

United States Postal Service

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purchase offer, the owner must be given a written statement of the basis for the offer of just compensation. This statement must include:

(i) A statement of the amount offered as just compensation. In the case of a partial acquisition, the compensation for the real property to be acquired and the compensation for damages, if any, must be separately stated.

(ii) The location and description of the real property and the interest(s) to be acquired.

(iii) An identification of the buildings, structures, and other improvements (including removable building equipment and trade fixtures) which are considered part of the real property for which the offer of just compensation is made. Where appropriate, the statement shall identify and separately held ownership interest in the improvement(s), for example, a tenant-owned improvement.

(6) *Basic Negotiation Procedures.* The Postal Service must make every reasonable effort to contact the owner or the owner's representative and:

(i) Discuss the Postal Service's offer to purchase the property including the basis for the offer of just compensation, and;

(ii) Explain Postal Service acquisition policies and procedures including the provisions for the payment of incidental expenses as described under § 777.33.

(7) *Opportunity to Consider Offer.* The owner must be given a reasonable opportunity to consider the Postal Service's offer, to present material which he or she believes is relevant to determining the value of the property, and to suggest modification in the proposed terms and conditions of the purchase. The Postal Service must consider the owner's presentation.

(8) *Updating Offer of Just Compensation.* If the information presented by the owner or a material change in the character or condition of the property indicates the need for new appraisal information, or if a significant delay has occurred since the time of the appraisal(s) of the property, the Postal Service must have the appraisal(s) updated or obtain a new appraisal(s). If the latest appraisal information indicates that a change in the purchase

offer is warranted, the Postal Service must promptly reestablish just compensation and offer the revised amount to the owner in writing.

(9) *Contracts and Options.* Contracts to purchase shall cover only those items related to the acquisition of the property, and not incorporate provisions for making payments for relocation costs or related costs under title II of these regulations.

(10) *Title II Benefits Not To Be Considered.* In the event of condemnation, estimated compensation shall be determined solely on the basis of the appraised value of the real property with no consideration being given to or reference contained therein to the payments to be made under title II.

(11) *Coercive Action.* The Postal Service shall not advance the time of condemnation, or defer negotiations or condemnation, or the deposit of funds with the court, or take any other coercive action in order to induce an agreement on the price to be paid for the property.

(12) *Inverse Condemnation.* If the Postal Service intends to acquire any interest in real property by exercise of the power of eminent domain, it must institute formal condemnation proceedings and not intentionally make it necessary for the owner to institute proceedings to prove the fact of the taking of the real property.

(13) *Payment Before Taking Possession.* Before requiring the owner to surrender possession of the real property, the Postal Service must either:

(i) Pay the agreed purchase price to the owner; or

(ii) In the case of a condemnation proceeding, deposit with the court for the benefit of the owner an amount not less than the amount of the approved appraised value of the property or the amount of the award of compensation in the condemnation proceeding for the property.

(14) *Right-of-Entry.* With the prior approval of the owner, the Postal Service may obtain a right-of-entry before making payment to the owner.

§ 777.32 Acquisition of tenant-owned improvements.

(a) *Acquisition of Improvements.* When acquiring any interest in real property,

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the Postal Service must acquire at least an equal interest in all buildings, structures, or other improvements located upon the real property. This must include any improvement of a tenant owner who has the right or obligation to remove the improvement at the expiration of the lease term.

(b) *Special Conditions.* Payment for tenant-owned improvements will be made to the tenant only if he or she meets the following conditions:

(1) In consideration for the payment the tenant-owner assigns, transfers, and releases to the Postal Service all of the tenant-owner's rights, title, and interests in the improvement;

(2) The owner of the real property on which the improvement is located disclaims all interest in the improvement; and

(3) The payment does not result in the duplication of any compensation otherwise authorized by law.

(c) *Preservation of Tenant's Rights.* Nothing in this section shall be construed to deprive the tenant-owner of any rights to reject payment under this section and to obtain payment for such property interests in accordance with other applicable law.

§ 777.33 Expenses incidental to transfer of title to the Postal Service.

(a) *Reimbursement.* When property is acquired through the exercise or the threat of the exercise of eminent domain, the owner shall be reimbursed for all reasonable expenses he or she necessarily incurred in conveying the real property to the Postal Service for:

(1) Recording fees, transfer taxes, documentary stamps, evidence of title, boundary surveys, legal descriptions of the real property, and similar incidental expenses. However, the Postal Service will not pay costs solely required to perfect the owner's title to the real property.

(2) Penalty costs and other charges for prepayment of any preexisting recorded mortgage, entered into in good faith, encumbering the real property.

(3) The pro rata portion of any prepaid real property taxes which are allocable to the period after the Postal Service obtains title to the property or effective possession of it, whichever is earlier.

(b) *Direct Payment.* Whenever feasible the Postal Service must pay these costs directly and thus avoid the need for an owner to pay such costs and then seek reimbursement from the Postal Service.

(c) *Certain Litigation Expenses.* The owner of the real property acquired must be reimbursed any reasonable expenses, including reasonable attorney, appraisal, and engineering fees which the owner actually incurred because of a condemnation proceeding if:

(1) The final judgment of the court is that the Postal Service cannot acquire the real property by condemnation; or

(2) The condemnation proceeding is abandoned by the Postal Service other than under an agreed-upon settlement; or

(3) The court having jurisdiction renders a judgment in favor of the owner in an inverse condemnation proceeding or the Postal Service effects a settlement of such a proceeding.

Subpart D—Voluntary Acquisitions

§ 777.41 Acquisition procedures.

(a) *Voluntary Acquisitions.* Acquisition rules for voluntary purchases are set out in Handbook RE-1, Realty Acquisition and Management and cover such areas as appraisal and negotiation procedures.

(b) *Tenant-Owned Improvements.* In general the Postal Service deals exclusively with the fee owner on the acquisition of all real property interest at the site. The Postal Service may, however, in exceptional cases deal directly with a tenant on a leasehold improvements matter. Should the Postal Service acquire the fee interest without acquiring rights in a leasehold improvement under circumstances in which the tenant would be entitled to compensation under § 777.32 of this part, if the acquisition were by eminent domain or the under threat thereof, the tenant will be entitled to the benefits that would, under such circumstances, have been paid under § 777.32 of this part, unless the tenant has formally disclaimed further right in the real property improvement beyond the time of the expiration of his or her tenancy.