filled on the same day as opened, deposit the funds and enter the amount to *Trust Funds Received*. Make a withdrawal from *Trust Funds* and entry to AIC 094 on the next business day when the orders are filled. Forms 3227 are not submitted as support for Forms 1412-A. Keep the files of these forms available for supervisors' review.

152 **Stamps by Phone**

By calling 800-STAMP-24 (800-782-6724), customers may order stamps and make purchases with Visa, MasterCard, or Discover credit cards. This toll-free number is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. There is a service charge, and stamps are delivered by mail within 3 to 5 business days.

153 **Stamps on Consignment**

153.1 **Description**

153.11 **General**

In the Stamps on Consignment program, the Postal Service distributes First-Class, Express Mail, and Priority Mail postage stamps to retailers for resale to the general public. Stamps are not to be sold above face value. In consigned stocks, if the vendor chooses to sell at below face value, the retailer still must pay the Postal Service for full value of the stocks. The retailer pays for the stamps 30 or 45 days after receipt (depending on the number of sales outlets). The objective of the program is to provide a convenient method of purchasing stamps for household customers who prefer to combine their stamp purchases with retail shopping. To meet this objective, retail specialists solicit local retail chains to provide the service, or through a postal contractor.

153.12 **Stamps on Consignment Agreement**

A stamp consignment agreement must be entered into by the Postal Service and the retail business. The agreements are signed jointly by the Postal Service and the stamp consignee. Only a designated Postal Service contracting officer may sign this agreement, unless it is established through the designated contractor (see Exhibit 153.12).
Exhibit 153.12 (p. 1)
Sample Stamps on Consignment Agreement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STAMP CONSIGNMENT AGREEMENT - Local</th>
<th>Date: __________________________</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

1. Consignee Obligations:

1.1 To accept on consignment, on _______ DATE _______ the following quantities of United States Postal Service (USPS) postage.

First-Class postage (minimum of 300 stamp booklets/sheetlets or equivalent value):

- ________________ 20 stamp booklets
- ________________ 10 stamp booklets
- ________________ rolls of 100 stamps

Express Mail postage: ___________ stamps

Priority Mail postage: ___________ stamps

Other (specify) ____________________________

1.2 The consignee must examine orders upon receipt and report any discrepancies within five calendar days to:

Postmaster/Station Manager

1.3 The consignee will sell stamps to the public for face value, which is the same price the USPS charges its customers for stamps. The consignee will advertise and promote the sale of stamps with advertising materials as may be made available by the USPS.

1.4 The consignee agrees to replenish stock as needed. Stock may be replenished until the value of all stock on hand equals double the value specified in part 1.1; further replenishments require modification to this agreement. Stock will be replenished at:

Name and Location of replenishing USPS facility

1.5 The consignee will remit thirty calendar days from the date in part 1.1 and every thirty days thereafter, full face value payments for stamps sold to the public during the preceding thirty-day period. Remittance will be made to the postal official named in part 1.2.

1.6 The consignee will be fully responsible for consigned stamps from the time of receipt until their sale, and for payments derived from consignment sales until their remittance to the designated post office. The consignee may not assign any of its interests or obligations under this agreement to any other party.

1.7 The consignee will provide the USPS, within a month of this agreement’s execution and quarterly thereafter, a list of outlets through which consignee sells stamps. The list must designate the outlets by 5-digit ZIP Code and show the amount and value of stock distributed to each outlet, and must be provided to:

Retail Specialist                        Address/City/State/Zip

1.8 The consignee will allow the USPS to examine stamp inventory and related documents while this agreement is in effect and for a period of three years from the date of its termination.
1.9 The consignee will notify the USPS in writing within five calendar days of the initiation of any bankruptcy proceedings. The notice must include: 1) the court in which, and the date when, the proceeding was filed; and 2) a report describing the stamp stock and sales payments for which the consignee is responsible on the date of notice.

1.10 Consignments to businesses the USPS deems commercial mail receiving agencies must agree to sell all First-Class stamp products, as well as Express Mail and Priority Mail products.

2. USPS Obligations:

2.1 The USPS will supply and replenish stamp stock.

2.2 The USPS may provide advertising to increase public awareness of consignment sales.

3. The Parties Obligations:

3.1 Except as otherwise provided in this agreement, changes to the agreement’s terms may only be made by written modification signed by both parties. Changes in the consignee’s ownership require the execution of a new agreement.

3.2 This agreement may be terminated by either party on thirty calendar days’ written notice to the consignee or contracting officer at the addresses in part 7. However, the USPS, if necessary to protect its interests, may terminate this agreement immediately, to be subsequently confirmed in writing within fifteen calendar days.

3.3 Within fifteen calendar days of any termination, the consignee must provide: 1) all stamps (or cash equivalent) in its possession to the USPS; 2) sales proceeds not yet remitted to the USPS; and 3) cash for stamps and sales proceeds not so provided for which consignee is responsible under part 1.6.

3.4 The parties agree that: 1) the agreement involves consignment sales and that the consignee does not receive title to the stamps; and 2) neither consignee and its employees, nor the USPS and its employees, may be considered employees of the other for any purpose.

3.5 This agreement constitutes the entire agreement of the parties and supersedes all former agreements. No oral representations of any kind affect any term of this agreement.

4. Consignee Tax Identification Number (TIN)

5. Parent Company TIN (if applicable)

6. Parent Company Name & Address (if applicable)
### 7. Signatures:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Signature</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Retail Specialist/Postmaster/Station Manager</td>
<td>(date)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United States Postal Service</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contracting Officer</td>
<td>(date)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United States Postal Service</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Contracting Officer’s Address**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Consignee’s Name:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Consignee’s Signature:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consignee’s Title:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name of Firm:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Street Address:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City, State and Zip Code:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact Person:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telephone:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**CONTRACT NUMBER**
153.2 Responsibilities

153.21 Districts

153.211 General

Districts must market and implement the Stamps on Consignment program in their respective areas. Sections 153.212 through 153.218 describe the steps. The area Advertising and Promotion function and the local retail specialist will coordinate local promotional efforts.

153.212 Identify Target Markets, Products, and Retail Outlets

The guidelines for identifying markets, products, and retail outlets are as follows:

a. The major item for sale will be booklets of First-Class Mail stamps. Many household customers prefer to purchase booklets of stamps over other postal products, and it is easier for both the Postal Service and the retailer to advertise, administer, and control the program. Retailers are more likely to sign an agreement if the stamp transaction is simple and fast. Therefore, customer, retailer, and Postal Service benefits will be maximized. The Postal Service does not consign booklets of fewer than 10 stamps because such booklets would compete with private stamp vendors, and these booklets are expensive to produce compared with the revenue they generate. The following products are authorized for sale:

   (1) First-Class stamp booklets (including self-adhesive sheetlets).
   (2) Rolls of 100 First-Class stamps.
   (3) Express Mail, Priority Mail, and postcard stamps. Items (2) and (3) are targeted for specific market segments. For example, rolls of First-Class stamps are often sold in card stores and high-income areas, while other stamps are often sold in truck stops and tourist areas.

b. Supermarkets have a significant lead over other retailers in retail revenues and frequency of household customer visits. Thus, these accounts offer the most benefits for the sales effort required. Drugstore chains and convenience store chains are considered secondary accounts. Approach these retailers only after making an effort to sign up supermarket chains. Consignment agreements can be signed with stores that have vending machines operated by private stamp vendors. The Consignment program is specifically targeted at customers who prefer to purchase large quantities of stamps in booklets or coils.

Private stamp vendors, in contrast, serve customers who prefer to purchase one or two First-Class stamps. Retailers participating in the Consignment program should be encouraged to retain existing private stamp vending machines. As a reminder, Postal Service vending equipment may not be placed at sites already served by a private vendor. Consult these sources to identify retail chains that could qualify as consignment outlets:

   (1) The Yellow Pages.
   (2) The public library.
Meet with Potential Consignees

Once the retailers in the area have been identified, call the postmaster at the retailer’s administrative Post Office to schedule a meeting. Before the meeting, use a proposal worksheet (see Exhibit 153.213) to gather all the information about the retail chain that is needed to plan an effective presentation. The Postal Service representative must be completely versed in the Stamps on Consignment program in order to answer all questions and present the sales points clearly. For example, there is evidence that the following are true of the sale of stamps at or below face value:

a. Generates increased store traffic.
b. Generates good will.
c. Could be tied in to sales of greeting cards.
d. Is most effective at the checkout counter, especially if a sign is located there to remind the customer.
e. Is fast because booklets have universal product code (UPC) barcodes.

Negotiate the Agreement

The Postal Service consigns postage stamps only to firms that sell them directly to the general public at one of their established retail outlets. The consignee’s business must be accessible to all segments of the public, and the consignee’s image and product line must be compatible with the image of the Postal Service. All stamps must be sold to the general public at face value or, if desired, less than face value. The consignee must agree to advertise within the store to make customers aware of the availability of stamps at their outlets. The Postal Service will consign postal products for a period of 30 days to retailers with fewer than 25 outlets. Consignees with 25 or more retail outlets will be allowed a 45-day consignment. If the required quantity of stamps would have a major impact on the inventory at the stamp distribution office (SDO), contact Alternative Retail Services at Headquarters before signing the consignment agreement. This will ensure that a sufficient quantity of booklets will be available for the consignee once the agreement is signed.

The minimum consignment consists of one, all, or any combination of the following items:

a. One full carton (300 books per carton) of stamp booklets.
b. One flat (50 rolls per flat) of rolls of 100 First-Class stamps.
c. One pad of Express Mail or Priority Mail stamps.
Exhibit 153.213
Stamps on Consignment Proposal Worksheet

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Business:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Type of Business:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Supermarket chain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Drugstore chain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Convenience store chain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Other (specify)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Business</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Address</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name of Contact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Title</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telephone Number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Stores</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Locations of stores (cities, counties)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Products to Be Consigned:</th>
<th>Estimated Number per Month*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ATM sheetlets of 18 37-cent stamps ($6.66)</td>
<td>___</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Booklets of 20 37-cent stamps ($7.40 each)</td>
<td>___</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Booklets of 10 37-cent stamps ($3.70 each)</td>
<td>___</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rolls of 100 37-cent stamps ($37 each)</td>
<td>___</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pad of Express Mail stamps ($)</td>
<td>___</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pad of Priority Mail stamps ($)</td>
<td>___</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Booklet of 10 postcard stamps ($)</td>
<td>___</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* For an initial estimate, assume that the supermarket chain has a potential of at least two booklets of 20 stamps a month for each $1,000 monthly sales.
153.215 **Implement the Program**

The Post Office nearest the consignee’s main office or warehouse manages the day-to-day operation of the contract. The Post Office orders stamps from the SDO before shipment to the consignee or pickup is scheduled. Post Offices with consignment agreements may order stamps more than once per accounting period. For a large retailer, orders are delivered to the consignee’s regional warehouse. To make the program cost-effective for the Postal Service, deliver the stamps to a single delivery point and have the consignee distribute boxes or cartons to its own outlets. When a consignee replenishes stamps, accept payment by corporate check (payable to “Postmaster”) to the Post Office where the agreement is held and in accordance with the contracted consignment period. Record payment to AIC 095 on PS Form 1412-A, *Daily Financial Form*, at the replenishing office. Each postal quarter, analyze the activity for each agreement to ensure that the Postal Service is receiving revenue in a timely manner. This analysis is conducted as follows:

a. Step 1: Total all replenishment sales.
b. Step 2: Multiply the total consignment amount by the number of consignment periods (three for 30 days or two for 45 days) in the quarter.
c. Step 3: Divide the total replenishment sales from Step 1 by the results from Step 2.
d. Step 4: The results must fall between 80 percent and 120 percent. Any consignment outside these parameters indicates a need to renegotiate or terminate the agreement. Percentages of less than 80 percent show that the consignee has too much stock and could be selling without replenishment. Return stock to the SDO and reduce the amount consigned. Percentages greater than 120 percent show that the consignee is having to replenish too often. Before any consignment levels are increased, the above analysis must be completed. An increase in subconsignees is not sufficient justification to increase consignment levels.

**Note:** It is important to monitor each agreement regularly to ensure compliance.

153.216 **Promote the Program**

Both the Postal Service and the consignee should promote the program; however, the Postal Service and the consignee must advertise separately and bear the cost separately. Customer awareness and use of Stamps on Consignment can be increased by the following activities:

a. Selling stamps at the checkout counter.
b. Posting highly visible door and cash register decals. The larger size, Label 226-A, *Stamps To Go Door Decal*, approximately 9 inches square, is for window and wall display. The smaller size, Label 226-B, *Easy Stamp Cash Register Decal*, approximately 3-3/4 inches square, is for display at cash registers. These decals can be requisitioned from the material distribution centers.
c. Advertising through direct mailings to postal customers. The Postal Service will not conduct a free mailing for one retailer, but may disseminate a generic mailer listing all of the stores in the area that are in the Stamps on Consignment program. Designs for mailing pieces should be cleared at the national Headquarters level.

d. Periodically sending press releases to local television and radio stations and newspapers. The district will issue press releases announcing stamp availability at the retailer when a consignment agreement is signed. The basic message will be that stamps are now available at a new retailer in addition to other store locations. Periodically, the retail specialist should issue press releases reminding the public that stamps are available at a number of local retailers, and include the names of all the retailers in the copy.

e. Advertising through local newspapers and radio stations. The Postal Service will provide reproducible artwork of its logo for retailer advertisements. The advertisements should be cleared at the Headquarters level before publication, to ensure that they are in keeping with the image of the Postal Service.

153.217 **Monitor the Agreement**

It is important that the Postal Service provide the retailer with timely stamp deliveries and support and that the retailer provide a high quality of service that reflects well upon the Postal Service. Therefore, monitor all consignment agreements each month to ensure that stamps are made available to the retailer on time and that the retailer is reimbursing the Postal Service as specified in the agreement.

After the first 6 months of the agreement, contact the retailer for feedback and to demonstrate Postal Service interest in an effective program. If appropriate, schedule a meeting. Followup is critical to the success of the program.

153.218 **Evaluate the Program**

Review consignment activity regularly to determine how the overall program is performing relative to expectations and to determine what improvements are needed. Information that should be reviewed includes the following:

a. Revenues: total for program and for each consignee.

b. Postal Service costs.

c. Customer and retailer feedback.

153.22 **Contracting Officer**

The contracting officer (CO) must sign all consignment agreements. Personnel from Alternative Retail Services at Headquarters will support negotiations to obtain the endorsement of the retailer’s national office. When this endorsement is obtained, or if there is no national or regional office, agreements can be executed at the local level. In addition to the original, the CO must make six copies of the consignment agreement (see Exhibit 153.12). The CO retains the original and distributes the remaining as follows: One copy goes to the main stock of the Post Office to support PS Form 8047-X, Stamps
on Consignment Replenishment and Analysis Record. One copy is for the retailer. One copy is submitted to the stamp distribution office (SDO) for entry into the STAMPS system. One copy is for the replenishment unit. One copy is for the Customer Service Support Office in the district file, and one copy is sent to:

SOC MANAGER
ALTERNATIVE RETAIL SERVICES
US POSTAL SERVICE
475 L'ENFANT PLAZA SW RM 8430
WASHINGTON DC 20260-2417

153.23 Main Stock Custodian

The main stock custodian completes PS Form 8047-X, Stamps on Consignment Replenishment and Analysis Record (see Exhibit 153.23a), and enters “consignment” as the explanation and the number of booklets or coils consigned in the balance column. Only when an agreement is amended or terminated will the balance of stamp products be changed. In these cases SDO must be notified. The main stock custodian enters the number of each item type consigned by the Post Office on a separate PS Form 3295, Daily Record of Stamps, Stamped Paper and Nonpostal Stamps on Hand (see Exhibit 153.23b).

153.24 Retail Clerk

Upon termination of the agreement, the consignee must return all stamp products or the equivalent funds to the Post Office immediately. The retail clerk returns booklets and coils in full boxes or cartons to salable stock and records loose booklets and coils as nonsalable stock. The clerk receives the funds for the stamp products consigned but not returned and a PS Form 17, Stamp Requisition, in duplicate, indicating the value of those stamps. The retail clerk then does the following:

a. Signs the original PS Form 17 and returns it to the main stock custodian.

b. Completes the transactions and enters on PS Form 1412-A the amount from the duplicate PS Form 17 in Stamps Received (account identifier code (AIC) 841), and Consignment Replenishment Sales (AIC 095).

c. Enters the funds for the booklets not returned in Cash Remitted (AIC 751 or 752).

d. If equivalent funds have not been paid, enters the PS Form 17 amount in Miscellaneous Suspense, Awaiting Collection (AIC 761).

e. Enters the amount of stock received to AIC 841, prepares a PS Form 17 for this stock, and submits it to the main stock custodian.
Exhibit 153.23a
PS Form 8047-X, Stamps on Consignment Replenishment and Analysis Record

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Product:</th>
<th>Consignor Telephone Number:</th>
<th>Consignee Name:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Replenishment Amount</th>
<th>Replenishment Date</th>
<th>Explanation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

PS Form 8047-X, November 1998
### Exhibit 153.23b (p. 1)

**PS Form 3295, Daily Record of Stamps, Stamped Paper and Nonpostal Stamps on Hand**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Balance</th>
<th>Comment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Exhibit 153.23b (p. 2)

**PS Form 3295, Daily Record of Stamps, Stamped Paper and Nonpostal Stamps on Hand**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date (1)</th>
<th>Quantity (2) Received</th>
<th>Value (3)</th>
<th>Quantity (4) Issued</th>
<th>Value (5)</th>
<th>Balance (6)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
153.3 **Revenue Allocation**

In cases where a consignment agreement covers retail units located in more than one five-digit ZIP Code area, during the first calendar year the revenue goes to the district that establishes the agreement. After the first year, consignment revenue will be allocated to the five-digit ZIP Code where the stamps are sold. Districts are responsible for submitting, on a quarterly basis, a revenue allocation report containing sales by five-digit ZIP Code for each consignment agreement in existence for 1 year or longer, with sales in multiple ZIP Codes. Send the report to:

SOC ALLOCATION
ALTERNATIVE RETAIL SERVICES
US POSTAL SERVICE
475 L’ENFANT PLAZA SW RM 8430
WASHINGTON DC  20260-2417

154 **Stamps by Automated Teller Machine**

154.1 **Description**

The newest Easy Stamp service allows a customer to purchase stamps at a bank automated teller machine (ATM). The stamps became available nationally in October 1992. Stamps may be purchased through the standard Stamps on Consignment contract or purchased outright.

154.2 **Responsibilities**

See 153.2, Responsibilities. Retail Specialists should notify the Alternative Retail Services office at Headquarters 60 days prior to a bank coming on-line. This can be accomplished by telephone or in writing. Information should include the name, district, and telephone number of the Retail Specialist; name and address of the bank, bank contact name, telephone number, number of ATMs the bank has, the number of ATMs dispensing stamps, type of ATM machine(s), the amount of transaction charged (if any); name and address of Post Office to issue stamp stock; and estimated usage per consignment period or month. Send to:

ATM PROGRAM
ALTERNATIVE RETAIL SERVICES
US POSTAL SERVICE
475 L’ENFANT PLAZA SW RM 4347E
WASHINGTON DC  20260-6809

154.3 **Revenue Allocation**

Refer to 153.3.
16 Consumer Services

161 Overview

A key to effective retail management and delivery services in the Postal Service is a responsive working relationship with the public. The public expects timely and consistent service at affordable rates. The Customer Satisfaction Index (CSI) indicates that prompt response to and resolution of customer complaints will increase customer satisfaction with the complaint handling process. The Customer Satisfaction Index, as well as complaints received by telephone, letter, e-mail, facsimile mail, or in person, points out areas where the Postal Service receives low marks from customers and where service needs improvement. Customers also suggest ways to better meet their needs, as well as offer positive feedback for superior service.

162 Scope

The following, or their designees, are responsible for implementing these requirements and for informing assigned personnel about local procedures for responding to or forwarding comments received from customers:

a. Headquarters Consumer Affairs.
b. Vice presidents, Area Operations.
c. Customer Service and Sales district managers.
d. Plant managers.
e. Consumer Affairs and Claims managers.
f. Postmasters and station or branch managers.
g. Postal employees delegated responsibility for handling complaints.

163 Source of Complaints

The Postal Service receives complaints, compliments, suggestions, and requests for information from business and residential customers through:

a. Personal contact, telephone, e-mail, and fax.
b. Written correspondence, including customer surveys (e.g., the Customer Satisfaction Index).
c. Headquarters to field referrals (customer correspondence initially directed to the Postmaster General or the Consumer Advocate, then reassigned to the field for resolution).
d. Inquiries from the legislative and executive branches of the federal, state, and local governments.
Responsibility

164.1 Headquarters Management

Headquarters Consumer Affairs is responsible for establishing requirements and measuring compliance with complaint handling and complaint resolution procedures contained in Management Instruction PO-160-2002-1, Complaint Resolution and Proper Use of Notice 4314-C, We Want to Know.

164.2 Field Management

The following managers must ensure compliance with comment and complaint resolution procedures and resolve complaints within their areas of responsibility:

a. Vice presidents, Area Operations.
b. District managers.
c. Plant managers.
d. Consumer Affairs and Claims managers.
e. Postmasters and station or branch managers.

164.3 Consumer Affairs and Claims Managers

Consumer Affairs and Claims managers must also do the following:

a. Monitor activity throughout their respective districts for compliance with comment and complaint resolution procedures.
b. Refer customer complaints to the appropriate functional areas for resolution.
c. Establish and maintain a customer complaint file.

164.4 Postmasters and Station or Branch Managers

Postmasters and station or branch managers must also do the following:

a. Ensure that their offices comply with comment and complaint resolution procedures.
b. Ensure that all employees coming in contact with the public on a regular basis (e.g., retail clerks, city and rural carriers, supervisors, installation managers) have available at their workstations enough Notice 4314-C, We Want To Know, for customers.
c. Prominently display Notice 4314-C in lobbies and box sections, business mail entry units, and other customer service areas at all times.
d. Maintain one or more customer complaint logs (see 165.3).
e. Investigate and take corrective action to resolve complaints by contacting and working with other functional areas of the Postal Service, if necessary, to resolve customer complaints.
f. Establish and maintain a complaint file.

Note: Other postal employees, especially retail clerks, are to provide the customer with a Notice 4314-C or refer the customer to the appropriate functional area.
165 Procedures

165.1 Time Frames
Follow the procedures in the chart below to ensure that the necessary actions are performed within the indicated time frames:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time Frame</th>
<th>Action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Initial Contact</td>
<td>Within 24 hours after receiving comment or complaint. Acknowledge comment or complaint by preprinted postcard, letter, telephone call, or personal contact with the customer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Response</td>
<td>Within 14 calendar days after receiving comment or complaint. Send a final response to the customer by telephone, letter, or personal contact. The final response must be comprehensive and either describe how the problem was or will be corrected, or explain why the problem cannot be corrected.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

165.2 Exception to Final Response Requirement
The final response time discussed above does not apply to complaints requiring issuance of a publication watch for daily, weekly, and monthly newspapers or magazines. All other requirements do apply. Process the publication watch in accordance with Management Instruction PO-440-88-4, Publication Watch — Revised Form and Procedures, dated 10/21/88. The time frames for responding to these complaints are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Publication</th>
<th>Final Response Due</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Daily</td>
<td>Within 35 days after complaint received.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weekly</td>
<td>Within 45 days after complaint received.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monthly</td>
<td>Within 75 days after complaint received.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

165.3 Maintaining Customer Complaint Control Log
Maintain one or more customer complaint control logs at every office to ensure timely response to customer complaints and to facilitate routine analysis of complaint activity. Include the following information in the customer complaint control log:

- Office name and ZIP Code.
- Customer name.
- Company name, if applicable.
- Customer address.
- Customer telephone number.
- Subject of complaint or comment.
  - Type of 24-hour acknowledgement (e.g., telephone, letter, postcard, personal).
  - Type of final response (e.g., telephone, letter, personal).
- Date received.
- Suspense date.
- Assignment of responsibility for suspense and resolution of the complaint.
- Date closed.

*Note:* See Exhibit 165.3.
Exhibit 165.3

Customer Complaint Control Log

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ZIP Code</th>
<th>Date Closed</th>
<th>Date Assigned To</th>
<th>Date Submitted</th>
<th>Date Received</th>
<th>Date Initial</th>
<th>Date Final</th>
<th>Control No. (GSC)</th>
<th>Office Name</th>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Phone No.</th>
<th>Customer or Company Information</th>
<th>Address</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
### Complaint Resolution

#### Complaints Resolved Immediately

If a comment or complaint received over the telephone or in person is resolved immediately, document the contact in the customer complaint control log.

#### Further Investigation Required

When local postal management cannot resolve a complaint or comment, the employee provides the customer with a Notice 4314-C, *We Want to Know*. The customer then can choose from the three options on 4314-C.

### Processing Complaints

#### Complaints Made in Person

When local postal management cannot resolve a complaint or comment, the employee provides the customer with a Notice 4314-C, *We Want to Know*. The customer then can choose from the three options on 4314-C.

#### Processing a Written Complaint

Transfer all vital information from the customer’s letter to the customer complaint control log.

#### Processing a Complaint Made by Telephone

Document all vital information of the customer’s complaint in the customer complaint control log.

### Headquarters to Field Referrals

The following procedures and duties apply to administrative handling of complaints:

a. The Consumer Affairs and Claims manager is responsible for transferring information from customer correspondence to the customer complaint control log, for assigning the suspense date, and for ensuring that appropriate response is made within 14 days from the date the district office received the complaint.

b. Field offices must respond within the assigned suspense date established by the Consumer Affairs and Claims manager.

c. Acknowledgment will have been made by Headquarters within 24 hours.

### Government Inquiries

Process inquiries from legislative and executive branch officials as follows:

a. Follow procedures in ASM 338.

b. Process inquiries regarding service to a postal customer in the area served as written correspondence. These inquiries must receive prompt and conscientious attention.
Right of Appeal

Dissatisfied Customers
Advise dissatisfied customers that using the methods on Notice 4314-C, We Want To Know, doesn't exhaust their opportunity to have the Postal Service consider their complaints and that they may also address their complaints in writing directly to:
CONSUMER ADVOCATE
U S POSTAL SERVICE
475 L’ENFANT PLAZA SW RM 5801
WASHINGTON DC  20260-2200

Suits Against Postal Service
Advise customers who indicate that they may sue the Postal Service or postal employees or officers that the court in which they file suit may require them first to appeal their complaints in writing to Postal Service Headquarters before the court will consider the matter.

Customer Contact Guidelines

General
This section provides guidance on how to handle complaints effectively. It does not provide final answers. Absolute rules cannot be established for handling complaints. In each case, judgments must be based on the specific circumstances of how the problem can best be resolved. Each complaint should be given individual treatment. Every individual complaint is important to the customer and to our organization. Not only can a complaint to the Postal Service identify operational problems, it also provides an opportunity to turn a dissatisfied customer into an understanding, informed, and satisfied consumer. Conveying a concerned attitude is an underlying factor in successfully resolving complaints. The general recommended approach is to follow these guidelines:

a. If the problem was the fault of the Postal Service, an apology should be automatic. To the customer, the person answering the complaint represents the entire Postal Service. The customer should be advised that the Postal Service regrets any inconvenience.

b. The customer is entitled to know why there was a problem. The customer has, after all, paid for a service that apparently was not received. Most people are responsive to a reasonable explanation.

c. It is the responsibility of the Postal Service to inform customers of the proper application and use of postal rules and regulations. A customer may well have misunderstood them and should not be criticized for any lack of knowledge in this respect. If possible, explain why the rule or regulation is in effect.

d. Impress upon the customer that the Postal Service is taking steps to see that the problem does not occur again.
e. The customer is helping the Postal Service by complaining. A complaint suggests where improvements can be made and helps to spotlight little problems before they become big ones.

f. Let the customer know that the Postal Service wants to be of help and that we encourage further contact if there are any problems in the future. Emphasize to the customer our concern about the quality of mail service.

**Note:** If a particularly difficult problem is encountered, consult higher level management about the best way to handle the complaint. A trained Consumer Affairs manager is available in each district to provide additional assistance.

### 167.2 Receiving Complaints

#### 167.21 In Person

Employees should always greet customers courteously, introducing themselves by name and title. Personal visits (walk-in customers) usually involve critical, time-sensitive issues that require immediate action. General guidelines for handling customers include the following:

a. Discuss the customer’s mail problem in a private, uncluttered area, away from the public.

b. Ask the customer to be seated. Make the customer comfortable, and let the customer explain the problem without unnecessary interruptions. Accept whatever evidence the customer offers to substantiate the complaint.

c. Tell the customer how long you think it will take to get back with some answers if the problem cannot be resolved immediately. Describe the actions you plan to take. Do not make promises or guarantees that you may not be able to keep.

#### 167.22 By Telephone

Employees should always answer telephone calls promptly, courteously, and clearly. The standard greeting and closing for all incoming telephone calls include the following:

a. Greet callers in a courteous and professional manner using an appropriate greeting (“Good morning,” “Good afternoon,” or “Good evening”).

b. Identify the office, department, or functional area.

c. Identify yourself by name.

d. Offer assistance (e.g., “May I help you?”).

e. If accusations are made that are known to be unfounded, remain calm. It is better for the customer to express dissatisfaction to the Postal Service than it is for the Postal Service to express dissatisfaction to the public. The Postal Service then has the opportunity to begin correcting the problem.

f. Before closing each inquiry, thank the customer for calling and offer to be of further assistance should the need arise.
167.23 **By Fax**

Customer contacts by fax are usually critical in nature and require the following immediate action:

a. Acknowledge receipt of fax by telephone whenever possible.
b. Clarify the problem and obtain any additional information needed to investigate the complaint.

167.24 **By Letter**

Postal employees responsible for handling written customer complaints must acknowledge receipt within 24 hours by preprinted postcard, letter, telephone call, or personal contact.

167.3 **Responding to Customer Comments and Complaints**

167.31 **General**

A delay in responding to customer comments or complaints will only add to a customer's dissatisfaction. A quick response, on the other hand, lets the customer know that the Postal Service cares. Customer comments and complaints can be addressed in person, by telephone, or by letter.

167.32 **In Person**

Postal employees responsible for responding in person to customer complaints should do the following:

a. Upon completion of the investigation, you may arrange an appointment with the customer to discuss the results of the investigation.
b. Thank the customer for bringing the matter to our attention and offer assistance in the future.

167.33 **By Telephone**

Postal employees who are responsible for responding by telephone to customer complaints should proceed as follows:

a. Upon completion of the investigation, telephone customers to inform them of the findings. Some customer problems can be answered best by letter, but in many cases a simple telephone call will suffice. Be friendly and informative. Discuss the findings with the customer.
b. Close the conversation by thanking the customer for bringing the matter to our attention and offer assistance in the future.

167.34 **By Letter**

Postal employees who are responsible for responding in writing to customer complaints should proceed as follows:

a. Upon completion of the investigation, write to customers to inform them of the findings. Responses should be concise, grammatically correct, and address the customer’s concerns. Assistance may be obtained from the district Consumer Affairs and Claims manager.
b. The written response must be comprehensive and either correct the problem or explain to the customer why the problem cannot be corrected.

c. Written responses should close with a paragraph thanking the customer for bringing the matter to our attention and offering assistance in the future.

d. All responses should be typed, without error, and prepared on official Postal Service stationery.

e. If the complaint was referred by another or higher level office, provide the originating office with a copy of your letter or report so that the case can be closed at that level.

168 Measurement of Effectiveness and Benefits

168.1 Effectiveness

Consumer Affairs monitors the quality and timeliness of complaint resolution by conducting reviews of the following:

a. Customer Satisfaction Index.

b. Consumer Affairs field audits.

c. Periodic reports from the Consumer Affairs Tracking System.

168.2 Benefits

The Postal Service expects these benefits from reviewing the complaint resolution process:

a. To improve customer satisfaction with the complaint handling process.

b. To establish accountability for effective resolution of customer complaints.

c. To identify and correct service deficiencies that cause complaints.

Note: Postal Service managers are never to be criticized or disciplined based solely on the number of complaints reported.

169 Other Consumer Services

169.1 General

Report of Postal offenses and requests for information regarding the mistreatment of mail are handled as outlined in the following sections.

169.2 Reporting Postal Offenses

Follow instructions contained in DMM G011 for customer reporting, or in ASM 22 for employee reporting. When criminal or serious postal offenses are indicated or suspected, discuss allegations with the Inspection Service. Report immediately any of the following unlawful acts to the Postal Inspection Service:

a. Theft of mail from any authorized mail receptacle.

b. Obstruction, interception, tampering, or rifling of mail.
c. Damage or vandalism to mail receptacles.
d. Possible theft, raising the amount (alteration), or counterfeiting of money orders.
e. Assaults on customers by employees or information concerning assaults on employees.
f. Attempts to manipulate or defeat postal currency changers or postal vending machine equipment.
g. Receipt of obscene correspondence or advertising material from foreign or domestic sources.
h. Presence of narcotics and dangerous drugs in the mail.
i. Libelous, threatening, or extortive correspondence.
j. Presence of concealable firearms, switchblade knives, motor vehicle master keys, intoxicants, poisons, chemicals, inflammable materials, abortifacients, and contraceptives in the mail.
k. Complaints pertaining to customers’ failure to receive merchandise or services ordered by mail.
l. Complaints pertaining to customers alleged to have been defrauded by schemes through use of the mail.

169.3 Requests for Information Regarding the Mistreatment of Mail

*Mistreatment of mail* is a general term that encompasses loss, rifling, and damage to mail. Encourage customers to report instances of mistreatment of mail, even for cases with no provision for payment of indemnity. The particular form and procedure for reporting mistreated mail depends on such factors as the type and content of the mail and the origin of the complaint or discovery. Exhibit 169.3 summarizes these distinctions and provides references to more detailed explanations. The forms needed to process customer complaints and to make reports regarding mistreated mail include the following:

a. Label 97, *Rifled Parcel*.
b. PS Form 673, *Report of Rifled Parcel*.
c. PS Form 1000, *Domestic Claim or Registered Mail Inquiry*.
d. PS Form 1510, *Mail Loss/Rifling Report*.
e. PS Form 3760, *Parcel Search Request*. 
Exhibit 169.3
Mistreated Mail Reference Table

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mail Description</th>
<th>Form Used</th>
<th>Instruction/Reference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>A. Inquiries/Complaints Initiated by Customers</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Government Checks</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Advise customers to contact the issuing agency.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Serious Losses</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Report to inspector-in-charge. See 169.2.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Federal Income Tax Related Mail:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Ordinary and Registered</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Advise customers to contact the field office of the Internal Revenue Service for their area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Certified Mail</td>
<td>PS Form 1510</td>
<td>See 169.5.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Mail Exchanged within the United States:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Ordinary</td>
<td>PS Form 1510</td>
<td>See 169.5.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Registered</td>
<td>PS Form 1000</td>
<td>See DMM.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Insured</td>
<td>PS Form 1000</td>
<td>See DMM.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Certified Mail</td>
<td>PS Form 1510</td>
<td>See 169.5.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. COD</td>
<td>PS Form 1000</td>
<td>See DMM.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Mail Exchanged with Canada:</td>
<td></td>
<td>See IMM, Chapter 9.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Ordinary</td>
<td>PS Form 542</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Registered:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1) Loss</td>
<td>PS Form 542</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2) Damage/Rifling</td>
<td>PS Form 2855</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Insured</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Certified Mail</td>
<td>None</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. COD</td>
<td>None</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Mail Exchanged with Countries other than Canada:</td>
<td></td>
<td>See IMM, Chapter 9.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Ordinary</td>
<td>PS Form 542</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Registered:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1) Loss</td>
<td>PS Form 542</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2) Damage/Rifling</td>
<td>PS Form 542</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Insured:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1) Loss</td>
<td>PS Form 542</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2) Damage/Rifling</td>
<td>PS Form 2855</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Certified Mail</td>
<td>None</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. COD</td>
<td>None</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>B. Damages Discovered by Postal Service</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Parcels separated from wrapper</td>
<td>PS Form 3760</td>
<td>See 169.3.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Parcels, rifled</td>
<td>PS Form 673</td>
<td>See 169.3.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Label 97</td>
<td>See 169.3.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* This service is not available.
**169.4 Other Requests for Information (Inquiries and Claims)**

Formal inquiries concerning claims, tracers, refunds, or postal offenses must be reported in accordance with instructions contained in DMM P014 and S010 for customer reporting, and ASM 22 for employee reporting. For requests concerning Registered Mail articles, insurance, money orders, and nondelivery of mail, the appropriate forms follow:

a. PS Form 542, *Inquiry About a Registered Article or an Insured Parcel or an Ordinary Article*.

b. PS Form 1000, *Domestic Claim or Registered Mail Inquiry*.

c. PS Form 1510, *Mail Loss/Rifling Report*.

d. PS Form 2855, *Claim for Indemnity — International Registered, Insured, and Express Mail*.

e. PS Form 6401, *Money Order Inquiry*.

**169.5 PS Form 1510, Mail Loss/Rifling Report**

**169.51 General**

If a consumer alleges loss, nonreceipt, or theft of mail, or that mail appears to have been tampered with, complete a PS Form 1510, *Mail Loss/Rifling Report*.

**169.52 Description**

**169.521 Use**

PS Form 1510 is a five-page form that consists of parts I through VI. It is used to process inquiries for ordinary, Delivery Confirmation, and Certified Mail.

**169.522 Initiation**

PS Form 1510 may be initiated by either the sender or addressee by telephone or personal visit to any Post Office.

**169.523 Time Frame**

In cases involving alleged loss, filers should use good judgment to ensure that sufficient time has elapsed for the article to have been delivered.

**169.53 Completion**

**169.531 General Instructions**

Postal Service employees complete PS Form 1510, except when firm mailers have been supplied copies of PS Form 1510 for completion. The procedure for filing is as follows:

a. To expedite processing, please print the information on the form using a ballpoint ink pen. Typing is not necessary. Press firmly and print legibly. All of the information required on the form must be entered.

b. Send the top copy to the local Inspection Service Operations Support Group (ISOSG) for your area (see Exhibit 169.53).

c. If the complaint indicates rifling, obtain the envelope or wrapper (if possible) and forward it with PS Form 1510 to the ISOSG that serves the affected area (originating or destinating).

d. If the complaint is made at stations, branches, or the main office, send the remaining parts of the form to the main office, Claims and Inquiry Section.
e. Part VI of PS Form 1510 is not a delivery receipt. If a firm mailer appears to be using the form to verify delivery, notify the local inspector-in-charge.

f. In cases involving multiple riflings or losses, complete a separate PS Form 1510 for each incident.

**Note:** PS Forms 1510 printed before April 1992 are obsolete and must not be used.

Exhibit 169.53

**Distribution of PS Form 1510, Mail Loss/Rifling Report**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Serves Eastern Area:</th>
<th>Serves Northeast Area:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>US POSTAL INSPECTION SERVICE OPERATIONS SUPPORT GROUP</td>
<td>US POSTAL INSPECTION SERVICE OPERATIONS SUPPORT GROUP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 BALA PLAZA E 300</td>
<td>TWO GATEWAY CTR 9TH FL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BALA CYNWYD PA 19004-9000</td>
<td>NEWARK NJ 07175-0001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telephone: 610-668-4500</td>
<td>Telephone: 201-693-4500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delaware (DE)</td>
<td>Ohio (OH)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District of Columbia (DC)</td>
<td>Pennsylvania (PA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kentucky (KY)</td>
<td>South Carolina (SC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maryland (MD)</td>
<td>Virginia (VA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Carolina (NC)</td>
<td>West Virginia (WV)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Serves Southern Area:</th>
<th>Serves Western Area:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>US POSTAL INSPECTION SERVICE OPERATIONS SUPPORT GROUP</td>
<td>US POSTAL INSPECTION SERVICE OPERATIONS SUPPORT GROUP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>225 N HUMPHREYS BLVD 4TH FL S</td>
<td>PO BOX 9000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEMPHIS TN 38161-9001</td>
<td>SOUTH SAN FRANCISCO CA 94083-9000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telephone: 901-747-7700</td>
<td>Telephone: 415-794-6300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alabama (AL)</td>
<td>Mississippi (MS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arkansas (AR)</td>
<td>Oklahoma (OK)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Florida (FL)</td>
<td>Tennessee (TN)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Georgia (GA)</td>
<td>Texas (TX)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Louisiana (LA)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alaska (AK)</td>
<td>Montana (MT)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arizona (AZ)</td>
<td>Nevada (NV)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>California (CA)</td>
<td>New Mexico (NM)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hawaii (HI)</td>
<td>Oregon (OR)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Idaho (ID)</td>
<td>Washington (WA)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Serves Central Area: |  |
|----------------------|  |
| US POSTAL INSPECTION SERVICE OPERATIONS SUPPORT GROUP |  |
| 222 S RIVERSIDE PLAZA STE 1250 |  |
| CHICAGO IL 60606-6100 |  |
| Telephone: 312-669-5650 |  |
| Canada | Missouri (MO) |
| Colorado (CO) | Nebraska (NE) |
| Illinois (IL) | North Dakota (ND) |
| Indiana (IN) | South Dakota (SD) |
| Iowa (IA) | Utah (UT) |
| Kansas (KS) | Wisconsin (WI) |
| Michigan (MI) | Wyoming (WY) |
| Minnesota (MN) |  |
17 Public Services

171 Voter Registration, Polling, and Absentee Balloting

171.1 Voter Registration

Voter registration may be conducted on postal premises only with the approval of the postmaster. A postmaster may approve voter registration requests provided that all of the following conditions are met:

a. The registration must be conducted by government agencies or nonprofit civic leagues or organizations that operate for the promotion of social welfare but do not participate or intervene in any political campaign on behalf of any candidate for any public office.

b. Absolutely no partisan or political literature is available, displayed, or handed out. This includes photographs, cartoons, and other likenesses of elected officials and candidates for public office.

c. Voter registration is permitted only in those areas of the postal premises regularly open to the public.

d. The registration must not interfere with the conduct of usual postal business, postal customers, or postal operations.

e. The organization will provide and be responsible for any equipment and supplies.

f. No contributions are solicited.

g. Access to the workroom floor is prohibited.

h. Voter registration activities do not become permanent but are limited to an appropriate period before an election.

171.2 Polling

171.21 Approval and Criteria

Approval to use postal premises as a polling place is given by the Postmaster General or designee. A request to use a postal facility will be considered only if the facility is the only reasonable available place for voting in the area and the following conditions are met:

a. The facility must be used as is and must not be materially altered to accommodate machines, voters, or workers.

b. The Postal Service will not provide any assistance in the installation or removal of items needed for voting or in the polling process itself.

c. Voting must not interfere with normal postal business.

d. Voter entrances and exits must be arranged to ensure the security of the mail.

e. Workroom floor space may not be used for voting.

f. Local law enforcement officials must agree in advance to enforce Postal Service regulations governing conduct on postal premises and all applicable state and local laws during the voting.
The state or local government must agree in advance to reimburse any costs incurred by the Postal Service for additional security, utilities, or building operations necessary to allow the use of the facility for voting.

There must be an absolute prohibition against the display or distribution of any political literature, badges, insignia, or posters on Postal Service premises, including parking areas. This provision does not deprive employees of their rights as stated in Employee and Labor Relations Manual (ELM) 663.1.

Requests
Submit polling requests to Retail Operations, Headquarters, through the area manager, Customer Service Support, no fewer than 60 days before the election. A request must include complete details addressing each of the above conditions and a statement that there are no suitable nonpostal facilities available. These procedures are intended to provide for the use of postal premises where they are truly needed for voting and, at the same time, to ensure that there is no disruption of postal services.

Absentee Balloting Materials Not to Be Detained
Except as provided in ASM 274, absentee balloting materials must not be detained or treated as unpaid mail. The materials must be promptly dispatched and delivered to the addressees. Questions about possible abuse or impropriety must be referred to the RCSCs.

Selective Service Registration

Purpose
To assist the Selective Service System (SSS) with its registration effort by providing space in lobbies of classified Post Offices, stations, and branches for registration materials. Contract postal units are not involved.

Scope
With only limited exceptions, the requirement to register with the SSS applies to all male U.S. citizens and male aliens aged 18 through 25 residing in the United States. That includes undocumented workers, recent parolees, and applicants for asylum. Handicapped men must also register.

Request for Materials
In the Interagency Agreement with SSS, the Postal Service agrees to stock, provide, and display Selective Service Registration forms and materials. The following is a list of the required registration materials that can be obtained through the material distribution center at Topeka, KS, and should always be available in the lobby.

a. SSS 1M, Registration Form.
b. SSS Form 2, Change Of Information.
c. SSS Lobby Poster 46, Read It. Fill It. Mail It.
d. SSS Display Box 45, Plastic Display Box.

Check stock several times a week to make sure adequate supplies of the SSS 1M, Registration Form, are on display at the service table areas or behind the counter.

*Note:* Order SSS/Postal Service Registration Handbook as needed by writing to:

SELECTIVE SERVICE SYSTEM (OPR)
1515 WILSON BLVD
ARLINGTON VA 22209-2425

SSS Brochure No. 10., Selective Service, will not be maintained in our lobbies and will no longer be available through the material distribution centers. Registrants may only request Brochure No. 10 by writing to:

CONSUMER INFORMATION CENTER
PUEBLO CO 81009-0001

172.4 Registration Procedures

There are just a few simple steps in the registration process:

a. Direct the prospective registrant to the counter display or the Display Box 45 at the service table area where he may retrieve an SSS 1M, Registration Form, which he uses to register. Or if forms are kept behind the counter, give him an SSS 1M, Registration Form, which he uses to register.

b. If asked by the prospective registrant, instruct him to complete the form according to the directions on the form and mail the form (with the proper postage) himself directly to Selective Service’s address shown on the SSS 1M.

c. If a prospective registrant has specific questions about registration, he should be directed to call Selective Service’s Information Office at 1-888-655-1825. All other inquirers may be directed to 1-847-688-6888.

173 Assistance to Government Agencies

173.1 Criteria

The Postal Service may assist federal agencies in making their services available to the public in areas where there is an unfulfilled need for such services and where they can be provided without detriment to postal operations. Such assistance is provided under terms and conditions, including reimbursability, as the Postal Service and the head of the agency concerned deem appropriate. The services may be provided by retail employees and through the use of postal lobbies.
173.2 **Types of Services**

A table of services provided by the public service assistance programs of the Postal Service may be found in the ASM, chapter 4. Some of these programs include the following:

b. Acceptance of passport applications.
c. Distribution of food coupons.

18 **Postage Meters**

181 **Licensing and Mailings**

181.1 **Description**

Postage meters are devices that can print one or more denominations of postage and display the amount of postage used and the amount remaining. A meter locks when no postage or minimal postage remains. A meter generally must be taken to the licensing Post Office to be reset by payment of additional postage. Avoiding the payment of postage by misusing a meter is punishable by law. DMM™ P030 contains the general rules governing the use of meters.

181.2 **Approved Meters**

Postage meters are available only by lease from authorized manufacturers as listed in DMM P030. The Postal Service holds manufacturers responsible for the control, operation, maintenance, and replacement of their meters.

181.3 **Licensing**

An applicant wanting to be licensed to lease and use a meter must provide an original signed PS Form 3601-A, *Application or Update for a License to Lease and Use Postage Meters*, to the Post Office where the applicant plans to deposit mail, to a meter manufacturer’s representative, or to the National Customer Support Center under the Centralized Meter Licensing System (CMLS). The procedures in DMM P030 must be followed for licensing meter customers, including the procedures for transferring and relocating meters.

181.4 **Meter Stamps**

Only the meter stamp designs authorized in DMM P030 may be used. Meter stamps must be legible and not overlap. Those that are illegible or overlapping do not count when determining postage paid. Fluorescent ink is mandatory for meter imprints on letter-size mail. When meter strips are to be printed on tape, Postal Service-approved tape must be used. DMM P030 contains standards for the content of the meter indicia (such as date of mailing and Post Office of mailing).
181.5 Mailings

Mailers must follow the appropriate standards for the class and rate of mail and those in DMM P030 when preparing metered mail for mailing, whether single-piece rate mailings or presorted or automation rate mailings.

182 Setting

182.1 General Standards

Before delivering a meter to the licensee, the meter manufacturer must take the meter to be set, sealed (if applicable), and checked into service by the Post Office where the meter is to be regularly set or examined, unless the meter is serviced through the on-site meter-setting program. DMM P030 contains the rules for setting meters.

182.2 Procedures

For updated instructions on meter setting, installation, withdrawal, and examination, Post Offices should refer to the Postal Bulletin or contact Metering Technology Management at Postal Service Headquarters at the following address:

METERING TECHNOLOGY MANAGEMENT
US POSTAL SERVICE
475 L’ENFANT PLZ SW
WASHINGTON DC 20260-6801