

CHAPTER 12-00  
MAIL AND RELATED SERVICES -- GENERAL

- 12-00-00 Purpose
  - 10 Policy
  - 20 **Responsibility** for Providing Mail and -Related Services

12-00-00 PURPOSE

Part 12 provides Departmental policy and procedures governing official mail and related services (such as mail and messenger) and payment for postal services. Details for local use of such services will, as necessary, be issued locally in Manual Guide form. Appropriate GSA and U.S. Postal Service publications **will be used.**

12-00-10 POLICY

- A. Centrally located mail facilities shall be established whenever economically feasible in each building or group of buildings for the receipt and dispatch of official mail.
- B. Mail and related services shall be used only in the conduct of official business.

12-00-20 RESPONSIBILITY FOR PROVIDING SERVICES

- A. The Office of Administration, Office of the **Secretary**, is responsible for providing Departmental policy and procedures relating to mail and related services. This office is also responsible for liaison with the U.S. **Postal Service and the** General Services Administration.
- B. The heads of operating agencies are responsible for providing services in their respective buildings. They are also responsible for HEW activities where their respective agency **is the principal** HEW tenant of multi-tenant buildings. The other tenants shall furnish such funds or manpower as are equitable.
- C. Officials in charge of HEW field installations shall maintain liaison with local post offices and will acquaint themselves with the services available from them and their local practices. Such liaison should assure that all **HEW** mail, printing and reproduction facilities **will keep** their systems compatible with mail flow in the postal service.

~~(12-0-20~~ continued)

- D. All contracts negotiated by HEW organizations with private mailers will stipulate that all HEW mailings produced by such contracts be prepared in compliance with current zip code pre-sort **requirements** and deposited in the appropriate city post office no later than **4:00** p.m. (see **HEW** Procurement Manual, paragraph 3-1.350).

CHAPTER 12-10  
MAIL AND MESSENGER SERVICES

12-10-00 Policy  
10 General Policy  
20 Incoming Mail  
30 Outgoing Mail  
40 Special Mail Services  
50 Messenger Services

12-10-00 PURPOSE

**This** chapter establishes Department policy for the provision of efficient, uniform and economical mail and messenger **services.**

12-10-10 GENERAL POLICY

- A. **Mail** reading in mail facilities should be limited to those pieces of mail that cannot otherwise be correctly routed, usually those which are improperly addressed.
- B. Mail delivery points should be established according to need by agreement between the customer organization and the head of the mail facility.
- C. Detailed local operating procedures should be supplemented as required by the maintenance and use of the Postal Manual - Chapter 1, Post Office Services/Domestic and Chapter 2, International Mail. Other Post Office and General Services Administration issues and guides should be used as appropriate.

12-10-20 INCOMING MAIL

- A. All incoming mail shall be **received** in the mail facility, opened when necessary, and routed according to the local mail routing guide. Normally, envelopes are attached **to** and routed with incoming communications.
- B. Registered and Certified mail shall be signed for **by** authorized mail room personnel upon delivery by the Post Office. Those employees, in turn, shall require the addressee to sign Form HEW-40 (Messenger Receipt Card) showing the date and **time** of receipt. (See Exhibit X12-10-1.)
- C. Air Mail and Special Delivery mail shall be handled in the same manner as first class mail. Mail that is tagged for immediate handling shall be promptly handled according to instructions on the tag.

(12-10-20-C continued)

Postal matter that is marked in such a manner as to indicate that the contents are intended solely for the addressee is not to be opened by anyone but the addressee. When any such material is opened inadvertently, it shall be resealed by the opening unit and marked "Opened in error" or some similar designation.

- E. Cash and negotiable instruments received shall be adequately controlled and safeguarded. A responsible employee shall be designated to enter in a log, as available, the name and address of the remitter and type and amount of receipts. Delivery of such receipts shall be made to an appropriate agent cashier or collections unit. Local instructions will be issued to supplement this policy, as required. Mail control activities such as date and time stamping of bids should be done by customer organizations rather than by the central mail facility. Mail Control Card HEW-73 and similar controls will be maintained at action points, as necessary. (See Exhibit 12-10-1.)

12-10-30 OUTGOING MAIL

- A. The most economical class and type of mail service consistent with the needs shall be used.
- B. All outgoing mail shall be forwarded to the central mail facility at regular intervals throughout the day to avoid peak loads at the end of the day. Official mail is not to be dropped into building mail slots.
- C. Regulations prohibit the inclusion of borders, markings, slogans or designs on mailing envelope labels, etc. Requests for exceptions shall be directed to the Office of Administration, Office of the Secretary.
- D. Because of the volume of Christmas mail, all bulk mailings of supplies, publications, books, forms or other printed matter should be withheld from the mails for the period December 1 through December 26 of each year.
- E. Consolidated Mailings. All first class mail directed to the same address shall be consolidated by the mail facility, and, as volume permits, dispatched in one envelope. Mail to installations for which consolidated mailings are authorized shall be forwarded to the mail facility in messenger envelopes. Mail facilities shall maintain preaddressed envelopes for consolidated mailings.
- F. Segregation by Type and Class of Service. Mail facilities shall segregate mailings according to type of mail and class of service desired and place in separate mail bags, properly labeled. Bags and labels may be obtained from the local post offices. Where there is insufficient material to warrant bagging separately, items intended for air mail and/or special delivery shall be tied separately, properly marked, and placed on top of bundles of ordinary letters.

- G. **Local and Out-of-Town.** To expedite handling by the Post Office, separate "Local" and "Out-of-Town" mail, and tie with addresses facing the same way. Labels for use on each type may be obtained from the local Post Office.
- H. **Perishable Biological Materials Via International Mail**
1. Perishable biological materials may be transmitted in the postal union mail only as letter packages (packages paid at letter rate having weight limit of four pounds, six ounces, except 60 pounds for Canada). These packages must bear distinctive violet labels. Labels will be furnished by the U.S. Postal Service to laboratories making written application. (See Chapter 2 of the Postal Manual for conditions, dimension restrictions, and list countries agreeing to accept materials.)
  2. Perishable biological materials may be transmitted by parcel post. See Directory of International Mail regarding individual agreements with various countries.
- I. **Envelopes, Cards, and Self-Mailers**
1. Standard size cards and envelopes, especially small envelopes, should be used whenever practicable. These are available through HEW ordering channels.
  2. Self-mailer type matter prepared without envelopes or wrappers must be sealed or secured so that it may be handled by machines, and otherwise conform to Post Office regulations.
  3. New types of mailing pieces not of standard format or design shall be submitted to the U.S. Postal Service for prior approval as to conformance with postal requirements. When prepared in Washington, D.C., a specimen shall be submitted to the Division of Mail Classification, Bureau of Operations, U.S. Postal Service. When prepared at a field office the specimen should be submitted to the local postmaster.
- J. **Postal Guidelines for Automatic Mail Processing**

Whenever possible, outgoing mail should be prepared in accordance with the "Guidelines for Preparing U.S. Government Mail," transmitted by the General Services Administration Bulletin FPMR-B-22. Optical Character recognition and other automatic processing equipment in the postal centers throughout the United States require the application of these guidelines.

(12-10-30)

K. Return Address Limitations

Return addresses on mail pieces, labels and the like, should not exceed five lines. If it is necessary to identify each component of a multiplex organization in a return address, this may be accomplished by entering the title of the department followed by the **action** office and followed by the organization code as indicated by Chapter 8-66 of the General Administration **Manual**.

L. Two Letter State Abbreviations

**Two** letter state abbreviations authorized by the U.S. Postal Service **are permissible** for use **on outgoing mail throughout** the **Department** when used in conjunction **with** the zip code. They are particularly applicable where space can be saved in the addresses contained in the various automated addressing systems and their output. They should not **be** used on letters **placed** in window envelopes.

12-10-40 MAIL CLASSES AND SERVICES

The four classes of mail and certain special services which may be used when necessary to modify their use **are** as follows:

A. Classes of Mail.

1. First-Class Mail. Use first-class for mail requiring the highest priority surface handling.
2. Second-Class Mail. Second-class mail is used for **newspapers and periodicals**. **The Department of HEW does not use this class.**
3. Third-Class Mail. Printed material and **parcels** weighing less than one pound **qualify** for third-class.
4. Fourth-Class Mail. Printed **material and** parcels weighing one pound and over **qualify** for fourth-class. Fourth-class is commonly referred to as **parcel** post.

To effect economy and a reduction in the **issuance** of SF-1103, Government Bills of Lading, the Comptroller General has directed **all agencies** to use parcel post for shipment of mailable Government materials. The use of freight or express shall be restricted to **materials** classed as **not** mailable and to shipments that exceed weight **and** size limits for **parcel** post. (See **Postal Manual**.)

- B. Special Mail Services. These services shall be kept at a minimum to avoid additional costs to the Government. If more detailed information is needed than that provided below, customer offices should consult with appropriate officials in **charge** of mail facilities. Requests for special mail services are **made** via Form **HEW-76**, Mailing Instructions.

Air Mail Service. Normally, this service is used when more than **24** hours time can be gained and where the distance is over **500** miles. Dispatching air mail on a **Thursday** or **Friday** is normally not feasible **if regular** mail will reach the destination on a **Monday**. Where the recipient is an organization that receives and processes mail on a **24** hour shift basis or operates seven days a week, exception would be in order.

Certified Mail Service. Certified mail service **is** used for **dispatch** where a record is needed of the **sending** and receipt of **important** papers such as certain legal or personnel documents. (See C below for uses.)

Insured Mail Service. Insured **mail** service is used for **parcel** post. Use minimum fee unless otherwise **required**.

Registered Mail Service. Registered mail service is used to protect valuable and **important** mail and provide evidence of delivery **and** receipt.

Return receipts shall be requested only when proof of delivery must be made a matter of record.

Special Delivery should be used only under exception & conditions, usually for mail requiring immediate action outside the Government agencies.

Special Handling provides the most **expeditious handling** available for fourth class mail only. It is not used for special delivery.

- C. The major **characteristics** of registered **and** certified **mail** services **are** as follows:

Registered Mail (postage at first-class or air mail rate must be paid).  
**Additional sealing** devices may be used but not over **inter-**sections of sealing flaps on envelopes.

Certified Mail (for **first-class** domestic use **only**).  
Lower special fee charged.  
**Must** be sealed. No **restriction** on additional sealing devices.

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Authenticated mailing receipt furnished sender by post office.	Mailing receipt prepared by sender.
Sender's return receipt service. <b>(Optional.)</b>	Same.
Restricted delivery service to addressee only. (Option&L.)	<b>Same.</b>
Complete mailing records kept at the Post Office recorded in transit and <b>separated</b> from other mail. Receives additional security <b>if warranted.</b>	No record kept at the Post Office. Not recorded in transit. <b>Handled</b> with first-class mail without separation.
Controlled at Post Office of address by charge-out to delivering employees.	Not <b>charged</b> to carriers. Carriers identify mail by endorsement rules governing.
Signed delivery kept two years by Post Office.	Seine.
Postal indemnity provided, subject to limitations of Government Losses <b>in</b> Shipment Act (5 U.S.C. <b>134, 134a-h</b> ) if <b>value</b> declared and fee for value paid. Indemnity not paid for articles mailed under " <b>Postage and Fees Paid</b> " reimbursement <b>arrangements.</b>	No indemnity provided.

12-10-50 MESSENGER SERVICES

- A. Regularly scheduled pickup and delivery **service** shall be provided for all offices of the **Department.** It shall:
1. Be of sufficient frequency to meet the operating needs of the offices served and minimize the need for special messenger services.
  2. **Provide an** even flow of incoming and outgoing communications throughout the regular workday.



- B. **Messenger** personnel shall be assigned to the central mail facility wherever possible so that assignment of routes will not be duplicated and manpower utilization will be more effective.
- c. Offices served by messengers shall provide one "IN" and one "OUT" box (plainly marked) for receipt and dispatch of communications.' These boxes shall be placed as **near** as possible to the entrance of the office which is to serve as the pickup and **delivery station.**
- D. Desk-to-desk distribution of *communications* within each office shall be the responsibility of respective offices. Whenever practicable, combined pickup and delivery stations shall be established for offices functionally related or occupying continuous interconnecting space.
- E. Urgent mail which must be dispatched after the last regular messenger pickup shall be delivered by the originating office or the clearance point to the mail facility for dispatching.
- F. Special messenger service shall be furnished, provided **mossengers** are **available,** the need is urgent, and regular service will not suffice.
- G. Duties assigned to messengers shall be in keeping with the mission of the central mail facilities. Requests for other services shall be referred to the mail room supervisor or other appropriate officials for resolution.
- H. Material distributed by the mail and messenger activities should normally be limited to communications sent or received in the conduct of Departmental or Agency business. The distribution material prepared by employee groups will be handled in accordance with the **HEW** Personnel Manual where it deals with "**Employee - Management Cooperation.**" Other material that is questionable should be brought to the attention of the mail room supervisor or other appropriate **officials.**



Form HEW-40 ("MESSENGER RECEIPT CARD")

HEW-40  
MESSENGER RECEIPT CARD

Date .....

Description .....

From .....

Addressed to .....

Building ..... Room No. ....

Time Received ..... Messenger.....

Time Delivered ..... Received by .....  
(Sign full name—Do not use initials)

Form HEW-73 ("MAIL CONTROL CARD") - 5-part Snapout

J3701  
U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFF. CE 1967 264 983

FROM:			CONTROL NO.
SUBJECT AND DATE:			DATE REC'O.
			DUE DATE
REFERRED (1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
DATE:			
REPLY SENT TO:			DATE RELEASED
REMARKS			ACKNOWLEDGED - DATE
			<input type="checkbox"/> NO ANSWER NEEDED
			<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLAIN IN REM'KS

HEW-73  
(REV. 3-66)

MAIL CONTROL SCHEDULE

REMOVE THIS COPY ONLY— DO NOT SEPARATE REMAINING COPIES



- 12-20-00 Purpose
  - 10 Definitions
  - 20 Use of Official Mailing Xndicia
  - 30 Use of Postage Stamps for Official Mail
  - 40 Payment for Postal Service

12-20-00 PURPOSE

This chapter establishes department policy for the use of official mailing indicia and provides instructions for the payment of postage fees on all official mail.

Reference: U.S. Postal Service Manual, Part 137, "Official Mail," and the U.S. Postal Service "Payment fcr Official Mail" current year.

12-20-10 DEFINITIONS

- A. Indicia mail is mail sent with the phrase "Postage and Fees Paid" substituting for a postage stamp on the envelope, mailing label, self-mailer, etc.
- B. Postal Service Unit (PSU) is an HEW unit or group of units whom the U.S. Postal Service has granted postal mailing code number. HEW Postal Service Units and their respective mailing code numbers are:

<u>Post21 Service Units</u>	<u>Mailing Code Number</u>
1. <u>Office of the Secretary</u> (includes): Office for Civil Rights	391
2. <u>Office of Human Development Services</u>	353
3. <u>Public Health Service</u> (includes): Office of Assistant Secretary for Health Alcohol, Drug Abuse, and Mental Health Administration Health Resources Administration Food and Drug Administration National Institutes of Health Health Services Administration Center for Disease Control	396

4. <u>Education Division</u> (includes):	395
Office of Assistant Secretary for Education	
National Center for Education Statistics	
Office of Education	
5. <u>National Institute of Education</u>	398
6. <u>Health Care Financing Administration</u>	392
7. <u>Social Security Administration</u>	397

#### 12-20-20 USE OF OFFICIAL MAILING INDICIA

- A. The term "official mail" applies **exclusively to** the business of the government of the United States. Any matter transmitted under an HEW indicia must pertain to official department business. Any other use is prohibited.

Each Postal Service Unit must have its mailing code number printed on all its indicia mail.

- B. Postal Service Units cannot use the mailing code number of another PSU.
- C. HEW employees responsible for the printing of indicia mail covers (envelopes, labels, cards, self-mailers, etc.) should **insure** that:
1. The approved eagle symbol, the HEW **indicia**, and the appropriate mailing code number are printed in the upper right corner of the address side, as shown below:



\*(insert appropriate mailing code number)

This marking must be printed. It cannot be handwritten, type-written, or hand-stamped on **the envelope**.

2. The name of the department, the name of the appropriate Postal Service Unit, and the appropriate return address, including the Zip Code, are printed above the notation, "Official Business" and "Penalty for Private Use \$300" in the upper left corner of the address side, as shown in the following example:

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, ~~EDUCATION,~~ AND WELFARE  
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20201.

*Human Service*

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OFFICIAL BUSINESS  
PENALTY FOR PRIVATE USE \$300

- D. Never use indicia envelopes for personal or unofficial mail, even if you place stamps on the envelope. This prohibition also applies to the personal mail of hospital patients. Never use a government envelope of any kind for personal correspondence.
- E. Offices served by an interdepartmental messenger service, (i.e., the United States Official Mail and Messenger Service in Washington, D.C. Run-Stop-Service) should use this service to the fullest extent possible. Use Standard Form 65, U.S. Government Messenger Envelope, for this mail whenever possible. Otherwise, use a plain envelope. Show agency stop numbers on the envelope.
- F. Department employees may, if for purposes of official business, supply to members of the public printed reply envelopes or labels printed with indicia and pre-addressed to a Federal Government office or officer. These should be supplied for the sake of convenience in having persons submit information for official purposes.

Project officers may supply envelopes or labels to department contractors for use in accordance with contract terms and U.S. Postal Service Regulations. The envelopes must bear the printed return address of the department over the words "Official Business." Never use the name and return address of a private person or firm on an envelope utilized for official mailing. This includes envelopes mailed by a contractor as well as envelopes used in reply to a contractor's inquiries.

HEW Postal Service Units that have contractors performing mailing services which interface with the U.S. Postal Service must obtain a permit for the contractor before such mailings may be entered into the mailstream.

When a special mail service is required, supply a reply envelope or label preprinted with the type of special mail service desired. Users of reply envelopes or labels may not add their own markings for these services.

- G. Never supply envelopes or labels to an individual or concern:
1. If law or regulation require the requested information.

2. If the requested information pertains primarily to the person's own business with the Government (e.g., a claim), a personal matter, or the application for Federal funds under a grant program.
3. For replies to a mailing list circularization; however, **self-**addressed cards or envelopes without the official mailing indicia may be provided for the use of respondents to circularizations of mailing lists.

#### 12-20-30 USE OF POSTAGE STAMPS FOR OFFICIAL MAIL

- A. Department **employees** should use postage stamps for official mail when the use of an **indicia** would hamper their tasks (e.g., when the success of investigative work performed by the department would be jeopardized). The officials listed in paragraph **12-20-40B**, or their designees, can authorize the purchase of such stamps.
- B. The department will reimburse employees in foreign countries for foreign stamps purchased for official business.
- C. Department employees should return stamps supplied by an inquirer if the stamps are not affixed to a self-addressed envelope.

#### 12-20-40 PAYMENT FOR POSTAL SERVICES

- A. Law requires government agencies to reimburse the U.S. Postal Service for all official mailings. Such reimbursement can be made from any funds available to an organization. For the purpose of postal service billing, **HEW** is divided into seven Postal Service Units (see paragraph **12-20-10B**). Each PSU negotiates, consistent with department policy, directly with the U.S. Postal Service for payment of postal charges. Each PSU shall send its postal service payments to:

Disbursing Officer  
U.S. Postal Service  
New York Postal Data Center  
Main Post Office Building  
New York, New York 10099

To obtain further information regarding the payment of USPS charges, contact:

Chief, Postal Management Branch  
Division of Administrative Services  
Office of Management Services  
Office of the Secretary

- B. The U.S. Postal Service bills each Postal Service Unit quarterly on the basis of an annual estimate prepared by the PSU and furnished to



the U.S. Postal Service by September 1. This estimate should be based on the preceding year, correlated with projected volume trends. As an alternative reimbursement procedure, HEW Postal Service Units may use the Simplified Intra-Governmental Billing and Correction (SIBAC) System which provides for the automatic monthly transfer of funds from Federal agencies to the U.S. Postal Service. The officials listed below are responsible for preparing and submitting the postal service estimates of their respective **PSU's**.

<u>Postal Service Unit</u>	<u>Responsible Official</u>
Office of the Secretary	Director, Office of Management Services
Office of Human Development Services	Director, Office of <b>Adminis-</b> tration and Management
Education Division	Assistant <b>Commissioner</b> for Administration
National Institute of Education	Assistant Director for Adminis- tration and Management
Public Health Service	Deputy Executive <b>Officer</b>
Social Security Administration	Associate <b>Commissioner</b> for Management and Administration
Health Care Financing Administration	Director, Division of Administrative Management Service

- C.** Regional administrative officials are responsible for conducting respective regional mail counts in accordance with prescribed procedures as set forth **in** this chapter.' Regional POC units, including Office of the Secretary, **will** submit their postal service estimates to their parent or primary funding organization.
- D.** The U.S. Postal Service annually distributes the format for reports of annual mailing estimates. Copies of the current format can be obtained from the Chief, Postal Management Branch (see paragraph **12-20-40A**).
- E.** The Postal Management Branch, Division of Administrative Services, OS, will furnish to each Postal Service Unit by August 15 of each year a report of the **actual** mailings for that agency made by the Printing and Visual Systems Branch, DAS-OS.
- F.** Departmental policy provides these three methods for estimating annual mail costs:

1. An actual count of the number of pieces of mail and computation of postage payable over a representative one-week period occurring each half of the fiscal year. This is the minimum sampling mandated by the U.S. Postal Service and the random weeks to be used are selected by the Postal Service. The department strongly recommends a one-week count occurring each quarter of the fiscal year. The amount of postage for these periods will be averaged and projected into an annual estimate.

NOTE: A count by weight may be substituted where a conversion between weight and number of pieces has been calculated by the mailing facility and approved by the USPS. **Due** to the wide variation in types **and** classes of mailings, a department-wide conversion table is not feasible.

2. Program workload figures may be used in lieu of sampling by those organizations which can establish ratios between program workloads and total postage costs. Under this method, periodic samplings of special surface mail are necessary to verify trends.
3. A beginning inventory of **indicia** items, plus acquisitions, minus closing inventory may be used as an estimate of postage costs. In this method, a periodic sampling of special mail services is necessary to determine total mailing costs.

The Chief, Postal Management Branch (see paragraph **12-20-40A**) can provide detailed information regarding implementation of the methods described above.

**G.** Estimates of postal service costs shall include:

1. All official matter entered in the U.S. Postal Service such as first-class mail, special delivery, registered mail, certified mail, foreign mail, parcel post, periodicals, postage due items where postage would ordinarily be paid upon delivery, proof of mailings, reply cards or envelopes, return receipts, etc.
2. Adjustments for voluminous mailings occurring in other than the sample period or for planned increases or decreases in programs which would affect the amount of mail.
3. The final reimbursement amount must be fully documented with respect to type and size, class, quantities and rates applied in accordance with the U.S. Postal Service current format. Postal Service Units will submit summary data with a copy of its procedures for sampling and estimating **fiscal** year totals **to** the Manager, Government Revenue and Examination Branch, USPS, as soon as possible at year end, but no later *than* October 31.

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- H. Mail sampling to determine estimates of postal service costs shall not include:
1. Express Mail. 'Express mail is billed separately from the rest of postal usage.
  2. Actual mailings by the Government Printing Office. The U.S. Postal Service will bill Postal Service Units separately for their GPO mailings.
  3. Mailings made by printer-mailer contractors engaged through the Government Printing Office or through other channels must be accounted for and documented on an individual basis.
- I. Postal Service Units should include funds to -cover the payment of postal services in their annual budget requests. Postal Service Units can reimburse the USPS for postal services from any funds available to the **PSUs**. In most instances, a PSU will distribute postal service costs among the various components of the PSU. **Some** suggested methods for allocating postal service costs to components **are:**
1. By past experience adjusted to reflect known changes.
  2. By reports of fndicia items procured by components.
  3. By the number of staff producing correspondence in the component.
  4. By workload data or other management documents.

Subject: DEPARTMENT POLICY AND PROCEDURES ON MAIL COVERS

12-25-00 Purpose  
10 Definition  
20 Policy on Mail Covers  
30 Procedures for Requesting Mail Covers

12-25-00 PURPOSE

This chapter states policies and procedures to be followed in requesting the U.S. Postal Service to carry out a mail cover. 39 CFR 233.2 contains additional information on mail covers.

12-25-10 DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this chapter, the following definitions from 39 CFR 233.2 apply:

- A. "Mail Cover" is the process by which a record is made of any data appearing on the outside cover of any class of mail matter, including checking the contents of any second-, third-, or fourth-class mail matter as now sanctioned by law, in order to obtain information in the interest of (1) protecting the national security, (2) locating a fugitive, or (3) obtaining evidence of commission or attempted commission of a crime.
- B. "Fugitive" is any person who has fled from the United States or any State, territory, the District of Columbia, or possession of the United States, to avoid prosecution for a crime, to avoid punishment for a crime or to avoid giving testimony in a criminal proceeding.
- C. "Crime", is any commission of an act or the attempted commission of an act that is punishable by law by imprisonment for a term exceeding one year.
- D. "Law enforcement agency" is any authority of the Federal Government or any authority of a State or local government one of whose functions is to investigate the commission or attempted commission of acts constituting a crime.

12-25-20 POLICIES ON MAIL COVERS

- A. Only the head of each HHS organization that is considered to be a "law enforcement agency" under the definition stated above in Subsection 12-25-10D can request the U.S. Postal Service to initiate and carry out a mail cover.

- B. The requesting official must obtain approval from the Inspector General, the Deputy Inspector General, or the Assistant Inspector General for Investigations and individuals who are acting in the capacity of the above officials during their absence (Note: The approval authority may not be redelegated within the Office of Inspector General) before sending a request for a mail cover to the U.S. Postal Service.
- C. Use of a mail cover as an investigative measure is to be limited to situations where: (1) the necessary information cannot be obtained by any other means, and (2) the imposition of a mail cover is essential to an investigation.
- D. The U.S. Postal Service limits each mail cover and each renewal of a mail cover to 30 days.
- E. A mail cover is to be cancelled if the information sought is obtained prior to the expiration of the 30 days.
- F. All documentation received from the U.S. Postal Service as a result of a mail cover is to be treated in the strictest confidence while in the possession of the Department. It is to be returned to the Postal Inspector in Charge from whom it was received no later than 60 days after its receipt.

#### 12-25-30 PROCEDURES FOR REQUESTING MAIL COVERS

##### A. Request for Initial Mail Cover

In making a request to initiate a mail cover, the requesting official should:

1. Prepare the request in the form of a letter addressed to the Postal Inspector in Charge of the area in which the mail cover will be carried out.
2. Include the following information in the request:
  - a. a statement as to which authorized purpose contained in 39 CFR 233.2(d)(2)(ii) will be served by the mail cover;
  - b. the citation of the statute which gives the requesting official authority to investigate the matter in question;
  - c. the identity of each individual or business to be covered (give name, address and zip code number of each);
  - d. a statement that an official investigation is in progress;
  - e. the Federal statute alleged to have been violated and the criminal penalty, if convicted;
  - f. the reasonable grounds that exists which demonstrate that the mail cover is necessary to the investigation;

- g. the name and address of any attorney for the mail cover subject or a statement that the subject's attorney, if any, is not known (Mail cover data excludes matter mailed between the mail cover subject and his known attorney);
    - h. a statement that the subject of the mail cover request, if not a fugitive, is not under indictment in connection with the matter under investigation;
    - i. a statement that if the subject is indicted for any cause during the mail cover period, the Postal Inspector in Charge will be immediately notified (Note: Under such circumstances, the mail cover is required to be cancelled and if the subject is under investigation for further criminal violations, a new mail cover must be requested); and
    - j. the coverage requested should be specified, i.e., business or residential, first-class only, first-class and parcels, etc.
  3. Obtain approval from an appropriate official of the Office of Inspector General by sending to them the official file copy of the request (plus two other copies) and a brief covering memorandum explaining why the mail cover is necessary.
  4. Keep the request until receiving the official file copy with the OIG approval, then send it to the Postal Inspector in Charge.
  5. Maintain the official file copy of the request.

B. Request for Renewal of a Mail Cover

In making each subsequent request to renew a mail cover, the requesting official should follow the procedure outlined above in Subsection 12-25-30A, and should explain in the memorandum to the appropriate OIG official why an extension of the mail cover is necessary. In addition, the request for the fourth renewal and any subsequent renewal is to contain specific reasons for continuing the mail cover and be addressed to the Chief Postal Inspector.

C. Request to Cancel a Mail Cover

Requests to cancel a mail cover should be sent directly from the requesting official to the Postal Inspector in Charge to whom the request to initiate or renew the mail cover was addressed.

