



**ADMINISTRATIVE
COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

DEPARTMENTAL DIRECTIVE

OM:4-115

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Distribution:
All Department of Education employees

Approved by: _____/s/_____
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Mail Management

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Supersedes OM:4-115 "Mail Management" dated 06/28/2005.

For technical questions, please contact the Mail Manager at 202-401-2905.

I. Purpose

This directive establishes the policy, procedures, and responsibilities of the Mail Management Program for the U.S. Department of Education (ED).

II. Policy

ED's policy is to promote procedures that achieve maximum economy, efficiency, uniformity, and safety in developing and maintaining an ongoing Mail Management Program consistent with operational needs. ED cooperates with the United States Postal Service (USPS) and the General Services Administration (GSA) in administering ED's Mail Management Program.

III. Authority

- A. Domestic Mail Manual (DMM), USPS, which provides regulations for domestic mail entering the USPS system.
- B. Title 39 U.S.C., Chapter 32, which provides for the use of Penalty mail by Executive Agencies.
- C. Title 18 U.S.C. Section 1719, "Franking Privilege," which provides penalties for the misuse of Government mail.
- D. International Mail Manual (IMM), USPS, which provides guidance for preparation and postage costs for International Mail.
- E. Federal Property Management Regulation Part 101-9, Federal Mail Management, 41 CFR, Chapter 101.

IV. Objectives

The objectives of the Mail Management Program are to:

- A. Provide efficient handling and timely and accurate delivery of mail throughout ED as economically as possible.
- B. Ensure uniform practices and standards.
- C. Provide staff assistance to headquarters and field locations in the area of postal operations and service.
- D. Control ED's official mail costs through proper and cost-effective use of the USPS and private carriers.
- E. Provide monthly reports ED management officials for Education's meter usage and quarterly reports for postage use by contractors in other locations.

- F. Achieve centralized official mail and internal mail processing and distribution across program lines in common geographical areas, where practicable.

V. Responsibilities

- A. The Mail Manager, Office of Management (OM), Facilities and Management Services Group, Mail Services Team, is responsible for managing ED's Mail Management Program by:

1. Developing mail management policies and procedures.
2. Promoting an ongoing official mail cost-control program to ensure that ED uses the most economical class and type of mail services available, consistent with operational needs.
3. Establishing and maintaining effective communications with ED management officials and employees who receive mail management support services.
4. Providing essential reports on volume, types of mail processed, and postage costs incurred by each Principal Office (PO) to the OM Executive Office.
5. Serving as a liaison with USPS, ED's Overnight Mail Contractor, UPS (United Parcel Service), GSA and ED officials, and complying with established rules, regulations, and practices to ensure correct and efficient movement of ED's mail in the postal system.
6. Providing guidelines during mail management disruptions.
7. Providing quarterly postage usage reports and annual budget estimates to the OM Executive Office.

- B. The Mail Services Contractor shall:

1. Screen and examine all incoming mail and parcels for suspicious characteristics such as:
 - a. Excessive postage;
 - b. Handwritten or poorly typed addresses;
 - c. Incorrect titles;
 - d. Misspellings of common words;
 - e. Oily stains, discoloration, or odor;

- f. No return address;
 - g. Protruding wires; and
 - h. Other distractions.
2. Isolate suspicious items and report them to Security Services, OM for further screening and disposition.
 3. Ensure integrity of all mail from the time received from the USPS or internal mail delivery points, to the time of delivery to the USPS or addressee. Special attention will be given to accountable mail, overnight mail, negotiable instruments, items of value, and confidential or sensitive information to prevent mishandling, loss, or theft.
- C. The OM Executive Office shall:
1. Analyze reports on volume, types of mail processed, and postage costs for each PO as provided by the Mail Manager to determine and request the appropriate chargebacks for each PO.
 2. Analyze Federal Express reports provided by the Mail Manager and provide these reports to the other POs after receiving a written request.
- D. Each PO shall:
1. Ensure compliance with this directive;
 2. Provide chargebacks to the OM Executive Office, as requested;
 3. Provide a written request to the OM Executive Office in order to analyze and respond to discrepancies for the Federal Express (FedEx) reports.

VI. Procedures and Requirements

- A. Each PO may request changes or clarification of this directive at any time by notification to the Mail Manager.
- B. Headquarters' employees should use the attached Mail Users Guide (see Attachment 1) as a guide to the locations and schedules within Headquarters for basic mail service.
- C. Regional employees should follow the pickup and delivery schedule established in their respective Regions.

Attachment 1: U.S. Department of Education Mail Users' Guide

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

This guide is provided to help all Headquarters employees send and receive mail faster and more accurately.

Location of Main Mail Centers:

Name/Building	Address/Location	City	State	Zip	Phone	Hours
Central Mail Facility	7100 Old Landover Road	Landover	MD	20785-1506	202-377-4426	6:30–5:30
LBJ	400 Maryland Avenue, SW, Room BC102	Washington	DC	20202	202-401-0969 202-260-9944	7:00–5:50
Union Center Plaza 3	830 1 st Street NE, Room 1200	Washington	DC	20202	202-377-3341	7:30–4:30
K Street	1990 K Street, NW, Room 7159	Washington	DC	20202	202-502-7595	7:30–4:30
Potomac Center Plaza	550 12 th Street, SW, Room P210	Washington	DC	20202	202-245-7670	8:00–5:00

Special Notice: Mail services staff will receive, X-ray, and screen all items for suspicious markings or packaging. Items deemed safe will then be delivered to the addressees. Mail and items for other buildings will be screened when brought to the mail center in that building. Suspicious items will be referred to Security Services, OM.

Services offered by the Mail Centers:

- Receive all incoming and outgoing mail for ED
- X-ray all incoming mail
- Screen all incoming mail for suspicious markings or packaging
- Deliver to recipients
- Meter all outgoing Postal Mail
- Track all Accountable Mail

1. Scheduled Delivery/Pick up for Main Buildings:

Each office within ED's Headquarters receives mail pick up and delivery services **four** times daily at approximately 9:00 AM, 11:00 AM, 1:00 PM, and 3:00 PM. Mail Clerks will pick up outgoing mail – including overnight (FedEx and UPS) and inter-office mail which must be in a holy joe envelope -- from each designated mail stop and deliver all incoming mail at these times. This includes Overnight (FedEx and UPS) and Inter-Office Mail (must be in a Holy Joe Envelope).

2. Scheduled Delivery/Pick-up Service for Other Headquarter's Sites

Mail Service is provided **twice daily** to the following locations as described above:

- 470/490 L'Enfant Plaza, SW
- 800 North Capitol Street, NW
- 1775 I Street, NW
- Capitol Place – 555 New Jersey Avenue, NW
- 1100 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW

3. Types of Service

The following services are available through each of the mail centers. Contact mail center personnel or the Mail Manager for additional information and guidance:

- **First Class Mail:** All outgoing letters and small packages, unless another service is requested
- **Priority Mail:** Special labels and envelopes for important documents
- **Package Mail:** Most boxes over 2 lbs.
- **International Mail:** For routine international letters
- **Business Reply Mail:** Postage paid return envelopes and labels
- **Registered/Certified Mail:** For accountable mail
- **Return Receipt:** For Proof of Receipt
- **Express Mail:** Next Day Delivery by Post Office
- **Overnight-Federal Express:** Next day delivery by common carrier
- **United Parcel Service:** 1, 2, 3-day delivery of parcels & delivery of next day mail to PO Boxes.
- **Regional Mail:** To 10 Regional Offices
- **Internal Mail:** Within Headquarters buildings using mail stops
- **Internal Packages:** Within Headquarters using mail stops
- **Internal Distribution:** Within Headquarters, desk to desk
- **Distribution to all Regions**

4. Addressing Mail

Please follow the instructions shown below when addressing mail.

- Machine-produced addresses in capital letters will enable the USPS mail equipment read the addresses better and avoid mistakes.
NOTE: All hand written addresses must be legible to avoid delay in delivery.
- Apply the recipient's ZIP plus 4 (9 digit) Code as part of the address for accurate delivery by the USPS. Go to www.usps.com: Find a Zip for assistance.
- Use inter-office envelopes (Holy Joe) and mail stop codes when sending internal mail.
- Make sure individuals sending you mail use your name, address, and mail stop.

EXAMPLE: Department of Education
Attn: Shelia Abubaker, Management Services Group
7100 Old Landover Road
Landover, MD 20202-4863
Significance of +4 (4863):
4800 series represents OM
63 represent Management Services Group/Mail Management

NOTE: **The Post Office reads your mail from the bottom up.** The City, —State and Zip should always be at the Bottom, preceded by the Street Address.

- **REMEMBER** - Always send your mail early.
- Always double-check the address.
- Always use plastic or nylon reinforced tape to seal a box or envelope that has staples in it.

5. Mail Fulfillment or Mass Mailings

The information shown below applies for mass mailings.

- The request for a mailing of 250 or more pieces of identical mail going to the same address or different addresses.
- You must provide a complete list of the mailing address to the Mail Services Contractor on disk and in word format.
- The Mail Services Contractor will process the items for mailing by collating, inserting the materials, and affixing the address labels.

- The Mail Services Contractor will save POs time and labor by preparing PO items for shipment.

Contact: ED Pubs Contract Office Representative at or 202-401-0480.

6. USPS Mail

- The Mail Centers are responsible for processing all outgoing mail for pick-up by USPS.
- USPS delivers 2 times daily to ED's Central Mail Facility in Landover and once to K Street.
- USPS picks-up 2 times daily from Landover and once from K Street.
- USPS's last pickup is at 4:30 PM from Landover.

7. Overnight Mail

The information listed below applies for overnight mail (FedEx).

- Use only when necessary for mail that must be received by the next day.
- Affix a mailing address to each item or, if you are sending the same items to numerous places, attach a list of the addressees for further processing by the mail center.
- Once the item is ready for mailing you may either leave it in your office outgoing mail box for pick-up by the mail clerk on their next scheduled run or take it to the mail center before 3:00 PM at the LBJ Center and other locations before 2:30 PM.

Alternative: For after hours use, you can take the package to your nearest FedEx Drop Box.

- Complete blue Shipping Request Form - available through Mail Management or your mail center or on-line at www.fedex.com - Ship.
- Use your PO's Assigned Account Number. Contact: Mail Management, the mailroom or your Executive Office to obtain your account number.
- After hours, complete an air bill form and use the FedEx drop box located in each lobby of ED's headquarters buildings.
- REMEMBER- Always double check address and telephone number.

8. Alternative Delivery Services

The alternate delivery services shown below are available for headquarters employees.

- Local Couriers – as contracted by your PO.
- Publications delivery from ED's fulfillment contractor (ED Pubs).
- Pick up from and delivery to specific rooms or buildings. This alternative is available upon request.
- Consolidated mail delivery to the Finance Center in New Orleans.
- Consolidated mail delivery to the Regions.

9. Other Optional Services

Other optional services available upon request through the Mail Center as listed below:

- Strapping Tape to wrap packages.
- Tracking of lost accountable mail (i.e. FedEx; UPS, USPS: Certified).
- The Mail Center's Shuttle Drivers will make special deliveries within the Washington Area Beltway during normal business hours (9:00 AM– 4:00 PM) at no additional cost to the Contract/ED.

10. PROHIBITED SERVICES

The sending or receiving of personal mail or packages through the Mail Center is prohibited. **ED's Mail Services is for Official Government Only.** Employees may be subject to disciplinary action for misuse of Government mail.

Please contact the Mail Manager/Management Services Group (202-401-2905) for further guidance on any mail information not covered in this Users Guide.

Attachment 2: Mail Management Cost-Savings Techniques

The information shown below applies to all ED employees.

1. Reduce Size and Weight of Mail

- Fold material to the smallest practical size and use smallest envelope possible.
- Avoid the use of 9 x 12 (Flat) envelopes for mailing less than 10 pages of correspondence.
- Use lightweight packaging material.
- Prepare packages accordingly for Parcel Post requirements.
- When possible, reduce the weight of material by using 2-sided copies.
- Use flats rather than padded envelopes when suitable.

2. Use Lower Mail Classifications

- Send letter correspondence by First Class.
- Send publications and bulk materials by Parcel Post.
- Anticipate deadlines to avoid the necessity of using Priority, Express Mail, or FedEx.
- Do not use overnight delivery on Friday.

3. Definitions

The definitions listed below describe the various classes of mail.

- a. **First Class Mail** consists of mailable postal cards, matter wholly or partially in writing or machine produced, matter closed against inspection, bills, and statements of accounts. Official Mail weighing 11 ounces or less will automatically receive first-class service UNLESS a lower class of mail is indicated on the items. First class is the highest priority for processing mail and is given precedence over other classes of mail by the USPS. First class mail over 11 ounces is Priority Mail. Do not use this endorsement on mail weighing less than 11 ounces. Nonstandard first class mail is any first class piece weighing 1 ounce or less which exceeds 11.5 inches in length and 6 inches in height or ¼ inch in thickness. Such items are subject to a surcharge.
- b. **Priority mail** must weigh between 11 ounces and 70 pounds. It must not exceed 108 inches in combined length and girth and must be endorsed with a Priority Mail label. Priority mail is generally twice the rate for parcel post. Before mailing, the sender

should determine if the speed of delivery is more important than cost. Employees are reminded to mail early to avoid overnight delivery charges.

- c. **Standard mail** is typically publications, circulars, photographs, merchandise, or catalogs weighing less than a pound (lb). This mail can be opened by the USPS for inspection.
- d. **Parcel post** is typically materials weighing 16 ounces to 70 pounds and not exceeding 108 inches in length and girth. This service may take up to eight days delivery, depending upon transportation availability. It is the best way to send boxes and larger items that do not require short time delivery times.

4. Special Services

Use special services only when necessary. Special services are offered by the USPS to guarantee delivery, provide indemnity, and expedite delivery of mail. Because most of these services are costly, they should only be used when the cost justifies the benefits the service provides.

The services listed below are available.

- a. **Registered Mail** provides added protection for valuable and other important mail. It provides a receipt to the sender at the time of mailing and a post office record of mailing. For an additional fee, a return receipt will be sent to the mailer. This service is being replaced by delivery confirmation where barcode readers monitor each step of the mailing process and the sender's PC can monitor delivery progress. Anything mailed First Class or Priority can be registered. A receipt is issued at the point of mailing.
- b. **Certified mail** provides a record of mailing to the sender and a record of delivery at the post office of delivery. The carrier delivering the item obtains a signature from the addressee on a postal receipt, which is kept at the post office for 2 years. For an additional fee, a return receipt will be sent to the mailer. Although certified mail can provide a return receipt when requested, it is more economical to include a receipt inside the piece of mail and to request the addressee to complete the receipt and return it to the sender.
- c. **Insured Mail** can be insured for protection against loss or damage by purchasing special insurance; however, it is the general policy of the Federal Government to self-insure all risks of monetary loss. Therefore, postal insurance should not be purchased for official mail.
- d. **Express Mail or Overnight Mail** is an expedited, guaranteed delivery class of mail providing overnight service to designated locations. This class of mail is particularly designed for time-sensitive materials or letters and should only be used for items that positively must arrive the next day.

- e. ***International Mail*** includes letters, packages, printed matter and parcels destined for foreign countries. Mail sent to Army-Air Force (APO) and Navy (FPO) post offices is not considered international mail. Consult your mail services personnel for the best way to ship your particular international needs. There are a variety of shipping services for international mail and the most efficient depends upon size and time of delivery required. Please plan ahead.

5. Mail Volume Reduction

Reduce mail volume by consolidating daily or weekly mail to the same locations such as the Regions or contract locations. Update mailing lists and correct addresses every six months. Always ask mail service personnel for information and help with items you mail.