

GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION
Washington, DC 20405

OAS 1840.1
July 7, 2020

GSA ORDER

SUBJECT: Internal GSA Mail and Small Package Management Handbook

1. Purpose. This Handbook provides instructions for internal General Services Administration (GSA) mail and small package management.
2. Cancellation. This Order cancels and supersedes ADM P 1840.1, Internal GSA Mail Management, dated January 12, 2007.
3. Background. The use of mail and small package delivery services by GSA ensures effective and efficient communications with the agency's customers, stakeholders, and the public. This Handbook helps to assure that mail and small package delivery services are used economically to support bona fide GSA mission requirements. All GSA employees, particularly supervisors and managers, are encouraged to closely monitor mail and delivery costs in order to conserve critical GSA financial resources.
4. Scope and Applicability. This Order applies to all GSA employees managing mail or small packages and all GSA personnel who send or receive mail or small packages. This Handbook applies to the Office of Inspector General (OIG) only to the extent that the OIG determines it is consistent with the OIG's independent authority under the Inspector General Act of 1978 as amended and it does not conflict with other OIG policies or the OIG mission. This Order applies to the Civilian Board of Contract Appeals (CBCA) to the extent that the CBCA determines it is consistent with the CBCA's independent authority under the Contract Disputes Act and it does not conflict with other CBCA policies or the CBCA mission.
5. Revisions.
 - a. This Handbook provides policy and guidance for the management of internal and external GSA mail and small packages, metered mail, stamped mail, and expedited mail, in accordance with the United States Postal Service (USPS) Domestic Mail Manual (DMM), the Federal Management Regulation (FMR), 102-192, Mail Management, and the Office of Management and Budget's (OMB's) requirements for agencies to take a category management acquisition approach for small package delivery services.

b. Many of the changes in this version stem from GSA Order, [ADM 5440.640A Change in GSA Organization \(Office of Administrative Services\)](#), which transferred GSA internal mail management from the Office of Government-wide Policy (OGP) to the Office of Administrative Services (OAS) on November 18, 2011.

c. These revisions remove some obsolete items, update titles to those currently used, and simplifies the Handbook by moving the definitions to an Appendix. In addition, the Handbook contains more content about small packages, and updates references for small package delivery services. Furthermore, GSA Mail Center employees will consider marketing mail that does not contain both a recipient name and an organizational code as undeliverable and will recycle or dispose of it.

6. Signature.

/S/ _____
BOB STAFFORD
Chief Administrative Services Officer
Office of Administrative Services

INTERNAL GSA MAIL AND SMALL PACKAGE MANAGEMENT

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CHAPTER 1. GENERAL

1. Purpose. This Handbook states the policies regarding how and when to use official (penalty) mail, supplemental U.S. Postal Service (USPS) mail services, and commercial carriers (e.g., FedEx, UPS) when shipping Official Mail. It sets forth the objectives of the Mail Management Program, assigns responsibility for carrying out objectives, and establishes procedures to meet the objectives. For the purpose of this Handbook “Mail” is defined as letters, flats, memoranda, postcards, documents, publications, packages and other written or printed communications received for distribution or dispatch by GSA from the USPS; Commercial carriers; or an intra-department envelope. This Chapter covers policies and procedures relating to the two distribution and dispatch methods primarily used by GSA: (1) USPS; and (2) Commercial carriers.

2. Policy. Under FMR 102-192, each Federal agency must establish and implement an agency Mail Management Program. All organizational units within GSA must use this Handbook in implementing the program throughout GSA. It is GSA’s policy to provide rapid handling and accurate delivery of mail and small packages at the lowest possible cost. This Handbook is a guide to assist GSA employees in understanding the relevant regulations and does not replace or supersede the regulations. Employees should contact their [Regional Mail Manager](#) (RMM) for guidance on any situations or events not covered by the Handbook. Employees may also access the regulations and policies directly by using the following links:

- [United States Postal Service \(USPS\) Domestic Mail Manual \(DMM\)](#)
- [GSA Mail Security Guidance](#)
- [GSA Mail Management Policy Overview](#)
- [Code of Federal Regulations, Title 41 Section 102-192, Mail Management](#)
- [U.S. Code, Title 39, Postal Service, Private Express Statute](#)
- [U.S. Code, Title 40, Chapter 173, Government Losses In Shipment](#)

3. Objectives. The objectives of the program are to:

a. Develop and implement agency-wide procedures for the rapid handling and accurate delivery of agency mail at minimum cost through the USPS or small package delivery services,

b. Maintain liaison with local USPS employees to guarantee receiving the best possible mail service, and

c. Implement Governmentwide mail regulations promptly throughout GSA.

d. Utilize the OMB mandated category management acquisition approach for small package delivery services.

4. Responsibilities.

a. GSA Office of Administrative Services (OAS) - Names the Agency Mail Manager (AMM), the RMMs, and issues this Handbook.

b. AMM. The AMM ensures agency-wide awareness and compliance with mail management standards set forth by USPS in the DMM, the Postal Bulletin, and GSA standards and guidelines. AMM responsibilities are further defined in Section 102-192.130 of the FMR. The AMM is responsible for the following:

- (1) Developing and issuing this Handbook;
- (2) Maintaining liaison with USPS and small package delivery services company representatives;
- (3) Improving the program through cost savings wherever possible; and
- (4) Further responsibilities are detailed in Chapter 12, Agency and RMM Responsibilities.

c. RMMs. RMMs manage all mail operations within the Regions. This includes mail operations serving a particular Service or Staff Office unit. RMMs may develop additional implementing procedures, as necessary. RMMs are responsible for the following in their regions:

- (1) Providing guidance and implementing all mail policies, guidelines, and procedures;
- (2) Assembling and submitting all mail reports to the AMM in accordance with GSA guidelines;
- (3) Serving as liaison with local postmasters and postal customer service representatives;
- (4) Assisting agency employees in determining the most efficient and least-expensive methods for mail delivery;
- (5) With the assistance of the AMM, establishing policy and procedures for participation in Cooperative Administrative Support Unit (CASU) or interagency agreements where applicable and when cost-effective;
- (6) Working with program leads to enter into USPS work sharing programs when mail volumes or lack of resources for proper mail preparation (i.e., presorting and barcoding), make contracting for work-sharing the cost-effective choice. This includes the use of the Government Printing Office (GPO); and

(7) Further responsibilities are detailed in Chapter 12, Agency and RMM Responsibilities.

d. Mailers. This Handbook applies to all GSA employees who create, design, prepare, or are responsible for handling/processing incoming and/or outgoing official mail or small packages. Such GSA employees and contractors have a responsibility to understand this Handbook and related mail policies and procedures. The Handbook provides references and instructions necessary for the rapid handling and accurate delivery of mail at the lowest possible cost. It is incumbent upon all GSA employees and contractors to use the most economical and appropriate means of mail or small package service consistent with their needs. For any further questions please contact your RMM.

5. Funding. The AMM, with the help of RMMs, oversees amounts billed for USPS and commercial carriers.

a. USPS. GSA OAS pays for normal official mail postage billed through the Online Mail Accounting System (OMAS) using a centrally funded account. The OMAS account is overseen by the AMM. Program offices are billed back for Permit Imprint charges, which are usually from GPO vendors for large mailings like catalogs and tax forms.

b. Commercial Carriers. GSA does not centrally manage funds to pay for small package shipments. Commercial carrier's shipment costs are the responsibility of the office making the shipment. For more information, please see your RMM.

6. Forms.

a. This Handbook provides for the use of the following GSA forms:

(1) [GSA Form 14](#), Routing Slip

(2) [GSA Optional Form OF65B](#), U.S. Government Messenger Envelope, (Medium)

b. This Handbook provides for the use of the following Postal Service forms:

(1) [PS Form 17-G](#), Federal Agency Stamp Requisition

(2) [PS Form 1952](#), Annual Estimate of Anticipated Penalty Mail Usage (No digital version exists)

(3) [PS Form 3615](#), Mailing Permit Application and Customer Profile

(4) [PS Form 3817](#), Certificate of Mailing

c. Supplies of Postal Service forms can be obtained through your local post office,

your local Postal Service Representative, or electronically at <http://www.usps.com/forms>. GSA forms are available electronically at <http://www.gsa.gov/forms>.

CHAPTER 2. INCOMING MAIL

1. General.

a. Mail and Small Package Delivery Service Schedules. RMMs will provide scheduled mail pickups and deliveries as required for each location in their Region.

(1) USPS delivers mail to the mail center. The RMMs and local postmasters determine the frequency, time, and method of delivery. However, outlying offices such as field offices and communications centers may arrange for their own postal service.

(2) Where GSA offices occupy more than one building, the RMM arranges with the USPS for delivery to individual buildings.

b. Mail Irregularities. The RMM and the local postmaster check mail irregularities, such as unusual delay or damage to mail while it is in the postal channels. If the RMM cannot resolve a problem locally, the RMM notifies the AMM. The AMM coordinates with USPS Headquarters.

c. Routing of Routine Mail.

(1) Mail center employee's route unopened mail directly to the mail station serving the office of address, if possible, within six hours after receipt from the carrier.

(2) Mail center employees open First-Class Mail not addressed to a Service or Staff Office (SSO) or unit and route the mail directly to the appropriate action office if the appropriate action office is readily apparent.

(3) In the Washington Metropolitan Area, if the appropriate action office is not apparent, mail center employees route the mail to the Executive Secretariat (H1E).

(4) Marketing mail (this used to be called standard mail) that does not include both a recipient's name and an organizational code in the address will be considered "undeliverable as addressed" and recycled or disposed. This mail is largely unwanted and manually looking up the recipient and mail stop information represents a significant expense to GSA. Catalogs and free magazines without both a recipient's name and an organizational code in the address will also be recycled or disposed of.

Employees who wish to receive these items should ensure their org code is included in the address, for example:

BEN FRANKLIN, H2A
1800 F STREET, NW
WASHINGTON, DC 20405

(5) USPS Express Mail. Mail centers should establish controls to ensure proper delivery of Express Mail to the addressee and maintain records that will substantiate the delivery. The mail centers in Central Office and regional headquarters buildings are responsible for controlling Express Mail through the following:

(a) Establish a log that contains the following:

1. Identification of the mail piece,
2. Date and time the mail piece was received in the mail center,
3. Signature of recipient, and
4. Name of mail center employee releasing the mail piece.

(b) Self-service mail centers must also indicate the following:

1. Name of mail center employee telephoning or emailing recipient's office,
2. Name of person contacted, and
3. Telephone number or email address of recipient, date, and time contacted.

(c) In regular mail centers, a mail center employee delivers the mail piece immediately by hand-carrying it or on the next mail run that day.

(d) In self-service mail centers, a mail center employee telephones the recipient to pick up the mail. The mail center employees must make follow-up calls if no one picks it up within a short time.

(e) In both regular and self-service mail centers, the recipient must sign the log upon receipt of the mail.

2. Incorrectly Addressed and Unwanted Mail.

a. SSOs should provide mail center supervisors with copies of all changes of correspondence symbols or office titles.

b. The USPS DMM requires that mail centers return undeliverable First-Class Mail to the mailer.

c. Recipients of incorrectly addressed or unwanted mail should notify mailers of an address change or to stop sending unwanted mail. GSA mail centers receive many

incorrectly addressed communications each day. Time spent to reroute this mail places an unnecessary burden on mail center employees and delays mail delivery.

3. Employee Personal Mail. Employees may not use the GSA mail system or mail rooms to receive personal mail or small packages. The extra workload that handling personal mail imposes on mail center employees reduces the time available to process official mail. Employees should receive personal mail and small packages at their home addresses.

CHAPTER 3. OUTGOING MAIL

1. General. Outgoing mail refers to official mail prepared by GSA employees for delivery by the following:

- a. USPS;
- b. Batch Mail;
- c. Intra-Office Mail;
- d. Small Package Delivery Services;
- e. International Mail;
- e. Contractor Mailings:

2. USPS.

a. Use of Org Code in Return Address Field. Outgoing mail should always include the sender's organization code in the return address field. This is used for data collection and mail return if needed. For example:

BEN FRANKLIN, H2A
1800 F STREET, NW
WASHINGTON, DC 20405

b. Use of USPS Collection Boxes for Official Mail.

1. Only field offices and other outlying GSA units that do not have access to a GSA mail center may regularly use USPS collection boxes for official mail.

2. Central Office and regional offices that normally use a GSA mail center should make every effort to have the mail center process their mail. Under exceptional circumstances, employees may place small amounts of official mail in USPS collection boxes.

c. Putting official mail in USPS collection boxes delays its delivery. Mail taken directly from a mail center to a post office moves faster because it bypasses several processing and delivery steps. USPS closely monitors the volume of official mail found in USPS collection boxes and reports abuses to offending agencies. Postal regulations do not require carriers to pick up bags or boxes of mail left outside of USPS collection boxes.

3. Batch Mail. Batch mail service is available for all mail sent between regional offices and between Central Office and regional offices. Mail center employees consolidate the mail pieces according to destination and ship them using the most efficient method. Region and correspondence symbols should always be used on batch mail. This is the least expensive and preferred method of moving mail and small packages between offices. Optional Form 65-B can be used for sending batch mail.

4. Intra-office Mail. Intra-office mail includes mail sent between two mail stations within a building. If the address is inadequate to guarantee delivery, mailers should use a GSA Form 14, Routing Slip. Optional Form 65-B can also be used for addressing. Correspondence symbols should always be used to indicate organization addresses.

5. Small Package Delivery Services.

a. Heads of Services and Staff Offices (HSSOs) and Regional Administrators (RAs) should ensure that employees strictly limit the use of overnight express mail services because these services are very expensive.

b. Mailers should not use expedited mail on Fridays, weekends, or the day before a holiday unless the addressee will be present to receive it. Overnight mail delivery services should only be used for urgent requirements.

c. Mailers should plan their mailings in advance to control their costs. Through proper planning, mailers will find that, in many cases First-Class Mail, internal GSA mail, e-mail, or facsimile machines will do the job as well.

d. When mailers have requirements for next business day delivery of extremely urgent letters or small packages, mailers should use the OMB mandated category management acquisition approach for package delivery services. (See Chapter 10)

e. U.S. Code, Title 39, Postal Service, Private Express Statutes, state that the USPS has a general monopoly for the transmission of all First-Class Mail. The law allows for the private carriage of letters under certain exceptions, the primary one being letters for which the sender has paid at least six times the price currently charged for the first ounce of a single-piece First-Class Mail letter. Usually, private carrier prices are greater than this amount. Private carriers are referred to as small package delivery services in this handbook. The other exceptions are included in this Handbook as required:

1. Private couriers may carry extremely urgent letters, invoices, bills, and similar First-Class material sent with, and exclusively for, the cargo they accompany.

2. Universities and colleges may carry the letters of their bona fide student and faculty organizations.

3. Time sensitive material (extremely urgent letters) that must reach an addressee within 48 hours, and which the USPS cannot deliver (through normal

First-Class or Priority delivery schedules) within that time frame. (USPS First-Class delivery timeframe is 48 hours).

4. Private delivery companies may transport First-Class material without payment of postage during a disruption of the USPS.

NOTE: If a decision is made to use a private delivery company, the NGDS contracts are mandatory for domestic express and ground small packages (up to 150 pounds) and extremely urgent letters. In some instances, commercial carrier services are superior to the USPS in terms of cost or delivery time. (See Chapter 10).

6. International Mail. Information about [USPS international mail](#) can be found in the [USPS International Mail Manual \(IMM\)](#) on the USPS Postal Explorer website.

7. Contractor Mailings. Printing contractors engaged by the GSA through the Government Printing Office (GPO) to send official items through the USPS shall prepare mailings using the [permit imprint](#) format as shown on the USPS Postal Explorer website. The GSA Permit Imprint Number is G-30. Contractor mailings that do not meet the requirements of the DMM for use of permit imprint mail (i.e., minimum volume and identical weight pieces), must be prepaid by the contractor and reimbursed for postage under the contract terms. Pieces prepaid by the contractor in this manner shall not bear the permit imprint format.

8. Personal Mail. Under no circumstance are GSA funds or official postage permitted to be used to send personal items. The GSA mail system is not for personal use. Employees may not use the GSA mail system or accounts to send or receive personal mail or small packages. Mail centers may provide a separate collection box for employees to insert personal stamped mail to go to the post office.

CHAPTER 4. MAIL PREPARATION

1. General Preparation for Mailing and Processing.

a. Preparation of outgoing mail is the responsibility of the originating office. The correspondence symbol of the mailing office must appear in the upper left-hand corner as part of the return address. The correspondence symbol is used for collecting mail program metrics and mail return if needed. Before preparing mailings, make sure you update the mailing list regularly to minimize mail returned as undeliverable. Use the most cost-effective means to reduce postage/shipping costs when possible and consider the use of commercial carrier via small package delivery services (Chapter 10) when rate shopping. Properly package, presort, and/or consolidate, as necessary.

b. Before the mail center employee picks it up, mail should be inserted in envelopes, with the exception of batch mail. If the mail center has a sealing machine, mail (25 items or more) should be brought to the mail center for sealing.

c. Only field offices and other outlying GSA units that do not have access to a GSA mail centers may regularly use USPS collection boxes.

d. Central Office and regional offices that normally use a GSA mail center should make every effort to have the mail center process their mail. Under exceptional circumstances, employees may place small amounts of official mail in USPS collection boxes.

2. Package Preparation. Each package should be properly prepared to prevent damage or loss.

a. Containers should be strong enough to protect the contents during handling;

b. Contents should be cushioned to make sure they do not move within the container;

c. Address information should be affixed onto the contents only on the side of the piece bearing postage;

d. Pressure-sensitive filament or reinforced tape should be used to seal and reinforce flaps and seams;

e. Use of wrapping paper should be avoided;

f. String should not be used; and

g. "Fragile" should be marked boldly on all sides of a package containing a

breakable item.

3. Addressing Standards for Automation. USPS addressing guidelines should be used to guarantee efficient handling of your mail. The USPS uses automated equipment to speed up mail handling. [Postal Addressing Standards](#) can be found online at the USPS Postal Explorer website.

4. Expedited Mail.

a. USPS Express Mail is usually more expensive and slower than the service available through the OMB mandated category management acquisition approach for package delivery services – currently usage of the NGDS Contract is required. (See Chapter 10). Express Mail should generally only be used if the location is not serviced by the small package delivery service vendors. Expedited mail service should not be used for mail that will arrive on Saturday, Sunday, or holidays unless the receiving office is open for business.

b. All program managers, HSSOs, and programs with large mailings are to monitor the use of expedited mail to prevent abuse and to make sure that requirements of the Private Express Statutes are being met.

c. Mailers and recipients should check to see that expedited mail arrives on time. When there is a delay, the mailer must complete and submit parts I and IV of PS Form 3533, Application and Voucher for Refund of Postage and Fees. Submit the mailer's receipt with the form. The mailer must also submit the envelope, with the mailing label and postage intact, showing the date and time of delivery. If the cover is unavailable and the claim is valid, the Express Mail Manager at the office of origin must obtain a copy of the delivery report.

CHAPTER 5. CLASSES OF USPS MAIL

1. Mail Classes. GSA mail rooms can help decide the best class of mail to use. Generally, GSA uses First-Class Mail for most USPS mail. Mailers of large volumes of mail, including contractors, should compare [Classes of Mail](#) at the USPS Postal Explorer website and use the least expensive class that will satisfy their mailing requirements. Some of the more common classes that GSA uses are discussed below.

2. First-Class Mail. First-Class Mail is the highest priority mail. This is the class service most commonly used by GSA. Mailers may use First-Class Mail for any mailable item (DMM E110.1.1).

a. The following are items that the USPS requires be sent First-Class or by Express Mail:

- (1) Written or typewritten matter,
- (2) Matter closed against postal inspection,
- (3) Matter having the character of actual and personal correspondence,
- (4) Credit cards, and
- (5) Bills and statements of account.

b. First-Class Mail receives prompt handling and air transportation. First-Class Mail consists of the following:

- (1) Letters and postcards (0-13 ounces), and
- (2) Priority Mail (First-class mail that is between 13 ounces and 70 pounds).

c. First-Class Mail should be used whenever possible as an alternative to expedited (overnight) mail. Mail managers and mailers should plan their mailings to maximize the use of first-class mail instead of more costly expedited mail service.

d. The USPS service objective for First-Class Mail is delivery within 1 to 3 days nationwide.

3. Marketing Mail. Formerly called standard mail, this can be used for items not requiring First-Class or periodical service and weighing less than 16 ounces. This class of mail service is slower than First-Class and is generally used for flyers, circulars, newsletters, bulletins, catalogs, and small parcels. Standard mail rates are bulk rates and each mailing must meet a minimum quantity of 200 pieces or 50 pounds. Generally,

at GSA this type of mail is printed through the GPO and mailed as part of the same job to a GSA supplied mailing list.

4. USPS Priority Express Mail.

a. GSA does not generally use USPS Priority Express Mail, which is a guaranteed expedited service offered by the USPS. It offers next day delivery by 12 PM to most destinations if the mail is presented to the post office at the Express mail window by 5PM. USPS does not provide a money-back guarantee if the shipment arrives late. Fees vary depending on distance and weight of the mail, and the type of services selected. The use of USPS Priority Mail Express is extremely costly and the determination to use it should, in general, be limited to destinations where small package delivery service is not available. The NGDS contract prices with UPS, FedEx and DHL (see Chapter 10, Small Package Delivery Services) is less costly than USPS Priority Mail Express. Therefore, mailers are encouraged to rate-shop and select the most cost-effective transportation method based on required delivery date, security, accountability, and availability to destination.

CHAPTER 6. BUSINESS REPLY AND COURTESY REPLY MAIL

1. General. GSA rarely uses Business Reply Mail (BRM) or Courtesy Reply Mail (CRM) as the post office administrative fees for BRM are high and the return rate for CRM is low. Offices are encouraged to use online surveys, email, or other mechanisms to receive replies and feedback.
2. Authorization. All mailers must have approval from the AMM before using BRM or CRM, even if executed for GSA by a contractor.
3. BRM. BRM is a special service that enables mailers to receive First-Class Mail back from customers by paying postage only on the mail returned to them. Post office annual fees of approximately \$450 for each different BRM piece are charged, making this a very expensive way to receive replies or feedback. If needed, BRM should be contracted for using a third-party provider. BRM should not be used to originate mail under any circumstances. More information about [BRM](#) can be found on the USPS Postal Explorer website.
4. CRM. CRM consists of pre-addressed postcards or envelopes provided by the mailer to customers in order to expedite their responses and provide a more accurate delivery. It differs from BRM in that the USPS does not charge a fee and the respondent is responsible for applying the correct postage before mailing. The USPS returns CRM more quickly because it has a correct address and a barcode which allows it to be automatically processed. USPS provides the Facing Identifier Mark (FIM), correct ZIP + 4, and a barcode for CRM mail at no charge to the mailer. More information about [Courtesy Reply Mail](#) can be found on the USPS Postal Explorer website.

CHAPTER 7. USPS EXTRA SERVICES

1. General. USPS extra services require payment of an additional fee and are often unnecessary. More information about [extra services](#) and the corresponding [prices](#) can be found on the USPS website. Extra Services should be used only when necessary; for example, when the Government may require evidence in a mailing dispute, or when they are needed to protect sensitive, controlled, pilferable, or irreplaceable one-of-a-kind material. Special mail services should not be used for the sole purpose of providing a record of mailing and delivery or for tracing mail. Below is some information on some of the types of extra services available.
2. Endorsements. Markings for special services should be placed above the address and to the right of the return address. This requirement applies to endorsements for registered, insured, certified, special delivery, restricted delivery, and return receipts.
3. Certificates of Mailing.
 - a. Certificates of mailing furnish evidence of mailing only. Certificates of mailing are available for First-Class, Standard mail, and Priority Mail. USPS records certificates of mailing only at the mailers post office. Certificates of mailing do not provide proof of delivery. Mailers should use certificates of mailing when proof of a mail piece entering the postal system is all they require.
 - b. The mailer prepares certificates of mailing. Use PS Form 3817, Certificate of Mailing, for ordinary mail of any class. This mail service does not insure the article against loss or damage, which is prohibited for Federal mailers.
4. Certified Mail.
 - a. Certified mail provides proof of delivery. Certified mail should be used only when required by law or when deemed absolutely essential. If the mailer only requires proof of mailing, a certificate of mailing should be used instead.
 - b. Certified mail provides the originating post office with a receipt and requires the delivering post office to keep a record of delivery which it holds for 2 years. The originating post office keeps no record of delivery. USPS handles the mail in transit as ordinary mail. Certified mail costs much less than registered mail.
 - c. USPS accepts only First-Class and Priority Mail as certified mail. Return receipts and restricted delivery services are also available with certified mail.
5. Insured Mail. GSA is prohibited from insuring its mail. The U.S. Comptroller General has held that “Federal agencies are prohibited from using insured mail under both 40 U.S.C. 726 and the Government’s self-insurance policy since insured mail provides no

special or additional service in addition to the indemnity offered.” (Source: 3 Comp. Gen. 391 and 22 Comp. Gen. 832, modified.)

6. Registered Mail.

a. Registered mail provides added protection for valuable and important mail. It is the most secure service offered by the USPS for domestic mail. Registered mail stays under lock and key, or under personal control, from the moment the post office receives it until the post office delivers it. The USPS limits this to First-Class and Priority Mail. The mailer may obtain a return receipt or restricted delivery for an additional fee. This is a costly service and requires more time for delivery because the system of receipts slows the movement of the mail. The sender’s office is responsible for filling out registered mail forms. Please note that GSA mailrooms are not equipped to assist with sending large volumes of registered mail. Organizations with a need to send large volumes of registered mail may contact the Government Printing Office for assistance.

b. The USPS limits registry service to the following:

(1) Any registered mail required by statute or regulation; and

(2) Material requiring special safeguards or of such importance that determining individual responsibility for loss or damage is necessary, such as valuable documents or jewelry.

c. The USPS does not accept padded envelopes, plastic envelopes, or envelopes with a glossy finish as registered mail. Tape should not be placed over the envelope flap where the USPS places postmark impressions during travel. Registered mail should not be placed in USPS collection boxes.

7. Restricted Delivery. Restricted delivery allows a mailer to specify that mail be delivered only to the addressee or to an agent. The addressee must authorize the agent in writing to receive the mail. This mail service should be used only when you must obtain the signature of the addressee or designated representative at the time of delivery. The USPS limits the service to registered or certified mail, or mail insured for more than \$50.

8. Return Receipt.

a. A return receipt furnishes the mailer with proof of delivery. A mailer can request it at the time of or after mailing. If a mailer requests a return receipt after mailing, he or she must pay a required fee in advance. Return receipts should not be routinely requested. If experience indicates that only a small percentage of the receipts are needed, they should be requested after mailing. This reduces costs even though the fee for the receipt is much higher after mailing. Return receipts should only be requested if:

- (1) There is a requirement to take action based on the date of receipt;
- (2) The mailer needs to verify receipt by a deadline date; or
- (3) GSA files require a return receipt as proof of receipt.

b. The USPS limits return receipts to Express Mail, registered mail, certified mail, or mail insured for more than \$50. Return receipts do not insure against loss or damage.

9. Special Delivery.

a. The USPS gives special delivery mail expedited handling when it arrives at the destination post office. The USPS delivers it on the next special delivery run or on the next regular mail delivery route. Special delivery is costly for addresses outside of a 1-mile delivery radius of the destination post office.

b. The USPS bases fees on the class of mail used and the weight of the article. Special delivery is less expensive than Express Mail but it does not guarantee next day delivery. Special delivery is available for all classes of mail except Express Mail, and may be combined with certified or registered mail.

c. Special delivery should not be used unless someone will be at the address to receive it, and the post office will provide a special delivery to that location.

10. Special Handling.

a. The USPS limits special handling to the standard mail sub-classes parcel post, bound printed matter, and special mail. It also provides preferential handling, but not preferential delivery, to the extent practicable in dispatch and transportation. The service itself does not insure the article against loss or damage. Special handling is available for First-Class Mail, Priority Mail, and Package Services. Parcel post, bound printed matter, and special mail should be used instead of Express Mail or First-Class Mail whenever possible. It costs less than First-Class, Priority, and Express Mail.

b. Mail that requires special handling does not go through bulk mailing centers, which shortens the delivery time. It is provided preferential handling between post offices, but is not provided special delivery from the destination post office. The USPS delivers parcels on the regularly scheduled trips. Since most standard mail is low priority, special handling may expedite parcels during peak mailing periods such as seasonal rushes.

CHAPTER 8. METERED MAIL

1. General.

a. A postage meter system consists of two parts: a base unit that a mailer purchases or leases from a manufacturer and a meter that a mailer leases from a USPS approved mail meter manufacturer.

b. The postage meter is a sealed unit that contains a postmark die and two registers. The postmark die prints the name of the mailing post office and the price of postage. This is called an indicia. The indicia imprint may mark directly on the envelope, or it may mark on adhesive tape for attachment to an envelope or package. The two registers record the value of the postage imprints. The ascending register adds and keeps a total of all postage spent. The descending register subtracts and shows the postage balance remaining on the meter. The sum of the ascending and descending registers should equal the total postage loaded on the postage meter. Most meters are inspected and re-loaded with U.S. Postage by the meter's manufacturer over the Internet.

c. GSA uses the USPS Official Mailing Account System (OMAS) to track postage spending. Postage is paid for by funds transferred to the USPS on a monthly basis.

2. End of the Fiscal Year Postage Meter Loading. Do not load large amounts of postage at the end of the fiscal year. Run the postage meter as close to zero as possible.

3. Postage Meter Maintenance.

a. Reporting Problems. If the printing and recording mechanism is faulty in any way, do not use the postage meter. Notify the postage meter manufacturer immediately. Under no circumstances should a mailer tamper with the postage meter register. Only the postage meter manufacturer may perform postage meter maintenance. Government contractors may not directly contact postage meter manufacturers for maintenance.

b. Maintenance Logbook. Mailers should keep a logbook of postage meter maintenance calls. Include the date and time the mailer called the postage meter manufacturer, a summary of the conversation, and how long it took the postage meter manufacturer to respond.

c. Checking Postage Meters Out of Service. Postage meter manufacturers must pick up defective postage meters and check them out of service. The postage meter manufacturer will replace defective postage meters with new postage meters. Only the licensing post office may check a postage meter out of service. The meter manufacturer will generate a transaction to credit the OMAS system for any unused postage.

d. Refunds. Federal Government agencies may not accept cash or money order

refunds or transfer refunds to another penalty postage meter. When you withdraw a postage meter from service, make sure that GSA receives proper credit for the postage remaining on the descending register. The USPS may withhold final postage adjustments or refunds pending a report from the postage meter manufacturer. The USPS will refund postage on postage meters damaged by fire only if the registers are legible, or can be reconstructed by the postage meter manufacturer.

e. Moving a Postage Meter. If a mailer moves a postage meter or otherwise changes the post office where he or she deposits metered mail, the meter manufacturer must be contacted to process the address change and report any change in licensing Post Office to the Postal Service.

4. Metering Mail.

a. Meter Date. The postage meter date advances automatically. The month, day, and year must be shown in the meter stamp on all First-Class Mail and on all certified, Collect on Delivery (COD), insured, Registered Mail, and special handling mail.

b. Meter Stamps, Ink, and Meter Tape. Mailers should run a blank tape before actually metering the mail, to verify that the meter imprint is correct and clear. Only fluorescent ink should be used. Only approved meter stamp designs should be used. Meter stamps should be legible and should not overlap. Only USPS-approved meter tape should be used.

c. Bundling. Mailers should always bundle ten pieces of letter-sized metered mail with rubber bands. Bundling prevents the metered mail from being mixed with other mail that the USPS must face, cancel, and postmark. Mailers should face and tray large volumes of letter mail. Facing is turning the envelopes so that the addresses all face the same direction.

5. Postage Meter Errors. Mailers should save incorrect postage meter tapes and take them to the licensing post office for a credit to the OMAS system. The postage meter tapes should be complete and legible. Postage meter tapes should not be removed from envelopes. Submit the entire envelope. The credit cannot be applied to another postage meter. The USPS will issue all refunds as credits to the OMAS system. The USPS will only refund 90 percent of spoiled meter impressions unless the USPS is at fault or a postage meter malfunction caused the error. Meter impressions can be submitted for refund within 1 year of error.

6. Records and Reporting. GSA requires RMMs to collect and report data on mail and small package administrative shipment volumes and expenditures, and operational costs from locations that process mail. The collection and reporting of the required data allows the OAS, the AMM, and the RMMs to have a clear and quantifiable view of mail operations to assist in making informed management decisions regarding mail operations.

a. Monthly RMM Reports. RMMs must submit monthly data on metered mail volumes and postage expenditures on the Monthly RMM Report. This data will conform to the requirements of FMR 102-192, Subpart C, Reporting Requirements. Maintaining this information is necessary to accurately manage the mail program and to gauge the impacts of rates and classification changes. The data is due five business days after the start of the next month. Consolidated Administrative Services Unit (CASU) and interagency agreement operated mail centers should make collecting this data part of the agreements.

b. Inventory of GSA Mail Processing Equipment. Each postage meter should be identified by serial number, cost code, location, and meter vendor on the Annual Inventory of GSA Mail Processing Equipment. RMMs will receive the inventory sheet from the AMM by October 31 of each year.

CHAPTER 9. PERMIT IMPRINT MAIL

1. General.

a. USPS may authorize mailers to mail without affixing postage. Each mail piece sent under this method must bear a permit imprint indicia showing postage payment. Mailers must present these mailings for weighing unless otherwise authorized by the USPS. Penalty permit imprint mailings must contain at least 200 identical pieces or 50 pounds of mail, but the USPS may require higher volumes at some rates.

b. GSA has a permit imprint account. The number is G-30. Use the penalty permit imprint format for all mailings containing at least 200 identical pieces, including special rate mail, contractor mailings, jobs printed and sent through the GPO, and mailings for other Federal agencies. OAS will require reimbursement at the end of the fiscal year from offices using the G-30 permit to send mailings.

2. Large Mailings. The originator of a large mailing (200 pieces or more) should:

a. Plan in advance to allow lead time for using a more economical class of mail service;

b. Consolidate mailings wherever possible;

c. Purge mailing lists as often as standards require; and

d. Design the mail piece as a self-mailer if possible.

3. Forms. The required forms are as follows:

a. [PS Form 3615](#), Mailing Permit Application and Customer Profile. Prepare and submit two copies of the form to the entry post office. The application is a one-time requirement as long as the application remains active.

b. Mailers are responsible for completing and submitting the required mailing statements as specified in the DMM for the appropriate class of mail. The entry post office can provide mailers with mailing statements and detailed instructions. Contact the AMM for imprint cost codes.

4. Format.

a. First-Class penalty permit imprints must show the city, state, First-Class Mail, "U.S. Postage Paid", and the permit number. They may also include the date, amount of postage paid, ZIP Code, and rate markings.

b. Standard mail penalty permit imprints must show the city, state, "U.S. Postage

Paid”, and the permit number. They may also include the amount of postage paid, ZIP Code, and rate markings.

5. Contractor Mailings. If a mailer’s office does not have the resources to prepare a large mailing in house, consider using a contractor. For presort, the mailer should determine if the savings will more than offset the added cost of having a contractor prepare the mailings. A GSA employee must complete and furnish the contractor with two copies of PS Form 3615 if the entry post office does not have one on file. The entry post office can provide mailers with this form. The contractor must then submit both copies to the post office. A GSA employee must also prepare the appropriate mailing statements in duplicate to present to the post office with each mailing. After verification of the mailing statements by the post office, the contractor must furnish one copy to the mailer for forwarding to the RMM.

6. Mailings for Other Federal Agencies. GSA contracts and interagency agreements that print and mail large volumes of material for other Federal agencies must follow these procedures:

a. The permit imprint format must be included on all mail pieces. The permit imprint indicia must appear in the upper right corner of the mail piece or label and must include the customer agency name and permit imprint number. Print the complete return address (customer agency name and mailing address) in the upper left corner and the words “Official Business - Penalty for Private Use \$300” immediately below the return address. The FIM must not appear on permit imprint mail. Any mail pieces printed without the permit imprint format should be returned to the customer agency for mailing.

b. Each mailing must consist of at least 200 identical pieces. Non-identical pieces should be returned to the customer agency for mailing. Letter mail should be placed in trays with each piece facing the same direction.

c. The customer agency must complete and submit two copies of [PS Form 3615](#) to the mailing post office. This application is a one-time requirement as long as the application remains active.

d. If possible, mail should be returned to the customer agency for mailing and preparation of forms. Otherwise, a print plant employee must prepare the appropriate mailing statements in duplicate. Mailing statements should be presented at the post office with each mailing. Mailing statement preparation time should be billed to the customer agency. Copies of the mailing statements are kept on site for 2 years and at the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) for 6 years. Copies of the mailing statements should also be returned to the customer agency.

7. Mailing Lists.

a. Organizations that use mailing lists should purge them annually, under established standards, to delete invalid or inactive addresses. This guarantees that only

those people requesting retention on a mailing list receive future mailings from that list. Purging lists can substantially reduce postage costs since some mailing lists include thousands of addresses.

b. The most cost-effective way to purge mailing lists is to annually attach a questionnaire to a mailing. The recipient should be asked whether he or she wishes to remain on the mailing list. Mailing lists should be purged of those people who fail to respond by the designated date.

c. The annual questionnaire should be CRM, not BRM. People wishing to remain on the mailing list should be required to place their own postage on the return mail.

8. Unauthorized Use of Permit Indicia. Unauthorized use of permit imprint indicia should be reported to the AMM and the GSA Office of Inspector General immediately upon discovery.

CHAPTER 10. SMALL PACKAGE DELIVERY SERVICES

1. General.

a. GSA uses the NGDS contract vehicle for, among other things, domestic express next and second business day small package delivery services. This Indefinite Delivery/Indefinite Quantity (IDIQ) contract vehicle is a Best-In-Class (BIC) solution designated by OMB for small package delivery services. This solution was established and is administered by the Department of Defense (DOD) U.S. Transportation Command (TRANSCOM). The solution has streamlined the acquisition of delivery services and leverages the Federal Government's buying power to achieve the best possible pricing and discounts.

b. Key NGDS features:

- (1) Utilizes BIC pricing and discounts;
- (2) Includes international express delivery for shipments up to, and including, 300lbs;
- (3) Includes domestic express and ground delivery for shipments, up to, and including 150lbs within the Continental United States (CONUS);
- (4) Includes domestic express delivery for shipments between CONUS and Alaska, Hawaii, and Puerto Rico, and within Alaska, Hawaii, and Puerto Rico up to 300lbs;
- (5) Allows for the shipping of hazardous materials and dangerous goods;
- (6) waives fuel surcharges for parcel shipments; and
- (7) Improves management of inbound, outbound, and intra-agency shipments.

c. More information on NGDS may be found on the Acquisition Hallway at <https://hallways.cap.gsa.gov/app/#/gateway/transportation-logistics-services>.

2. Insurance or Declared Value. The purchase of additional insurance is prohibited by 40 U.S.C. 17307, also known as the Government Losses in Shipment Act (GLISA). Insurance fees are automatically charged when the shipper declares any value over \$0.00. Shippers shall avoid declaring value on shipments. This includes stating a value when creating shipping labels in online systems, for example UPS CampusShip.

3. Private Express Statutes.

a. The Private Express Statutes (39 CFR 310 and 320) are a group of laws under

which the USPS has the exclusive right, with certain limited exceptions, to carry letters for compensation. The Statutes reserve a sufficient revenue base for the United States mail system to enable it to serve all areas of the nation equitably, at uniform rates, including areas where services are not self-sustaining. The Statutes generally state that other carriers may transport letters only if the mailer pays the appropriate postage and meets certain other requirements. The Statutes prohibit the private carriage of letters for others without postage payment. Shippers are always encouraged to use the least expensive option that meets GSA needs. More information about the [Private Express Statutes](#) can be found on the USPS Postal Explorer website.

b. Small Package Delivery Services (NGDS carriers) may also carry letters if they are extremely urgent as defined in 39 CFR 320.6. To qualify as extremely urgent, the letter must meet one of two USPS tests shown below:

(1) Cost. The USPS considers a letter to be extremely urgent if the amount paid for private carriage is at least 6 times the cost of mailing a one ounce letter. This means that NGDS-contracted carriers can be used when the extra cost is justified by the speed or service required to meet GSA's needs; or

(2) Time Limits. The USPS considers a letter to be extremely urgent if it loses its value or usefulness without delivery as follows:

(a) Messenger services must complete delivery of letters dispatched by noon and within 50 miles of the intended destination, within 6 hours or by the close of the addressee's normal business hours that day, whichever is later. Messenger services must complete delivery of letters dispatched after noon and before midnight and within 50 miles of the intended destination, by 10:00 a.m. of the addressee's next business day. For letters sent more than 50 miles, messenger services must complete delivery within 12 hours or by noon of the addressee's next business day.

(b) For all other letters, carriers must complete delivery within 12 hours or by noon of the addressee's next business day.

(c) The suspension is available only if delivery outside of these time limits causes the letter to lose value or usefulness.

4. Early Next Morning and Next Day Delivery. HSSOs and RAs shall ensure that employees strictly limit the use of Early Next Morning Delivery because this service is very expensive. Supervisors shall monitor and approve the use of Early Next Morning mailing services. Next Day Delivery should not be used on Fridays, weekends, or the days before a holiday unless it is known the receiving office will be open for business.

5. NGDS Alternatives. The USPS, internal GSA mail, email, and facsimile machines should be used whenever possible, all of these services offer timely delivery at lower costs. Mailers should plan their mailings in advance to control their costs in this area.

Through proper planning, mailers will find that, in many cases, First-Class Mail will meet the Government's needs.

CHAPTER 11. SECURITY

PART 1. MAIL CENTER SECURITY

1. General. RMMs, security offices, and mail center supervisors should work together to secure proper protection for materials flowing through each mail center. RMMs, working with the AMM, are responsible for establishing and annually reviewing a mail security plan to ensure the implementation of and conformity with appropriate security requirements that do not create undue delay in mail processing. All mail centers are required to have written security plans, regardless of the facility's size and the volume of mail handled. (41 CFR 102-192.110). RMMs are also responsible for writing a mail security plan and maintaining it in all regional locations regardless of the volume of mail handled. All GSA RMMs are required to complete and return an annual checklist pertaining to their mail center security plans. The checklist will be sent to the RMMs by the AMM by January 30th each year.

2. Entrances. Deadbolt locks with key slots should be installed on both sides of main center doors. One door should be a Dutch door to permit mail center employees to provide service without leaving an open entryway. Alternatively, a walk-up window can be used for customers. Only mail center employees should be allowed in the mail center. Mail centers shall be locked at all times during non-duty hours or when not in use. Security and protection of the mail shall be maintained at all times.

3. Internal Security. Adequate physical arrangements should be made for safeguarding security-classified documents and registered or certified mail. Security storage equipment should be obtained to safeguard mail that may contain valuables, classified mail, and registered mail. Mail should not be left in unattended public areas.

4. Postage Meters. Postage meters should be placed where they are visible. Postage meters should be kept under lock and key when not in use.

5. Mail Access Points. These are not mail centers. They are commonly found adjacent to employee work areas that are already in access controlled space and where the mail has already been screened elsewhere. Mail access points shall have security measures implemented as deemed necessary by the RMM.

PART 2. MAIL AND SMALL PACKAGE SECURITY

6. Characteristics of Suspicious Mail. Mail center employees should be aware of the general characteristics of mail bombs and chemical or biological threats. Some things to watch for are:

a. Appearance.

- (1) Items arriving via international mail are considered more suspicious;
- (2) Conspicuously marked Personal, Confidential, Eyes Only, Fragile, or Rush. These characteristics are important when the addressee does not usually receive personal mail at the office;
- (3) Distorted handwriting;
- (4) Excessive postage;
- (5) Holes, pin pricks, or punctures;
- (6) Inaccurate address, name, or title;
- (7) Misspelled common words;
- (8) No return address;
- (9) Oil stains;
- (10) Visible wires or aluminum foil;
- (11) Postmark is different from the return address;
- (12) Addressed with cut and pasted letters; or
- (13) Excessive tape.

b. Feel.

- (1) Rigid envelopes, as if containing cardboard, metal, or plastic;
- (2) Springy or sponge-like;
- (3) Unusually heavy; or
- (4) Unbalanced, one side is heavier (lopsided).

c. Smell or Sound.

- (1) Any strange smell; or

(2) Buzzing, ticking, or sloshing sound.

7. Discovery of Suspicious Mail. If a mailing containing a suspicious threat is detected and the contents cannot be verified by the addressee or sender within a reasonable amount of time, follow the specific procedures outlined in the Mail Security Plan.

a. Recommended Actions for Suspected Explosive Threats Are:

(1) FIRST - Treat it as suspect and DO NOT OPEN – follow procedures in the Mail Security Plan if available.

(2) INQUIRE – Ask the employee who found the suspicious item to write down the specific recognition point in the screening process that caused the alert (excessive postage, no return address, rigid or bulky, lopsided or uneven appearance, strange odor, protruding wires, oily stains, discolorations, excessive tape, etc.).

(3) ISOLATE - Isolate the area where the mail piece was discovered/found – don't handle it – evacuate the immediate area.

(4) ALERT - Alert other employees and keep personnel clear of the isolation area.

(5) NOTIFY - Inform supervisors and security.

(6) DOCUMENT - Without touching the mail piece, record from each visible side of the item all available information (name and address of addressee and sender, postmark, cancellation date, types of stamps, and any other markings or labels found on the item). Copy information with exact the spelling and location given on the item.

(7) INFORM - Inform security/local law enforcement agency and GSA's Office of Mission Assurance (OMA) (and USPS Postal Inspectors at 877-876-2455 if sent through the U.S. Mail) of all the information recorded from the suspect item.

(8) NOTE - If you have any reason to believe a letter or package is suspicious, do not take a chance or worry about possible embarrassment if the item turns out to be a false alert.

b. Recommended actions for suspected chemical or biological threats are:

(1) FIRST - Treat it as suspect and DO NOT OPEN – remain calm, slowly put the suspicious item down, and notify a supervisor/follow step-by-step procedures outlined in the unit Mail Security Plan.

(2) IMMEDIATE EMERGENCY - If there is a medical emergency or chemical reaction to the mail piece, call security/local law enforcement agency and OMA. If the

mail piece was sent through the U.S. Mail, also call the USPS Postal Inspectors at 877-876-2455.

(3) NO KNOWN MEDICAL EMERGENCY - The supervisor should call the designated emergency personnel/first responders in the unit/facility Mail Security Plan. If sent through the U.S. Mail, contact the USPS Postal Inspectors at 877-876-2455.

(4) ISOLATE - Isolate the suspicious mail piece – don't handle it –cordon off the immediate area. Ensure no one enters the room before emergency responders arrive. Depending on the circumstances, it may be better to get as far away from the suspicious package as possible but have one person remain near the room to ensure no one enters except emergency responders. The supervisor should turn off any installed ventilation system if accessible or contact the proper authority to do so.

(5) WASH WITH SOAP AND WATER - At the first opportunity, ensure all persons who came in contact with the suspicious item wash their hands and forearms with antibacterial soap and water, being careful not to splash the water.

(6) CONTACT INFORMATION - List everyone who touched (or may have come in contact with) the mail piece. Include contact information and have the information available for authorities. If asked, provide the information to first responders.

(7) DECONTAMINATION - Follow first responders' instructions on decontamination procedures.

CHAPTER 12. AGENCY AND REGIONAL MAIL MANAGER RESPONSIBILITIES

1. General.

a. The AMM develops and issues this Handbook and improves the mail management program through cost savings whenever possible. AMM responsibilities are further defined in Section 102-192.130 of the FMR.

b. If a RMM cannot resolve a problem locally, the RMM notifies the AMM. The AMM coordinates with USPS Headquarters or NGDS-contracted vendors to solve the problem.

2. Annual USPS Estimate.

a. Each agency authorized to use penalty mail must provide the USPS with an estimate of its anticipated penalty mail reimbursement for the coming fiscal year. The AMM submits GSA's estimate, which is due to the USPS by September 15 of each year, on PS Form 1952, Annual Estimate of Anticipated Penalty Mail Usage. The AMM bases the estimate on mail volumes for the previous year with adjustments made for postal rate changes, projected volume trends, and/or program changes.

b. The AMM conducts a mid-year review and promptly notifies the USPS of any major changes in anticipated postage costs during the year, and submits a revised estimate if needed.

c. The USPS sends receives monthly statements in the amount of 1/12th of the total on that year's GSA's PS Form 1952. The Department of Treasury transacts these payments on a monthly basis through the Intragovernmental Payment and Collection (IPAC) System. The AMM receives courtesy copies of the IPAC statement for GSA.

3. Official Mail Accounting System (OMAS) Review.

a. The USPS issues monthly OMAS statements that provide a detailed listing of all postage costs incurred during the quarter. These are available on the OMAS System. The AMM downloads the OMAS statement for GSA.

b. The AMM reviews each OMAS statement for accuracy.

(1) Permit Imprint. The AMM receives copies of all mailing statements from mailers who have prepared permit imprint mailings. The AMM compares the postage charges on the mailing statements for presort First-Class, Bulk Standard mail, and all other permit imprint mailings with postage charges on the OMAS statement. The AMM also uses data kept in the GPO Print Job Log for this purpose. Programs are billed back

for these large mailings (e.g. catalogs and tax forms).

(2) Periodicals. GSA does not send periodicals. There should be no postage charges for periodicals on the OMAS statement.

(3) Postage Meters. The AMM reviews charges for GSA postage meters. If meters that are not in the GSA regional office buildings appear, the AMM works with USPS headquarters to have the meters removed from the main GSA account.

(4) BRM.

(a) Every month, the USPS includes a list of all BRM permits and any annual fees for the agency with the OMAS statement. The AMM checks this list to verify that only authorized mailing locations are using BRM.

(b) The AMM cancels unauthorized BRM permits by writing to the appropriate postmaster. The AMM also notifies the appropriate RMM of the unauthorized use of BRM and of the BRM permit cancellation. The AMM reports repeated misuse of BRM to the GSA OIG.

(5) Stamps.

(a) The AMM receives Monthly reports from all RMMs who use stamps. The AMM compares the Records of Accountable Mail with the stamp charges on the OMAS statement.

(b) The AMM refers any unverified stamp charges to the appropriate RMM. If the RMM cannot verify the charges, he or she works with the local post office to verify the charges or remove them from the OMAS statement. If the AMM cannot determine the appropriate RMM, the AMM works with USPS headquarters to verify the charges or remove them from the OMAS statement.

4. OMAS Reconciliation.

a. At the end of each fiscal year, the USPS issues a statement of reconciliation. It compares the amount actually spent on postage with the amount paid to the USPS. If the amount spent exceeds the amount paid, the USPS issues a bill. If the amount spent is less than the amount paid, the USPS issues a credit.

b. The AMM verifies the accuracy of this statement by comparing it with the verified OMAS statements received during the year.

c. The AMM will create an annual report of all USPS volume and postage costs by region. This report is due to OAS Director of Workplace Services from the AMM each year by November 30.

5. Penalty BRM.

a. Central Office and the regional headquarters buildings are the only GSA locations preauthorized to use penalty BRM. Each request should document the benefit the Government receives from the use of BRM.

b. The AMM approves all requests to use BRM. The AMM makes a written request to the postmaster at the post office where the mailer will receive the BRM mail.

c. Upon request, the AMM reviews sample BRM mail pieces for format accuracy and compatibility with automated equipment.

6. Metered Mail.

a. The AMM assigns cost codes for all postage meters in GSA. The AMM will need the complete office address and correspondence symbol to assign a cost code.

b. The AMM is responsible for maintaining the master list of all GSA postage meter cost codes and serial numbers. Whenever a RMM notifies the AMM of a change, the AMM will update the list. In addition, the AMM conducts an annual update based on the changes submitted by the RMM each November. The AMM uses the list to review the OMAS postage meter cost codes and serial numbers on the OMAS statement.

c. Each mailing location should submit a copy of its postage meter license to the AMM. The AMM will review the postage meter licenses and verify that they are Government postage meter licenses. The AMM verifies this information with the meter vendors. The AMM notifies the appropriate RMM of any incorrect postage meter licenses. The RMM is responsible for obtaining a corrected license.

d. Records of Accountable Mail Reports are due to the AMM each January 31, April 30, July 31, and October 31. The AMM uses the Records of Accountable Mail Reports to verify the accuracy of the postage meter charges on the OMAS statement.

7. Reporting Data. The AMM is responsible for assembling RMM reports. The AMM also maintains reports on USPS and Small Package delivery spending by collecting and consolidating data from RMMs and online databases.

8. Small Package Delivery Services. In addition, the AMM assists the RMMs with the establishment of Next Generation Delivery Service vendor accounts and provides general guidance and oversight, but unlike in the case of Official (Penalty) Mail, does not centrally manage funds to pay for small package shipments. Payments for small package shipments are the responsibility of the office or program making the shipment.

9. Mail Security Plans. RMMs, with the assistance of the AMM, are responsible for creating and maintaining Mail Security Plans for each mail center. Further information can be found in the Chapter 11, Security.

Appendix A. Definitions

1. General. This appendix defines the most common terms used in the General Services Administration (GSA) Mail Management Program and in the United States Postal Service (USPS) Domestic Mail Manual (DMM).
2. Definitions.
 - a. Addressing Standards. The rules and regulations governing the addressing of mail, developed by the USPS, that enhance the processing and delivery of mail, reduce undeliverable as addressed mail, and provide cost reduction opportunities.
 - b. Batch Mail. Internal GSA mail sent between regional offices or between Central Office and regional offices, which mail center employees have consolidated according to destination.
 - c. Bulk Mail. A mailing of extensively sorted periodicals or standard mail with various postage rates.
 - d. Business Reply Mail (BRM). A mail service that enables mailers to receive First-Class cards, envelopes, and labeled packages back from customers. The mailer pays the postage and fees only on returned mail (DMM S922.1.1). Generally, GSA does not use this class of mail.
 - e. Certified Mail. A mail service that provides the mailer with a mailing receipt and a delivery record at the destination post office (DMM S912.1.1).
 - f. Classes of Mail. Classes of mail include Express, First-Class, Priority, Periodicals, Marketing, and packages services.
 - g. Courtesy Reply Mail (CRM). Pre-addressed postcards or envelopes that a mailer provides to its customers in order to expedite and provide more accurate delivery of their responses. Unlike BRM, the USPS does not require a fee for CRM and the respondent pays the postage.
 - h. Domestic Mail. Mail transmitted within, among, and between the United States of America, its [territories and possessions](#), [Army Post Office \(APO\) addresses](#), [Fleet Post Office \(FPO\) addresses](#), [Diplomatic Post Office \(DPO\) addresses](#), and the United Nations, NY.
 - i. DMM. Domestic Mail Manual - A USPS-issued manual containing basic standards for the preparation and treatment of mail sent within the United States and its territories. It includes descriptions of mail classes, special services and their uses, and rate eligibility standards.

- j. Endorse. To print or stamp the appropriate class or special service on a mail piece.
- k. Expedited Mail. A generic term used to describe mail delivered faster than USPS delivery of First-Class, Periodicals, or Marketing Mail. Examples include USPS Express Mail and Federal Express.
- l. Express Mail. An express mail service offered by the USPS (DMM E500.1.2) and other express carriers.
- m. First-Class Mail (13 Ounces or Less). A class of mail that receives prompt handling and transportation. It also includes printed cards, letters, and postcards (DMM E110.1.1).
- n. Franked Mail. Official mail of Members of Congress sent without prepayment of postage. It bears a written signature or printed facsimile signature. Mailers often incorrectly use the term franking to describe standard penalty indicia.
- o. Incoming Mail. Mail coming into a GSA office from another GSA office or from an outside source.
- p. Indicia. The imprinted designation on mail that represents postage payment (i.e., permit imprint).
- q. Insured Mail. A mail service that provides indemnity coverage for lost, rifled, or damaged articles. In general the Government is self-insured. GSA employees may only use insured mail when its use provides special or additional service in addition to the indemnity offered.
- r. Internal Mail. Mail transmitted within GSA by a GSA mail center, not processed by the USPS or a private company. This includes yellow interoffice envelopes.
- s. International Mail. Mail sent out of the United States and its territories. It does not include military mail sent through an Army Post Office (APO) or Fleet Post Office (FPO), nor does it include materials sent in State Department pouches.
- t. Letter. A message directed to a specific person or address and recorded in or on a tangible object. It consists of any information recorded on tangible objects such as paper in sheet or card form, or magnetic media.
- u. Mail. Any letters, flats, memoranda, postcards, documents, publications, packages and other written or printed communications received for distribution or dispatch by GSA from the USPS; Commercial carriers (e.g. UPS); or an intra-department envelope.

v. Mail Center. A centralized location that processes mail. The mail center serves as the focal point for receiving and transmitting mail to and from internal or external sources for distribution to operating units or entry into the USPS system.

w. Mailing Location. Any location, including a mail center that processes mail for dispatch.

x. Mail Management. Applying efficient and inexpensive practices to mail processing, including receiving, sorting, opening, reading, routing, distributing, delivering, controlling, picking up, and dispatching mail.

y. Mail Preparation. Processes involved in preparing mail for dispatch in such a way that it meets USPS requirements. These processes include, but are not limited to: sorting, barcoding, and designing mail pieces.

z. Mail Stations. Authorized mail pickup and delivery points.

aa. Marketing Mail. A class of mail that does not require First-Class service, weighing less than 16 ounces. A minimum volume of 200 pieces or 50 pounds of address pieces is required. Previously referred to as Standard Mail.

bb. Metered Mail. Mail for which a mailer pays the postage through use of a postage meter.

cc. Official Mail. All mail used to conduct and transmit the official business of a Federal agency. All mail entering the GSA mail system is official mail until determined otherwise. As such, it is Government property and is subject to all rules pertaining to the use of Government property.

dd. Official Mail Accounting System (OMAS). An automated system that provides for entry of data from mailing statements for official mail. The USPS bills agencies based on data from OMAS.

ee. Optical Character Reader (OCR). A device that reads mail addresses and automatically determines if they are valid. It also determines if the ZIP code matches the address, prints a barcode, and sorts the mail.

ff. Outgoing Mail. Mail generated from within GSA, addressed for delivery outside the office or the agency, and processed for delivery by the USPS or a private company.

gg. Parcel Post. A type of standard mail on which the USPS bases postage rates on weights and distances (zone rated).

hh. Penalty BRM. BRM used for official business by a Federal agency (DMM E060.11.1.).

ii. Penalty Mail. Official mail sent by United States Government agencies relating to the business of the United States Government. The law authorizes transmission in the mail without prepayment of postage (DMM E060.1.0). A \$300 penalty applies for private use.

jj. Penalty Mail Stamp. A postage stamp used by Federal agencies for official mail.

kk. Penalty Metered Mail. Official mail on which a Federal agency pays the postage through use of a penalty postage meter.

ll. Periodicals. A class of mail that includes newspapers, magazines, and other publications. Generally, GSA does not use this class of mail.

mm. Permit Imprint. Printed indicia indicating that the mailer under the permit number shown has paid the postage due. Use of permit imprints facilitates direct accountability for bulk or other large, centralized mailings.

nn. Personal Mail or Small Packages. Mail or small packages sent by or addressed to individuals in a non-official capacity. Employees are generally prohibited from sending and/or receiving personal mail as doing so unreasonably uses Government resources. If a mail center provides a separate collection box for employees to insert personal stamped mail to go to the post office, then that may be used for personal, outgoing mail.

oo. Presorting. Arranging mail pieces in ZIP code order. Discounts apply on qualified mail pieces, meeting certain USPS criteria.

pp. Priority Mail. First-Class Mail weighing more than 13 ounces, and other mail that requires prompt handling and transportation, with a maximum weight of 70 pounds (DMM E120.1 E120.2).

qq. Private Express Statutes. A group of laws that generally provide the USPS with a monopoly to carry letters and other personalized correspondence over post routes (39 CFR 310, 320).

rr. Registered Mail. A mail service that provides added security for valuable and important mail (DMM S911.1.1).

ss. Restricted Delivery. A mail service that permits a mailer to direct delivery of mail only to the addressee or addressee's agent (DMM S916.1.1).

tt. Return Receipts. A mail service that provides the mailer with a receipt as evidence of delivery (DMM S915.1.1).

uu. Self-Mailers. Mail pieces with preprinted mailing information on the outside. Envelopes are not necessary.

vv. Self-Service Mail Center. Mail pick-up and delivery by non-mail center employees.

ww. Small Package Delivery Services. Domestic express and ground delivery services weighing up to and including 150 pounds for items shipped within the Continental United States (CONUS). Domestic express delivery services up to and including 300 lbs. between CONUS and Alaska (AK), Hawaii (HI), and Puerto Rico (PR) and within AK, HI, and PR. International express delivery for shipments up to and including 300 lbs. This definition is from the Next Generation Delivery Services contract administered by the Department of Defense.

xx. Special Delivery. A mail service that provides preferential handling in dispatch, transportation, and delivery at the destination post office (DMM S930.1.1).

yy. Special Handling. A mail service that provides preferential handling in dispatch and transportation for standard mail.

zz. Special Services. Services provided by the USPS for fees other than postage. Examples include registered, certified, insured, BRM, merchandise return, certificates of mailing, and return receipts.

aaa. Stamp Distribution Office. A post office designated to supply stamp stock.

bbb. Standard Penalty Indicia. The printed markings on mail pieces that indicate the format and method of mailing, such as penalty permit imprint mail.