

MAIL MANAGEMENT PROGRAM POLICY



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COMMANDANT INSTRUCTION 5110.1C

Subj: MAIL MANAGEMENT PROGRAM POLICY

Ref: (a) Classified Information Management Program, COMDTINST M5510.23 (series)
(b) U.S. Postal Service Domestic Mail Manual (DMM)

1. PURPOSE. This Instruction has authority over all U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) directives prescribing official (penalty) mail policy, supplemental U.S. Postal Service (USPS) mail services, and when/how to use commercial carriers (i.e. FedEx/United Parcel Service (UPS)) when shipping Official Matter using Small Package Delivery Services contracts. It provides instructions to implement the Coast Guard Official Mail Cost Control Program (CGOMCCP), prescribes the correct use of mail class, or supplemental USPS services thereby meeting the security, accountability, and delivery requirements of material being shipped at the most economical means. These policies apply to all USCG official mail/commercial carrier small package delivery services mailers/shippers who must comply with the references listed throughout this Instruction. This Instruction further:
 - a. Establishes policies concerning penalty mail and gives authority to accept and deliver personal mail under certain circumstances.
 - b. Provides guidance on the proper handling and processing of mailed Absentee Balloting Material to ensure legal requirements of the Absentee Voting Program are met.
 - c. Establishes policies concerning the shipment or mailing of Personally Identifiable Information (PII) or Sensitive Personally Identifiable Information (SPII).
 - d. Establishes a framework for complying with General Services Administration (GSA) and Department of Homeland Security (DHS) requirements to include Mail Data Collection and Reporting, Mail Security Plans (MSP) submission, and other reporting requirements as necessary.
 - e. Provides additional guidance for processing, receipt, and delivery of USCG official mail.
 - f. Provides additional guidance regarding the establishment of accounts, processing, receipt, and delivery of shipments containing USCG official matter when using small package delivery services contracts.

2. ACTION. All Coast Guard Area Commanders, Sector Commanders, Commanding Officers, Officers-in-Charge, Deputy/Assistant Commandants, and Chiefs of Headquarters staff elements must comply with provisions of this Instruction.
3. AUTHORIZED RELEASE. Internet release is authorized.
4. DIRECTIVES AFFECTED. U.S. Coast Guard Postal Manual, COMDTINST M5110.1B, and Express and Ground Services for Non-Freight Shipments, COMDTINST M5110.9 (series) are cancelled.
5. DISCUSSION. This Instruction contains the policies and responsibilities for the administration and processing of official and personal mail, and small package delivery services contract shipments. It emphasizes control of official mail costs through the proper and cost-effective use of the U.S. Postal Service (USPS), and small package delivery services commercial carriers such as FedEx and UPS.
6. DISCLAIMER. This guidance is neither a substitute for applicable legal requirements, nor is it a rule. It does provide operational guidance for Coast Guard personnel and is not intended to impose legally binding requirements on any party outside the Coast Guard.
7. MAJOR CHANGES. This Instruction has updated information throughout, and specifically adds new policies regarding Small Package Commercial carrier Shipments (Chapter 2); and the Mailing/Shipping of Personally Identifiable Information (PII) and Secret/Confidential Information (Chapter 11).
8. ENVIRONMENTAL ASPECT AND IMPACT CONSIDERATIONS.
 - a. Commandant (CG-47) reviewed the development of this Instruction, and the general policies contained within it, and determined that this policy falls under the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) categorical exclusion A3. No further environmental analysis is necessary in accordance with the U.S. Coast Guard Environmental Planning Policy, COMDTINST 5090.1 (series).
 - b. This Instruction will not result in any substantial change to existing environmental conditions or violation of any applicable federal, state, or local laws relating to the protection of the environment. It is the responsibility of the action proponent to evaluate all future specific actions resulting from this policy for compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), other applicable environmental mandates, and the U.S. Coast Guard Environmental Planning Policy, COMDTINST 5090.1 (series).
9. DISTRIBUTION. No paper distribution will be made of this Instruction. An electronic version will be located on the Commandant (CG-611) CGPortal: <https://cg.portal.uscg.mil/Pages/main.aspx> (under the Postal Management section).
10. RECORDS MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS. Records created as a result of this Instruction, regardless of format or media, must be managed in accordance with the records retention schedules located on the CGPortal - Records Resource Center. <https://cg.portal.uscg.mil/units/cg61/CG611/SitePages/Home.aspx>.

11. FORMS/REPORTS. The Coast Guard forms referenced in this Instruction are accessible from the CGPortal via the Internet. Forms related to the United States Postal Service (USPS) are available from the local post office and the USPS Home Page.
12. SECTION 508. This Instruction was created to adhere to Accessibility guidelines and standards as promulgated by the U.S. Access Board. If changes are needed, please communicate with the Coast Guard Section 508 Program Management Office at Section.508@uscg.mil.
13. REQUEST FOR CHANGES. Recommendations for changes may be submitted through the chain of command using the Coast Guard memorandum. Correspondence may be emailed to Commandant (CG-611) at: HQSPostal@uscg.mil.

/DAVID M. DERMANELIAN/
Rear Admiral, U. S. Coast Guard
ASSISTANT COMMANDANT FOR C4IT (CG-6)

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CHAPTER 1. RESPONSIBILITIES, DUTIES, AND AUTHORITIES

- A. Responsibilities. Individuals who create, design, prepare, or are responsible for handling/processing incoming and/or outgoing official and personal mail (where authorized) must become familiar with the contents and comply with this Instruction. All Coast Guard units identified as a Mail Center (MC) or Mail Service Location (MSL) (see Enclosure (1)), and Base National Capitol Region (NCR) (as the host command) at USCG Headquarters, the Action Officer must appoint in writing (as applicable) a Postal Officer, Official Mail Manager (OMM), Unit Mail Clerks, and (if desired) Unit Mail Orderlies. By virtue of their appointment, USCG Postal Officers, OMMs, Unit Mail Clerks, and Unit Mail Orderlies (when assigned) are responsible for enforcing the standards addressed in this Instruction. NOTE: Designations are not required to be submitted Commandant (CG-611); however they must be maintained in the unit files.
- B. USCG Mail Manager. The USCG Mail Manager, Commandant (CG-611), has authority over all aspects of USCG Official (Penalty) Mail and serves as liaison to internal and external stakeholders for all postal related matters. In addition, the USCG Mail and Small Package Shipping Manager assists units with the establishment of Small Package Delivery Services accounts and provides general guidance and oversight. Payments for small package shipments are the responsibility of the shipping unit/activity. More specifically, the USCG Mail and Small Package Shipping Manager must:
1. Oversee postal operations within USCG to ensure units comply with General Services Administration (GSA), Department of Homeland Security (DHS), Department of Defense (DoD), United States Postal Service (USPS), and other Federal agencies applicable mail policies.
 2. Establish and enforce written policies relating to mail and small package shipping.
 3. Develop, analyze, evaluate, and maintain mail policies and procedures for Coast Guard-wide official mail operations.
 4. Provide professional, cost-effective management of USCG mail services and establish policies and provide training to ensure that personnel promote savings.
 5. Ensure the collection and reporting of mail performance measures, mail volumes, and expenditure data for all USCG mail operations is accomplished as promulgated by DHS and/or GSA.
 6. Provide mail and small package shipping guidance to USCG mail/shipping locations.
 7. Manage USCG Fleet Post Office (FPO) ZIP Code assignments and mobile unit mail routing.
 8. Respond to mail and small package shipping inquiries from USCG field activities.
 9. Provide guidance on the proper handling and processing of Absentee Balloting Material.
 10. Enforce policies and procedures concerning the shipment or mailing of Personally Identifiable Information (PII) and/or Sensitive Personally Identifiable Information (SPII).

11. Approve the use of USCG Penalty Mail Imprint Permits.
 12. Establish a framework for compliance with DHS and other reporting requirements, including a number of recurring data collections.
 13. Ensure all required activities, regardless of size or volume of mail processed, maintain a Mail Security Plan (MSP) in accordance with GSA, 41 C.F.R. § 102-192.70, DHS, and USCG requirements.
 14. Disseminate notifications to all units to review and update unit MSPs. Collect and review MSPs for completeness and compliance by the DHS established deadline.
 15. Provide guidance for processing, receipt, and delivery of USCG official mail.
 16. Provide guidance for processing, receipt, and delivery of USCG commercial carrier small package shipments to include the establishment and maintenance of accounts.
- C. Postal Officer Designations/Responsibilities. The Postal Officer's designation is only applicable to cutters and other deployable units with an FPO ZIP Code assigned. The Postal Officer must be a commissioned or warrant officer, be designated in writing using the Postal Office Designation Letter located on the CG Portal, and comply with the DoD mobile mail routing and transportation policies and procedures. Units with an FPO ZIP Code must also appoint an Official Mail Manger (OMM) in writing. The Postal Officer and OMM can be the same individual, but require two separate designation letters. If the Postal Officer and OMM role is performed by the same individual, he/she must also comply with OMM responsibilities as applicable. Postal Officers must:
1. Coordinate with Commandant (CG-611) for FPO establishment/disestablishment, and for pre-deployment preparations to send/receive mail through the FPO system.
 2. Submit unit Mail Routing Instructions (MRI) in accordance with Department of Defense (DoD) Postal Manual, DoD 4525.6-M, Chapter 11.
 3. Comply with Absentee Ballot procedures and reporting requirements as outlined in Chapter 3, Paragraph E.
 4. Ensure procedures for processing Undeliverable as Addressed (UAA) mail are adhered to in accordance with Chapter 6 of this Instruction.
- D. Official Mail Manager (OMM) Designations/Responsibilities. The rank of the OMM should be, at a minimum, a Chief Petty Officer (CPO) or civilian equivalent. If a CPO or higher designation is not possible, the senior Petty Officer (regardless of pay grade) should be designated as the OMM. The OMM must be designated in writing by the Action Officer. OMM designation examples are located on the CGPortal - Mail Management. The OMM must ensure personnel and subordinate units comply with GSA, DHS, USCG, USPS, and other Federal agencies policies and procedures, as appropriate. Further, the OMM must ensure:
1. Efficient and cost effective use of official postage.

2. Compliance with all mandatory federal data collections and reporting requirements outlined in Chapter 10.
 3. Establish procedures for the use of Penalty Mail Stamps as referenced in Chapter 8.
 4. Units follow established policies as outlined in Chapter 9 Postage Evidencing Systems (postage meters).
 5. Commandant (CG-611) is notified via email at HQSPostal@uscg.mil when a point of contact changes for postal and shipping matters such as:
 - a. Postal Officer; OMM; and/or Unit Mail Clerk
 - b. Personnel responsible for submitting DHS Mailing and Shipping data collection reports and the unit Mail Security Plans (MSP).
 - c. Commercial carrier (FedEx/UPS) account holders.
 6. Submit all recommended procedural changes to the USCG Commandant (CG-611) that pertain to the Mail and Small Package Shipping program POC.
 7. The unit Mail Security Plan (MSP) is reviewed/updated annually or as required due to changes as identified in Chapter 4, and the new MSP is submitted to Commandant (CG-611).
 8. Compliance with Chapter 6 Mail Forwarding and Disposition.
 9. Limited use of USPS Extra Services (e.g. Registered, Certified, Signature Confirmation, etc.) and Priority Mail Express unless required by law or directive.
 10. Official mail received from other USCG activities complies with efficient mail practices and notify the sending location of errors or violations of mail management protocols.
 11. Personnel awareness of USPS Handbook 103 – Official Mail Penalties for Private Use of Official Postage.
 12. Mail products (including forms, Business Reply Mail (BRM) cards, envelopes, etc.) meet USPS and USCG requirements.
 13. Unit Mail Room (UMR)/Mail Center (MC) compliance with Chapter 2, paragraph F host activity requirements for mail preparation; delivery/pick-up schedules; assessments/reviews/inspections, and etc.
- E. Unit/Activity Mail Clerk Designations/Responsibilities. Action Officers must ensure Mail Clerk qualifications comply with the Privacy Act of 1974, 5 U.S.C. §552a, and the criteria listed in paragraph E.1. Mail Clerk designations must be made in writing using examples are located on the CG Portal under Mail Management. Unit Mail Clerks that occupy a recognized official position, must comply with USCG and USPS policies/procedures, the Privacy Act of 1974, and 5 U.S.C. §552a.

1. Unit Mail Clerks must meet the following qualifications:
 - a. Be a U.S. citizen.
 - b. Must not have a record of conviction by court-martial or non-judicial punishment within the last 12 months.
 - c. Have no civil convictions other than minor traffic violations.
 - d. Have no record of derogatory information or unfavorable conduct casting doubt on the individual's trustworthiness and integrity.
 - e. Have no history of psychiatric disorder, alcoholism, or drug abuse, unless a medical evaluation determines the condition no longer exists.
 - f. Have not been relieved of postal duties for cause.
 2. Unit Mail Clerks must:
 - a. Maintain the security and accountability of the mail at all times by safeguarding against theft, rifling, loss and damage.
 - b. Promote efficient and economical mailing practices consistent with the USCG Official Mail Cost Control Program (CGOMCCP), paragraph 2.E.
 - c. Be familiar with:
 - (1) Authorized use of Extra Services (e.g., Certified, Registered Mail, Signature Confirmation, etc.).
 - (2) Requirements for mailing classified information (Reference (a)).
 - (3) Chapter 2 Use of commercial carriers, when applicable.
- F. Unit/Activity Mail Orderly Designations/Responsibilities. Mail Orderlies may be designated as mail handling personnel beyond the Unit Mail Clerk level but is not required. The Unit Commanders may appoint/designate Unit Mail Orderlies to limit the number of personnel authorized to receive unit mail. A manager from each respective office/organization code, etc., must send a memo to the unit OMM assigning Mail Orderlies. Units electing to appoint/designate Mail Orderlies must ensure personnel appointed are informed of their responsibilities and adhere to the following standards:
1. Possess the same qualifications as required for Unit Mail Clerks.
 2. Retrieve the mail the mail each day, by the prescribed times.
 3. Maintain the security and accountability of the mail at all times by safeguarding against theft, rifling, loss and damage.

4. Ensure ALL mail is delivered to the person to whom it is addressed. When mail is returned to the mail center for any reason, Mail Orderlies will inform the Mail Clerk either verbally or by attaching a note to the mail stating why it was returned. Examples include: transferred, discharged, leave, liberty, transferred to new division, TAD, etc. Do not write directly on mail.
5. Are held directly responsible for any loss brought about by their failure to properly handle mail entrusted to their care. While in the custody of Mail Orderlies, U.S. Mail will be considered inviolate and will not be subject to delay, interception, seizure, rifling, or confiscation by any person.

G. Mail Orderly Designation Memoranda.

1. Mail Orderly Designation memoranda are maintained at the Mail Center/Mail Service Locations/Tenant Command Mailroom. The memorandum must include Mail Orderlies name/rank, division/department/organization code, and type of mail authorized to receive (ordinary mail, accountable mail, or all mail).
2. Personnel not listed on the memorandum are not permitted to pick-up mail.
3. Memoranda must be updated as necessary, and at a minimum, on a yearly basis.

H. Tenant Command Mail Clerk Designations/Responsibilities. Tenant commands (served by a Host Mail Center/Mail Service Locations where official mail is received/delivered through) are required to provide the host Mail Center/Mail Service Locations with a memorandum listing Mail Clerks authorized to receive and dispatch official mail for their respective unit.

1. Tenant command Mail Clerks must comply with unit/activity Mail Orderly responsibilities as outlined in paragraph 1.F.2 through 1.F.5 above.
2. Tenant Mail Clerk Designation memorandums must include Mail Clerks names/ranks, division/department/organization code, and type of mail authorized to receive (ordinary mail, accountable mail, or all mail).
3. Memorandums must be updated as necessary, at a minimum, on a yearly basis.

I. Contracting Out a Mail Center (MC). Units that contract out MC functions/operations must ensure:

1. The Contracting Officer's Technical Representative (COTR) meets the requirements for OMM described in 1.D above.
2. Contract employees meet the requirements for unit/activity Mail Clerk described in 1.E.1 above.
3. An electronic copy of the draft "Statement of Work/Performance Work Statement," or draft contract modification is provided to Commandant (CG-611) at HQSPostal@uscg.mil for review prior to contract award.

- J. Required Publications. All activities which create, design, prepare, or are responsible for handling/processing (including receipt and delivery) of incoming and/or outgoing official mail, are required to maintain the following publications in addition to this Instruction. Deployed USCG cutters should also maintain an electronic version of this Instruction and all required postage on board while deployed. Electronic copies of required publications are available for download via the USPS web page <http://pe.usps.gov>.
1. USPS Domestic Mail Manual (DMM) - Required at each activity that processes penalty mail. The DMM governs domestic mail service, contains USPS regulations, and is the primary USPS Manual used for post office operations. The DMM contains regulations pertaining to mailers, such as postage rates, mail classifications and preparation requirements.
 2. DoD Postal Manual, 4525.6M - Required at each activity with an assigned FPO ZIP Code. This Instruction, among many other topics, provides information on establishing/disestablishing an FPO ZIP Code and Mail Routing Instruction (MRI) preparations guidance for deploying mobile units. It also provides operating instructions to manage/control postal equipment and to process, dispatch, handle, and transport personal/official mail.
 3. The USPS International Mail Manual (IMM) - Required where international mail is sent. FPO/APO mail is not considered international mail.
 4. USPS Postal Zone Chart - Required at activities that use Penalty Mail Stamps and envelopes.
 5. USPS Notice 123 "Price List" - The USPS Current postage rates, fees, and information is required at activities that use Penalty Mail Stamps and envelopes.
 6. USPS Publication 25 "A Guide to Business Mail Preparation" - Required at each activity that processes mail for dispatch to USPS.
 7. USPS Publication 28 "Postal Addressing Standards" - Required at each activity that prepares envelopes or labels for mailing.
- K. Search and Seizure of Penalty Mail. The Action Officer, designated representative, or a properly designated OMM are authorized to seize and/or search official mail matter for the sole purpose of determining if the contents relate to the business of the U.S. government.

CHAPTER 2. OFFICIAL MAIL POLICIES

A. General. For the purpose of this Instruction “Mail” is defined as letters, flats, memoranda, post cards, documents, publications, packages and other written or printed communications received for distribution or dispatch by USCG activities from the USPS; Commercial carriers (i.e. FedEx/UPS); or an intra-department envelope. This Chapter covers policies relating to the two distribution and dispatch methods primarily used by USCG activities such as: (1) U.S. Postal Service (USPS); and (2) Commercial carriers (i.e. FedEx/UPS).

1. USPS. The USCG uses an appropriated fund account to pay for postage on ALL items dispatched through the USPS. This account is centrally managed by the USCG Mail Manager, and pays for the following:
 - a. CG-wide costs associated with official postage (i.e. permit mailings, postage meter settings, penalty mail stamps, business reply mail, postage due costs, etc.).

NOTE: Official postage is NOT authorized to be paid/purchased using unit funds.

- b. Lease/purchase/account set-up and applicable maintenance contract costs of Postage Evidencing Systems (postage meters/PC Postage).

NOTE: This account does not pay for postage meter/PC Postage expendable supplies (see Chapter 9, paragraph I).

2. Commercial Carriers. Items of an official nature sent via a commercial carrier as a small package shipment is considered official matter. Unlike Official (Penalty) Mail, USCG does not centrally manage funds to pay for small package shipments, small package shipment costs are the responsibility of the unit/activity making the shipment. The USCG Mail and Small Package Shipping Manager only assist units with the establishment of Small Package Delivery Service accounts and provides limited general guidance and oversight.

B. Official Mail. Is any item, mailed or shipped, belonging to or exclusively pertaining to the business of the government. The use of official postage or unit commercial carrier accounts may only be used to send official matter. Under no circumstance are unit funds or official postage permitted to be used to send personal items.

C. Private Express Statues. Title 39, U.S. Code, Postal Service, Private Express Statutes state that the USPS has a general monopoly for the transmission of all First-Class matter. The law allows for the private carriage of letters under certain exceptions, including:

1. Letters for which sender has paid at least 6 times the price currently charged for the first ounce of a single-piece First-Class Mail letter.
2. Private couriers may carry extremely urgent letters, and invoices, bills, and similar First-Class material sent with, and exclusively for, the cargo they accompany.
3. Universities and colleges may carry the letters of their bona fide student and faculty organizations.

4. Time sensitive (extremely urgent letters) material that must reach an addressee within 12 hours, and the USPS cannot make delivery (through normal First-Class or Priority delivery schedules) within that time frame.
5. Disruption of the USPS. 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 Next Generation Delivery Services (NGDS) contracts are mandatory for domestic express and ground small packages (up to 150 pounds) and extremely urgent letters (see paragraph 2.K.).

- D. Policy and Operation Channels. The single USCG POC with the USPS, DHS, GSA, and DoD, on Official Mail policy matters is the USCG Mail and Small Package Shipping Manager, Commandant (CG-611).
- E. The Coast Guard Official Mail Cost Control Program (CGOMCCP). The CGOMCCP requires activities to send items at the most economical rate. This is accomplished by: knowing mail classifications; selecting the appropriate carrier based on class of mail/type of material being shipped; and if using the USPS, only use USPS Extra Services if required by law or directive. In order to ensure the most economical practices are implemented, OMMs/UMCs are required to:
 1. Use the USPS for First-Class official (penalty) mail (except as noted above in paragraph 2.C); when required by law or directive; or when less costly than commercial carriers (while still meeting the required delivery date, security, and accountability requirements).
 2. Ensure USPS Extra Services (e.g. Registered, Certified Mail, Signature Confirmation, etc.), are not used unless required by law or directive.
 3. Encourage the use of “guard mail” (Government Messenger Envelope, Standard Form 65) to transfer correspondence between offices/activities when courier service between them is available.
 4. Integrate official mail/shipping preparation, procedures, and processing where possible to ensure optimum use of personnel, equipment, postage/shipping costs, and cost reduction best practices such as consolidated mailing/shipping, automation, and available discounts.
 5. Consolidate mailing/shipping operations (when feasible) on USCG installations with the major mailing activity as the host. In instances where the USCG is housed with other Federal agencies, a central mail facility should be formed when feasible, using a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA), Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), and/or Interagency Agreement (IA). If a unit is considering any type of these agreements which would result in a funding requirement, contact Commandant (CG-611) via email at HQSPostal@uscg.mil to initiate review of funding for approval/disapproval.
 6. Report unauthorized use, loss, or theft of official postage/unauthorized shipments to supervisors of the individual(s) involved for appropriate action or investigation if necessary, and notify the USCG Mail and Small Package Shipping Manager Commandant (CG-611) via email at

HQSPostal@uscg.mil of the outcome. Action Officers, in consultation with servicing legal office (SLO), will determine the appropriate reimbursement of postage and fees, and what legal or administrative action (if any) will be taken to obtain reimbursement.

- F. Official Mail Support for USCG Tenants on DoD Installations. The Military Postal Service Agency (MPSA) granted USCG activities assigned/attached to DoD installations continued use of the host's official mail support (e.g. pick-up, sorting, delivery, etc.), with certain stipulations. The activity Action Officer should coordinate with the host DoD installation commander for continued support. USCG tenants on DoD installations should establish Inter-service Support Agreements, as necessary, with the host. Costs will be coordinated with Commandant (CG-611) as funds are taken from the centrally managed postal account (not individual unit funds) for items sent through the USPS.
- G. Authorized Use of Official Postage. Official mail is mail sent by U.S. government agencies, relating solely to the business of the U.S. government. Under no circumstances will official mail contain unofficial commercial advertisements, discount type coupons, endorsements of any commercial businesses, etc.
1. The USCG/Reserve/Auxiliary may use official postage to transmit official matter including, but not limited to:
 - a. Non-appropriated Fund Activities (NAFA), including exchanges, for only official administrative (managerial) mailings related exclusively to the business of the U.S. Government. For example, official postage may be used on correspondence concerning command and control functions such as annual audits, customer surveys, financial reports, listing of available services, etc. Using official mail to send information on revenue producing items or events (sales and discount circulars) is not official business.
 - b. Newsletters and other correspondence may be sent as official mail by the Command Ombudsman or other personnel designated by the Commanding Officer for the purpose of communicating with family members when a unit is scheduled to be deployed for more than 30 days. Although the mailing of newsletters/correspondence in this situation is authorized, units are encouraged whenever possible to send this type of information to the deployed member's family member(s) via email in order to achieve cost savings, efficiency, delivery speed, and ease of use. NOTE: The mailing of a general Newsletter with official mail funding is not authorized.
 - c. Prisoners in a non-pay status for sending personal mail.
 - d. Units using official postage on authorized periodicals/newspapers, with the following limitations:
 - (1) Distribution is required for the transaction of USCG business.
 - (2) Individual copies to higher organizations in the chain of command for administrative purposes.
 - (3) Copies in bulk to subordinate units for distribution to the units' members.

(4) Copies to other government agencies, libraries, hospitals, or schools to promote USCG programs.

e. Gifts accepted by the Coast Guard from Non-Federal Sources in accordance with Acceptance and Accounting for Special Projects and Other Gifts to the Coast Guard from Non-Federal Sources, COMDTINST M5760.14 (series) and 10 USC § 2601 - General Gift Funds. Gifts accepted under these conditions must be:

(1) Accepted in writing.

(2) Mailed/Shipped at the most economical rate.

(3) Sent without the use of any USPS Extra Services (e.g. Registered, Certified Mail, or Signature Confirmation, etc.) or as Priority Mail Express.

2. Action Officers may:

a. Discharge their morale, welfare and recreation (MWR) mission and are authorized to mail a consolidated packet containing information regarding the existence of all available MWR activities to eligible personnel. Information on revenue producing items or events must not be combined within this packet. NOTE: Certain private associations (e.g., Boy Scouts, officer/enlisted wives clubs, Non-Federal Entities (NFE's), etc.) are not part of an MWR mission and are therefore not authorized use of official postage.

b. Send letters of congratulations to people selected for schooling, promotions, etc.

c. Send invitations to official social functions such as official retirement, promotion, award, change-of-command, and ship commissioning or decommissioning ceremonies held on behalf of, or sponsored in the name of DHS/USCG. Official status of the function must be clearly stated or readily apparent in the invitation. Action Officers:

(1) May note the location and time of a related social reception immediately following the retirement or change of command ceremony if it does not result in any increase in cost to the government and the notation does not include advertisement for, or endorsement of, any enterprise.

(2) Must not affix official postage to the RSVP card or reply envelope when sending the invitations. However, officials receiving an invitation and responding may use official postage on the return RSVP card. Commands are encouraged to utilize RSVP by telephone, email, internet, or FAX to the event coordinator.

(3) Must not use Business Reply Mail (BRM) when inviting community officials to official retirements and change of command ceremonies since typically the rate of return is too low to justify the expense of the permit fee and total cost of each item returned.

H. Unauthorized Use of Official Postage. The use of official postage is not authorized:

1. On mail matter that is not exclusively official business of the U.S. Government.
 2. For private use.
 3. By a Non-Appropriated Funds vendor or their employees.
 4. By charitable or nonprofit organizations (Chief Warrant Officers Association (CWOA), CG Foundation, Coast Guard Academy (CGA) Alumni Association, Blacks in Government (BIG), Non-Federal Entities (NFE's) etc.).
 5. On any holiday greeting or birthday cards.
 6. For invitations to unit functions such as Holiday party, unit party/get-together/picnic, etc., other semi quasi-official gatherings, general announcements, or other occasions/events.
 7. To ship items (including work related papers, books, binders, other office effects) for personnel that have departed the unit for any reason (retirement, discharge, removal of cause, etc.). The only exception to this would be the mailing of post awarded citation or award, or other item relating solely to the business of the U.S. government.
 8. To ship items to be presented as gifts relating to events such as: retirements, change of command, promotion, etc. (flags, plaques, oars, etc.)
 9. For care packages regardless of the event or intent. When in doubt, ask if the item to be sent may be purchased with a Government Purchase Card (GPC) for the purpose intended?
 10. RSVP items. The rate of return on these items is too low to justify the expense of pre-paying the postage on each item.
- I. Personal Mail Policy. Personal mail in the official mail system interferes with the handling of official correspondence and is generally prohibited (with the exception of those circumstances noted in paragraph 2.I.2 below). This policy also prohibits using USCG resources from processing outgoing personal mail. At the discretion of the Action Officer, personal mail found in the official mail system may be returned to sender. If delivered, the Action Officer must inform the individual of the personal mail policy.
1. Official mail of a personal nature.
 - a. Mail, administrative communications, or commercial carrier shipments received from unofficial sources may be official in nature (i.e. work related conferences, associations, seminars, etc.). Action Officers may authorize delivery of such mail if it is intended for addressees in their official capacity, rather than as a private person.
 - b. Deliver mail, administrative communications, or commercial carrier shipments from official sources that are addressed by name and clearly of a personal nature only to the addressee, unopened. If undeliverable, items must be returned to sender, unopened.

- c. Mail, administrative communications, or commercial carrier shipments addressed to an individual that has transferred or is no longer attached to the office/unit in which the mail piece is addressed AND appears to be “official business of the unit/activity” should be delivered to the individuals’ relief/office.
 - d. Mail, administrative communications, or commercial carrier shipments received for individuals no longer attached/assigned AND not authorized to receive personal mail as noted in paragraph 2.I.2 below, must be returned to sender.
 - e. Action Officers are authorized to open all mail/commercial carrier shipments that are addressed to official titles/positions on the first line of the delivery address (e.g., Commandant, Comptroller, Commanding Officer, Director, etc.).
2. Action Officers may authorize delivery of personal mail to individuals at their duty address, from unofficial sources, only under the following circumstances:
- a. Following a permanent change of station. Individuals (and their family members) may use their duty station address to receive personal mail for a limited period (no more than 90 days), or until a permanent home address is established. If individuals continue to receive personal mail after 90 days of reporting, the OMM must notify the individual(s) that future personal mail will be returned to sender.
 - b. On installations or at activities where USCG personnel permanently reside in unaccompanied housing, bachelor quarters or onboard ship, and only when there is no suitable facility to establish a mail center with postal lock boxes.
 - c. Units supporting deployed USCG cutters must provide a temporary address for personnel transferring to such cutters under PCS orders (prospective gain). If a cutter is or will be deployed, the temporary address should be provided at least 60 days prior to the member’s report date.
 - d. USCG personnel and/or other USCG resources must not be used to duplicate services the USPS, by law or agreement, is obligated to provide. For example, the USPS has an obligation to provide personal mail delivery to on-base family quarters. Personal mail for individuals residing on and off base, in private or government quarters where the USPS provides service, must be addressed to their home, and not received at the duty station/unit/activity. (Exception - see paragraph 2.I.2.a. and b. above).
 - e. For morale purposes, as directed by the Action Officer.
- J. Contractor Mailings Through the USPS. Printing contractors engaged by the USCG to send official items must prepare mailings using the penalty permit imprint format as shown in the DMM. The USCG Permit Imprint Number is G-157. Contractor mailings that do not meet requirements of the DMM, for use of permit imprint mail (e.g., 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 must not bear the permit imprint format.

1. When a contractor mails official business correspondence, supplies, publications, etc., the USCG activity involved must first get approval from the USCG Mail and Shipping Manager. Once approved, the contractor will then apply to use the penalty permit by completing PS Form 3615, "Mailing Permit Application and Customer Profile." This form, and the applicable postage statement form, are submitted to the post office where the mailings are to be deposited, at the time of mailing. The contractor may submit the forms, once completed by the USCG activity, to the post office of mailing. The Agency Code for USCG is 209, and should be annotated on all PS forms to ensure proper accounting.
 2. Official envelopes and labels used by any contractor must bear the preprinted return address of the USCG activity authorizing the mailing. The name and address of a private person, organization, or contractor must not be shown in the return address.
 3. Periodical mail must be prepared using a penalty "periodicals imprint" as described in the DMM, section 707.
 4. When an activity requires a contractor to provide progress reports or to return government materials by mail, the agency should require the contractor to prepay postage on such items, or as an alternative, provide contractors with penalty business reply envelopes or labels for these purposes.
- K. Commercial Carrier Small Package Shipments. The commercial carrier contract required to be utilized is referred to as Next Generation Delivery Services (NGDS) and was awarded to FedEx/UPS. The NGDS contract provides for domestic and international package delivery services.
1. Package delivery services include domestic express and ground delivery for shipments up to and including 150 lbs. within CONUS; domestic express delivery for shipments up to and including 300 lbs. between CONUS and Alaska, Hawaii, and Puerto Rico, and within Alaska, Hawaii, and Puerto Rico up to 300 lbs.; and international express delivery for shipments up to and including 300 lbs.
 2. These negotiated rates are considerably lower (discounted) when compared to commercial rates available to the public, and in many cases are superior to the USPS in terms of cost or delivery time. When deciding which service to use, Action Officers should always compare USPS to commercial carrier small package costs.
- L. Authorized Use of Small Package Commercial Carrier Accounts. Commercial carrier accounts are only permitted to be used to ship items belonging to, or exclusively pertaining to, the official business of USCG. The shipping activity should determine which matter relates exclusively to its own official business. Shipments must not contain unofficial or personal related items.
- M. Commercial Carrier Small Package Account Establishment. Units desiring to establish a commercial carrier small package account should contact the USCG Small Package Administrator, Commandant (CG-611) via email at HQSPostal@uscg.mil for instructions.
- N. Commercial Carrier Small Package Insurance/Declared Value. The purchase of additional insurance is prohibited by Title 40 of U.S. Code Section 17307, also known as the Government Losses In Shipment Act (GLISA), unless specifically authorized by the Secretary of the Treasury. FedEx,

UPS, DHL and other carriers insurance fees are automatically charged when the shipper declares any value over \$0.00. Shippers must avoid declaring value on shipments to comply with GLISA.

- O. Commercial Carrier Small Package Policies. In accordance with the NGDS contract, commercial carriers provide similar services and delivery guarantees. Units are strongly encouraged to rate shop by comparing all carriers, including USPS. The selection of a carrier should be based on cost and required delivery date. Items listed under paragraph 2.H (Unauthorized Use of Official Postage) are also unauthorized to be shipped via commercial carrier. Items to consider:
1. Shipment and expedited (overnight delivery) service selection decisions should be based on: mission critical requirements; mandated directives or instructions; and required delivery date. The use of two/three day service and ground service are less costly alternatives to overnight.
 2. Shipping to/from AK, HI, and/or PR using FedEx. All FedEx accounts are set up with the applicable Domestic/International Rates associated with the account numbers.
- P. Unauthorized Use of Small Package Commercial Carrier Accounts. Commercial carrier accounts are not permitted to be used in conjunction with the purchase of the following:
1. Purchases at FedEx/UPS Stores;
 2. Special containers (standard boxes are provided at no charge and can be ordered through Ship Admin accounts online);
 3. Packaging material;
 4. Packaging services;
 5. Freight shipments; and
 6. Shipping personal items or for personal use.
- Q. Commercial Carrier Hazardous Material Shipments

1. Preparers, packagers and certifiers of shipments containing Hazardous Materials must be trained and certified in: the proper identification and classification of Hazardous Materials (HAZMAT) / Dangerous Goods (DG); proper packaging, preparation and labeling of HAZMAT / DG goods shipments; proper completion and certification of proper documentation and declarations.

NOTE: Dangerous Goods refers to Hazardous Material Shipments made by Air (Express), HAZMAT is a term that applies to Hazardous Materials shipped by Ground transportation.

2. For the purpose of Small Package shipments as outlined in paragraph 2.K. above, certifiers of HAZMAT/DG shipments must complete the below listed minimum training (online training is acceptable). For more information on the current available HAZMAT/DANGEROUS GOODS training resources contact Commandant (CG-611) at HQSPostal@uscg.mil.

HAZMAT (Ground Shipments):

Global Safety Principles: Hazardous Substances in the Workplace 2.0.

DOT 1: Introduction, Classification, and Hazardous Materials Training;
 DOT 2: Packaging, Labeling, Marking, and Placarding;
 DOT 3: Shipping Papers;
 DOT 4: Loading and Storage; and
 DOT 5: Security for Shipment of Hazardous Materials.

DANGEROUS GOODS (Air Shipments):

Global Safety Principles: Hazardous Substances in the Workplace 2.0.

IATA 1: Hazard Class Identification/Classification;
 IATA 2: Marking and Labeling;
 IATA 3: Packaging;
 IATA 4: Documentation; and
 IATA 5: Limitations and Shipment Review.

(a) HAZMAT Shipper/ Certifier training must be renewed at a minimum of every 3 years. DG Shipper/Certifier training must be renewed at a minimum of every 2 years.

3. Declarations of Dangerous Goods documents must be electronically verified by a third-party using either commercial carrier provided software or by a third party vendor. For a current list of authorized resources contact Commandant (CG-611) Shipping Program Manager via e-mail to HQSPostal@uscg.mil.
4. Urinalysis/Exempt Human Specimens. It is PROHIBITED to ship Urinalysis/Exempt Human Specimens via FedEx/UPS Ground Service. This is a Department of Transportation restriction.

R. General Mail/Small Package Shipping Processing Policy.

1. Personnel who handle mail must readily process and promptly transmit these pieces, and protect them from damage, loss, or theft. Treat information in these pieces as private and do not disclose the contents to unauthorized persons.
2. Assume all Registered official mail contains classified matter and protect it accordingly. Do not leave Registered official mail unattended and always store as required by Reference (a).
3. Unprocessed or undeliverable Registered official mail must be placed in a classified storage container if kept overnight. Contact your Classified Materials Control Officer (CMCO) for specific storage instructions.
4. Mail should be processed and delivered according to classification and services paid for by the sender. Attempt to deliver mail to the addressee or have the mail available for pick-up within six business hours after it is received from the carrier.

5. Incoming bulk rate mail addressed to an individual and does not contain a mailer's endorsement, may be discarded if the unit cannot readily ascertain the name or location of the addressee. Bulk rate mail containing an endorsement should be returned to the USPS for processing.
6. Official mail sources (mailers) generally use a complete official return and delivery address. Make every attempt to deliver items received from official sources regardless of how they are addressed. Official sources may be determined by the return address, or the "Postage and Fees Paid" indicia, Official Business statement under the return address.
7. All USCG directives requiring the use of Extra Services (e.g. Registered, Certified Mail, Signature Confirmation, etc.) must be coordinated with Commandant (CG-611).
8. Units (primarily Mobile units/Cutters) decommissioning, conducting a move, or homeport change, even if temporary, must coordinate with Commandant (CG-611) (HQSPostal@uscg.mil), 45 days prior to the change.

CHAPTER 3. THE MILITARY POSTAL SERVICE (MPS)

- A. General. MPS is an extension of the USPS and operates under an agreement between the DoD and USPS. Its mission is to provide movement of mail and the operation of Fleet Post Offices (FPO), Army/Air Force Post Offices (APO), and Diplomatic Post Offices (DPO) in areas where USPS does not operate. The MPS is administered by the Military Postal Service Agency (MPSA), which serves as the single DoD POC with USPS and other Government agencies on MPS policy and operational matters.
- B. Military Mail. USPS Publication 38, "Postal Agreement with the Department of Defense," defines military mail as domestic and bearing a military or return address, which at some stage in its transmission, comes into the custody of a military department. All such mail being transported outside the U.S., its territories and/or possessions in the domestic postal system is placed under the control of the MPS.
- C. Establishment/Disestablishment of Fleet Post Office (FPO) ZIP Codes. FPO mail operations are under the direction of the Postal Officer (Action Officer). Assignments of FPO ZIP Codes will be granted for all USCG Cutters or mobile units that deploy for 30-day periods outside the continental U.S., or if operational conditions or other considerations make such service advisable. For establishing or disestablishing an FPO ZIP Code, Commanding Officers must submit a request electronically to Commandant (CG-611) at HQSPostal@uscg.mil at least 45 days prior to the known activation or deactivation date. When an FPO ZIP Code is established the FPO address will be the primary address for official and personal mail and must be used on all official correspondence (Letterhead, command website, Global address list (GAL), etc.).
- D. Mail Routing For Mobile Deployed Units. Mail transportation to mobile units requires careful planning of routes/carrier schedules and intensive monitoring by dispatching/receiving activities. Therefore, it is extremely important that, prior to deploying, Postal Officers complete a Mail Routing Instructions (MRI) message notifying the mail routers of their schedule. An MRI message must be submitted as far in advance as possible, but at a minimum of 10 days before movement.
1. All MRI's must be sent as a CONFIDENTIAL message in order for mail routers to properly route mail. Units without the capability to transmit CONFIDENTIAL message traffic will request approval from Commandant (CG-611) to transmit Mail Routing Instructions via UNCLAS message.
 2. Mail Routers should acknowledge receipt of an MRI via e-mail within 24 hours of transmitting. Postal Officers should contact Commandant (CG-611) immediately if confirmation is not received within this timeframe.
 3. Postal Officers must release an updated MRI (regardless of movement status) via CONFIDENTIAL message, at least annually.
 4. Postal Officers are responsible for keeping their home port post office and serving USCG Mail Center informed of their status.

5. Further information concerning mail routing can be obtained from Commandant (CG-611) at HQSPostal@uscg.mil.
- E. Processing Absentee Balloting Material. Only mobile units with an established FPO address, deployed away from CONUS for more than 30 days during a federal election, will be designated to participate in the processing and reporting of absentee ballots. This is a congressionally mandated requirement and must be given special attention. Absentee ballots must be legibly postmarked, processed, and dispatched in a timely manner. The necessary equipment, information, and guidance for designated participants will be furnished by Commandant (CG-611) prior to each period. It is the responsibility of the Action Officer/Postal Officer/Unit Mail Clerk to ensure all requirements of the Absentee Balloting Plan are met and that specific guidance provided by Commandant (CG-611) is followed.
1. Upon notification from MPSA, Commandant (CG -751) will identify the participating Cutters in the Absentee Balloting Program. Commandant (CG-611) will officially notify all participants of the specific requirements for each election.
 2. Participating units will be issued a USPS cancellation device for the explicit use of cancelling balloting material. The USPS cancellation device is considered a controlled item issued by Commandant (CG-611) to Postal Officers just prior to the voting season, and must be secured when not being used.

CHAPTER 4. MAIL SECURITY

- A. Physical Security. Personnel working with mail are reminded to be vigilant at all times. OMMs and Unit Mail Clerks are responsible to ensure adequate security is provided for all mail and mail equipment. Units are responsible for establishing and maintaining their own policies and procedures for personnel access, physical security, and key control, and ensure these procedures are documented in the unit's Mail Security Plan (MSP). The mail is considered an exploitable entryway that could be used to inflict harm to personnel; cause damage to equipment and facilities; disrupt the infrastructure; and interrupt operations of the Coast Guard. All activities that handle mail/commercial carrier small package shipments, are required to implement the following security processes/procedures:
1. USCG activities, regardless of size or volume of mail processed, must provide proper screening and security of all inbound/outbound mail and commercial carrier shipments/packages at all times. Never leave incoming or outgoing mail, commercial carrier (FedEx, UPS, DHL, etc.) or other carrier's shipments/packages unattended in an unsecured area. Stay alert to any unusual or preventable hazardous conditions that may arise, regardless of FPCON status.
 2. Restrict access to the following areas: mail handling and distribution areas; penalty mail stamps; postage meters; accountable mail storage containers, etc., to authorized personnel only.
 3. Personal effects such as coats, purses, backpacks, large lunch boxes, etc., are not permitted to be brought into or stored in mail handling or processing areas. Mail handling areas include, but are not limited to: containers, storage areas, box sections, mail stop locations, vehicles, any office/room used to process mail, etc. Lockers for the purpose storing personal effects are not allowed to be installed/placed inside mail handling areas as defined above, a separate and secure area outside of mail handling areas must be used for storing personal items (e.g. coats, purses, backpacks, etc.).
 4. Access to mail handling work areas must be limited to:
 - a. OMM/Postal Officer/Action Officer.
 - b. Mail Clerk.
 - c. Personnel conducting official business (with escort).
 - d. Official assessments/inspections and visits.
 - e. Maintenance personnel and work details (only when escorted or under constant surveillance by designated mail personnel).
 5. All spaces used for processing mail must be labeled "Authorized Personnel Only" and an authorized access list must be posted outside the entrance.

6. Security of the mail and protection of postage are the responsibility of OMM/Postal Officer/Mail Clerk/Action Officer as designated. Security and protection of the mail must be maintained at all times. Additional security measures should be implemented as necessary.
 7. The OMM/Postal Officer/Action Officer controls access to all mail handling/processing areas (e.g. room, bldg., office, etc.). These areas must be locked at all times during non-duty hours or when not in use. The OMM/Postal Officer/Action Officer must keep a log when any of the following controlled items are issued for access: keys; combinations; and/or codes.
- B. Explosives Threats. The screening method typically used to detect explosive devices in inbound mail is X-ray, however in many locations this may not be feasible. If X-ray is not available for inbound mail/commercial carrier shipments, follow the visual screening and threat detection procedures as outlined in the unit MSP.
- C. Chemical/Biological Agent Threats. Suspected Biological and other Chemical Agents can only be reliably detected through laboratory analysis or sophisticated detection devices. It is important all unexplainable powdery substances of any color in the mail be considered suspect and proper procedures for handling/processing suspicious items be followed. If you suspect a mailing contains a biological/chemical hazard, follow the procedures as outlined in the unit MSP.
- D. Mail Security Plans (MSP). In accordance with DHS Instruction Manual 119-01-001-01, Mail Management, General Services Administration (GSA) Mail Center Security Guide (Fourth edition), and 41 C.F.R. § 102-192.70, all activities, regardless of facility size or volume of mail/small package shipments (FedEx/UPS) received directly from the USPS or commercial carriers, are required to establish, maintain, and exercise a current MSP. EXCEPTION - the unit/activity is a tenant and the host activity receives and screens ALL inbound mail and small package shipments prior to delivery or pick-up by the tenant. These plans must be reviewed and updated annually by the unit, and submitted to Commandant (CG-611). The MSP is intended to be a comprehensive guide for threat prevention and response. All personnel processing/handling mail and shipments must be familiar with its contents for quick reference in the event a suspect item is introduced or discovered. In preparing the MSP, the Commanding Officer's designated representative (OMM) must:
1. Comply with the format/guidance provided by Commandant (CG-611). The format/templates will be made available electronically on the Mail Management Portal at the time the annual announcement is made.
 2. Actively participate in the ongoing development and implementation of the plan.
 3. Solicit assistance from security experts (i.e. District Security Managers, Federal Protection Service, CGIS, US Postal Inspector/Postal Inspection Service, and Commandant (CG-611) Mail Security Plan Coordinator).
 4. Ensure the 11 elements listed below are adequately addressed as they pertain to the activity.
 - a. Risk Assessment.
 - b. Plan to protect staff and all other occupants from hazards that might be delivered in the mail.

- c. Operating Procedures.
- d. Plan to provide visible mail screening procedures.
- e. Training.
- f. Testing and Rehearsing the Plan.
- g. Managing Threats.
- h. Communications Plan.
- i. Occupant Emergency Plan (OEP).
- j. Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP).
- k. Annual Reviews. At the beginning of each fiscal year Commandant (CG-611) will issue guidance on the specific requirements of the MSP review for the FY. At a minimum, plans must be reviewed for significant changes to mail operations and security procedures. Units must also consider whether any aspect should be updated as circumstances change.

CHAPTER 5. PREPARATION FOR MAILING

- A. General. USCG personnel must prepare all outgoing official penalty mail, sent via the USPS, according to policy provided in this Instruction, the DMM, and IMM. Use the most cost effective means to reduce postage/shipping costs when possible, and consider the use of commercial carrier (i.e. FedEx/UPS) small package delivery services (Chapter 2) when rate shopping. Properly package, presort and/or consolidate, as necessary.
- B. Authorized use of USPS Priority Mail Express. The use of USPS Priority Mail Express is extremely costly and the determination to use it should be carefully made. The Next Generation Delivery Services (NGDS) contract with FedEx/UPS (see Chapter 2) is less costly than USPS Priority Mail Express, therefore Action Officers are encouraged to rate-shop and select the most cost effective transportation method based on required delivery date, security, accountability, and availability to destination.
1. USPS Priority Mail Express is the only express service available for a post office box or an APO/FPO address. Commercial carriers do not deliver to PO boxes or APO/FPO addresses.
 2. Action Officers may approve use of USPS Priority Mail Express, on an exception basis if, in their opinion their mission could be seriously impaired. Action Officers should require exceptions be fully justified, in writing.
- C. Consolidated Mailing/Shipping. A reliable and cost-effective way to mail/ship administrative, operational communications, and logistical items between Headquarters, area/district offices, MLCs, and other large units. Consolidation should be used when mailing/shipping several items going to the same address. Consolidated mail/shipments reduces transportation costs since postage/shipment charges are paid on the total weight of the container and its contents, rather than separately on each piece within the container. Consolidated shipments must be endorsed "CONSOLIDATED MAIL" or "CONSOLIDATED SHIPMENT" above the "To" address to ensure the package is opened and contents sorted at the receiving Mail Facility. For additional details regarding consolidated mail contact Commandant (CG-611) at HQSPostal@uscg.mil.
- D. Mail Addressing. Official mail containing a handwritten return or mailing address will NOT be accepted in the mail stream and will be returned to the office code or unit causing unnecessary delays. **EXCEPTION** - a personal letter originating from a Flag Officer (example: a congratulatory letter or letter of condolence).
1. All USCG penalty mail must be addressed as follows:
 - a. Typewritten, rubber stamped, or machine printed using dark ink. NOTE: The entire address should be in upper case letters. For fastest delivery, use office symbols.
 - b. ALL punctuation must be omitted except the parentheses required for the routing symbol (within the first two lines of the address) and the hyphen in the ZIP+4 Code.
 - c. Limit the address block to five lines or less.

- d. It is mandatory that the last two lines (Delivery Address line and the City, State, and ZIP+4 line) of an address contain only information as illustrated below. The street address, PO Box number, rural route and box number, etc., must appear on the delivery address line. Mail addressed to occupants of multi-unit buildings must include the apartment number, suite, room, etc., immediately after the street address of the building, on the same line. When use of a building name is necessary, it should appear on the line above the delivery address line. USPS does not recommend using a dual delivery address, i.e., the street name and a PO Box number. Place only the city, state and ZIP+4 on the last line and DO NOT write or mark below the last line of address. All mail addressed to a DoD activity or another USCG activity must contain the ZIP+4 Code. Mail addressed to other Federal agencies must contain either the correct 5-digit ZIP Code or the correct 9-digit ZIP+4 code. The following are examples of proper addresses:

STANDARDIZED FORMAT

LINE 1----- COMMAND TITLE
 LINE 2----- ATTN (NAME OF RECIPIENT/OFFICE)
 LINE 3----- US COAST GUARD STOP XXXX
 LINE 4----- DELIVERY ADDRESS
 LINE 5----- CITY STATE & ZIP + 4

COMMANDANT (STAFF SYMBOL)
 ATTN MAIL PROGRAM OFFICE
 US COAST GUARD STOP 7101
 2703 MARTIN LUTHER KING JR AVE SE
 WASHINGTON DC 20593-XXXX

COMMANDER (DEPT: XXXXXXXX)
 EIGHTH COAST GUARD DISTRICT
 US COAST GUARD (STOP IF APPLICABLE/USED)
 ATTN (NAME OF RECIPIENT/OFFICE)
 501 MAGAZINE STREET STE 1240
 NEW ORLEANS LA 70130-3396

2. The complete return address (agency name and mailing address) must be in the upper left corner of each mailpiece (regardless of classification). The preprinted words "Official Business" must be immediately below the return address. The return address must be prepared in the format shown below:

- a. **US DEPT OF HOMELAND SECURITY**
 COMMANDING OFFICER
 ATTN (ROUTING/OFFICE NAME OR SYMBOL)
 US COAST GUARD
 STREET ADDRESS OR PO BOX / CUTTER NAME AND/OR PSC
 CITY STATE AND NINE-DIGIT ZIP CODE
OFFICIAL BUSINESS

- b. The statement "Penalty for Private Use, \$300" must be placed under the return address, directly below the words OFFICIAL BUSINESS, on the following types of penalty mail:

when “regular” USPS postage stamps are used/applied, Permit Imprint (G-157), Business Reply Mail (BRM), Merchandise Return Service (MRS), Periodicals, and USPS Express Mail.

- E. Mail Piece Endorsements. All mail, except standard sized envelopes, should be marked (by the originator) to show the mail class (e.g., First-Class, Package Services, etc.). The USPS gives unendorsed mail the lowest class of service.
1. Place the mail class endorsement in the upper right corner, about ¼” below the postage or indicia. Endorsements must be ¼” to ½” high.
 2. Place all markings for Extra Services (Registered, Certified, etc.) above the address and to the right of the return address (see the DMM).
- F. Business Reply Mail (BRM). BRM is a convenient method for mailers to help ensure they receive replies from individuals by paying postage only on mail that is returned. The DMM states “the only permissible use of BRM is for the return of information to a Federal agency address for which a BRM permit has been established at the delivery post office.” Use BRM only if it is in the best interest of the USCG. An example of BRM usage is when there will be a low return rate but the mailer wishes to obtain a greater response rate by providing free postage. Do not use BRM:
1. On mailings to any Federal agency or offices that have official mail postage capability.
 2. For RSVP items since typically the rate of return is too low to justify the expense of the permit fee and total cost of each item returned (see Chapter 2, paragraph G.2.c.(3)).
- G. Business Reply Mail (BRM) Preparation. The USPS Business Service Network (BSN) can provide detailed instructions on how to correctly prepare BRM, and assign a unique ZIP+4 code and barcode (see DMM, section 505 sub-section 1.0).
1. Business Reply Mail (BRM) must:
 - a. Be addressed to a USCG activity. The activity address, ZIP+4 Code, bar code and facing identification mark (FIM), must be preprinted on all BRM pieces (see the DMM, section 505).
 - b. Be used when an official reply is in the best interest of the USCG.
 - c. Be used when a reply is requested from an activity or individual, outside the U.S. Government, who is not required by law to reply.
 - d. Not be used to receive responses from other Federal agencies or personnel except retired USCG personnel and reservists not assigned to a unit. Federal activities can return these items at their agency expense, saving the U.S. Government the applicable accounting fee.
 2. BRM is charged at the First-Class postage rate and a per-piece accounting fee. The USCG must pay an annual permit and accounting fee for each location using BRM. The USCG pays for

BRM usage through the USPS Official Mail Accounting System (OMAS).

3. BRM Permit Number 13057, Washington DC, must be used by all USCG activities for official BRM.
4. Since the USCG participates in the Business Reply Mail Accounting System (BRMAS), users must complete a formal application to their servicing post office before they deposit BRM pieces in the mail. Prior to depositing BRM, users are encouraged to provide copies of the BRM piece(s) to the serving post office for approval.
5. BRM users must comply with the following instructions:
 - a. Action Officers have sole authority to permit subordinate activities to use BRM. Each authorized activity must be assigned an "Agency Code and cost code." The requesting activity must complete Mailing Permit Application and Customer Profile, PS Form 3615. Before presenting the application to the post office, make sure the mandatory Agency Code (209) is used and entered properly.
 - b. Since the USPS charges an annual BRM license fee for each location, plus a per-piece accounting fee and the appropriate First-Class postage, the Action Officer should limit BRM permits to only those activities that expect to receive at least 1,000 returned pieces annually.
 - c. Organizations which anticipate receiving more than 1,000 pieces containing a BRM reply card or envelope must prepare each reply piece using the procedures for Qualified Business Reply Mail (QBRM). Additionally, the organization must complete QBRM Application, PS form 6805, and forward the form with required BRM samples to the USPS Business Mail Entry Unit where the BRM will be returned.

H. Penalty Permit Imprint Mail.

1. Permit imprint mailings should be used, when cost effective, on large volume mailings of items with a uniform size and weight. See the DMM, section 505 subsection 2.0 for penalty permit formats and instructions.
2. Permit imprint mail can be used on any class of mail as long as the volume meets USPS requirements. Apply in advance, at the local post office that accepts such mailings.
3. Completion of the permit imprint application requires the USCG permit imprint number, G-157.

CHAPTER 6. MAIL FORWARDING AND DISPOSITION

- A. Directory Services for Departing Members. This Chapter pertains primarily to units that authorize the receipt of personal mail in accordance with Chapter 2. Units authorizing the receipt of personal mail must maintain a locally generated directory card/electronic database for unaccompanied members, military, or civilians and must ensure “undeliverable as addressed mail (UAA)” is processed using procedures in Reference (b), section 507 upon the member’s departure. The file must include all personnel serviced including those on TDY or TAD, scheduled to arrive, and permanently departed.
- B. Undeliverable As Addressed Mail. UAA mail is mail that cannot be delivered as addressed because of an incomplete/incorrect mailing address, or the member has transferred to another duty station. For disposition of “Undeliverable As Addressed Mail,” refer to Reference (b), Section 507.
- C. Mail Disposition For Casualties. Under no circumstances should mail for casualties be returned to sender or forwarded to next of kin (NOK) until absolute verification through the USCG Casualty Assistance Calls Officer (CACO) has been obtained.
- D. Action Officers Responsibilities for Casualty Mail. All mail for casualties must be turned over to the Action Officers designated representative for disposition.

CHAPTER 7. TRAINING REQUIREMENTS

- A. General. OMM's or Action Officers are responsible for establishing a mail training program. At a minimum, training should be conducted in the following areas: Cost saving measures/economical mailing practices; Mail Security; and Suspicious Mail Identification and Response Procedures.
1. Cost saving measures. The purpose of this training will be to increase the awareness of those who deposit mail in the typical office "OUT" box. Some potential strategies include displaying mail economy posters, or developing a well-illustrated Mail Management Handbook.
 2. Mail Security. The principle behind mail security training is to reduce theft, threats, rifling, loss and mishandling of the mail. Subjects that should be addressed in mail security training are safeguarding the mail, accountable mail procedures, identity theft prevention; and offenses against the mail. Semi-annual training is required for all MC and MSL personnel, and is recommended for any personnel whose responsibilities include frequent handling of official mail.
 3. Suspicious Mail. This training should include but should not be limited to the identification criteria covered in Chapter 4. Additionally, suspicious mail training should address response procedures and be specifically focused on locally specific circumstances, response plans and assets. Potential strategies include posters, checklists, and unannounced drills coordinated with security and emergency response personnel. Semi-annual training is required for all Mail Center and MSL personnel, and is recommended for any personnel whose responsibilities include frequent handling of official mail.
- B. Training Opportunities. OMM and UMC must be knowledgeable of postal procedures and policies. Appropriate training for mail security; personnel security; and cost savings measures can increase readiness and produce real savings. Contact Commandant (CG-611) via email at HQSPostal@uscg.mil for training locations and opportunities.

CHAPTER 8. PENALTY MAIL STAMPS – FEDERAL AGENCY STAMP REQUISITIONS

- A. General. Penalty Mail/Postage Stamps are primarily used by activities generating small amounts of outgoing official (penalty) mail. However, units may request authorization to utilize Penalty Mail Stamps as a back-up to their primary means of posting outgoing official mail. Stamps requisitioned and received as outlined in this chapter are strictly intended for use on official (penalty) mail. The term Penalty Mail applies regardless of the type of postage stamp used for mailing.
1. Activities electing to use Penalty Mail/Postage Stamps must request authorization in writing by submitting a request to the Commandant (CG-611) via email to HQSPostal@uscg.mil. Upon approval Commandant (CG-611) will create a PMS account and provide additional guidance on ordering, requisitions, exchanges, and security.
 2. Additional information regarding Penalty Mail/Postage Stamps can be found in Reference (b). A Penalty Mail/Postage Stamp users guide has been developed by Commandant (CG-611). This guide is sent to all newly established Penalty Mail Stamp activities, and is available in the CG Portal under the Postal Management community.
- B. Penalty Mail/Postage Stamps. Penalty Mail/Postage Stamps are affixed in the upper right corner of the address side of the mail piece. Penalty Mail Stamps bear the phrases, “Penalty For Private Use \$300” and “Official Mail USA.” Postage stamps ordered/used by federal agencies are the same stamps purchased by consumers at the post office.
- C. Penalty Mail/Postage Stamp Requisitions.
1. Under no circumstances will any USCG unit submit a Penalty Mail/Postage Stamp Requisition directly to the USPS Stamp Distribution Center (SDC). With the exception of the units’ first requisition, which is completed by Commandant (CG-611), subsequent requisitions are submitted to the Auxiliary National Supply Center (ANSC) by the unit OMM.
 - (a) Requisitions must be verified and signed for in the presence of a witness.
 - (b) Discrepancies must be reported to Commandant (CG-611) via email to HQSPostal@uscg.mil immediately.
 2. Stamp requisitions cannot exceed \$200.00 unless approval is granted by Commandant (CG-611) and at no time should penalty mail stamp inventory exceed a 90-day supply.
- D. Exchanges. Mistakes made by the ANSC in shipping the wrong items, damaged, defective, or otherwise unserviceable stamps must be corrected by the ANSC.
- E. Security. The OMM or UMC must sign the requisition in the presence of a witness. Retain the signed requisition in the unit files for a period of two years. The unit must maintain a simple log, computer database, or Daily Record of Stamp Stock (PS Form 3295) to sustain accountability. These items must be secured overnight in a locked cabinet, desk, or other suitable container. Overnight storage in a safe is not necessary. Store stamp stock separately from classified material, registered and certified mail.

F. Audit and Control of USPS Penalty Mail/Postage Stamps.

1. OMMs, UMCs, and supervisors should become familiar with the command resources protection program, which has the goal of safeguarding property by reducing the opportunity for theft by making a potential target inaccessible or unattractive. Since USPS penalty mail/postage stamp stock is an administrative resource, Action Officers, OMMs and UMCs are all responsible for preventing pilferage and misuse.
2. Audits and inspections are management tools designed to ensure established policies and procedures are being met. Each Action Officer is responsible for establishing their units' inspection program. At a minimum, Action Officers must:
 - a. Appoint, in writing, an officer, Chief Petty Officer (E-7 or above) or civilian equivalent, to conduct the audit. At small units, if the grade requirement cannot be met, the Action Officer should use their own judgment and appoint an appropriate individual to conduct audits.
 - b. Ensure audits of stamp stock are conducted at unscheduled and unannounced times quarterly.
 - c. Maintain a record of audits.
 - d. If there is a shortage, ensure the responsible individual immediately corrects the discrepancy. When individuals refuse to make voluntary restitution, take appropriate action to determine pecuniary liability to effect collection. Contact Commandant (CG-611) via email at HQSPostal@uscg.mil to obtain details for resolving these situations.

CHAPTER 9. POSTAGE EVIDENCING SYSTEMS

- A. Definition. Postage Evidencing Systems (PES) are secure postage systems that generate indicia imprinted on or affixed to a mailpiece to evidence prepayment of postage. PES (meters) used by USCG for outgoing official mail have a special penalty design inscribed with the statement “Official Business, Penalty for Private Use \$300.”
- B. General. PES consist of Postage Meters and PC Postage.
- C. Postage Evidencing System. All costs associated with PES (settings and account set-up as described in Chapter 2, paragraph A.1.a and b) are paid by Commandant (CG-611). Units desiring a PES must submit a request electronically to Commandant (CG-611) at HQSPostal@uscg.mil, via the chain-of-command. Approval will be based on the following criteria:
1. Current method of posting official mail.
 2. Reasons penalty mail stamps would not be sufficient to process mail daily.
 3. Non-availability of nearby alternative source of postage such as: USCG, DoD, or other Federal Mail Center.
 4. Estimated volume (pieces and typical weight) of official mail to be processed on a daily basis.
- D. Postage Meter Connection. Units that operate a Postage Meter are required to connect to the vendor’s Data Center in order to accomplish the USPS remote inspection requirement, transmit meter data, download updates, add postage, etc. Instructions on how to perform the connection are provided in the user Manual for each system. MSL should connect WEEKLY and MC should connect DAILY at the end of the day.
- E. Operation of Postage Evidencing Systems. A User Manual/Guide, which operators should study and implement, is provided with each PES by the vendor. The following paragraphs provide general operating instructions pertaining to all PESs regardless of type:
1. Pass Code. Each meter has a pass code security function which acts as a locking device that is required to be used (see paragraph 9.G).
 2. Recording Daily Balances. Activities operating a meter, must maintain a meter a log, excel spreadsheet (may be generated locally), or other tracking method to record the daily use and balance. Activities using PC Postage are not required to maintain a daily log however the OMM should create reports quarterly and review using reporting functions provided by the PC Postage vendor.
 3. Settings. When adding postage to the meter or PC Postage, determine the amount of postage needed to operate for one month set (add) the amount required, additional settings are permitted if required.

4. Equipment Failure.

- a. Immediately report failures of meters, mailing machines, scales, PC Postage website/application etc., to the service representative via phone and Commandant (CG-611) via email at HQSPostal@uscg.mil.
- b. Other than following a trouble-shooting process/procedure as listed in the user's manual, do not tamper with the postage meter under any circumstances.

F. Metered Mail. This definition applies to postage applied by Postage Meter or PC Postage. The meter imprint acts as a postmark. Meter imprints, including shipping labels printed using PC Postage, must be legible, clear, and dated correctly. Metered mail, showing the date, must be tendered to the USPS in the same day metered.

G. Security.

1. To maintain security, ensure the Postage Meter:

- a. Is set-up/used in a location or office with limited access.
- b. Is pass code protected when not in use or during prolonged absences throughout the day. The pass code should be protected at all times and only provided to designated meter operators..
- c. Is turned off at the end of each duty day, and secured to the extent possible.
- d. Immediately report the loss, theft and recovery of a meter to Commandant (CG-611). Reports must include the meter make, model, and serial number; the date, location, details of the loss, theft, or recovery, and a copy of the police report when applicable.

2. To maintain the security of PC Postage:

- a. The designated OMM for each activity should be designated as the Location Administrator for the PC Postage account. The Location Administrator is responsible for creating and maintaining PC Postage User Accounts.
- b. Each Location Administrator and User must have a unique user ID and password. Login information must not be shared with or transferred to other users.
- c. Upon transfer or being relieved from official mail responsibilities all PC Postage logins must be deleted by the Location Admin.
- d. Postage Stamp labels, both printed and unprinted, must be maintained in a secured and locked cabinet or drawer with limited access when not in use.

H. Property Accountability. Account for all PES equipment in accordance with the U.S. Coast Guard Property Management Manual, COMDTINST M4500.5 (series).

- I. Expendable Supplies. Generally consist of meter tapes, stamp paper/labels, ink cartridges, and envelope sealing products. Units must procure supplies for postage meters from an authorized supplier using unit funds. Commandant (CG-611) maintains a limited supply of NetStamps, available on a first come first served basis. PC Postage users can request NetStamps via e-mail at HQSpostal@uscg.mil.

CHAPTER 10. DHS MAILING AND SHIPPING DATA COLLECTION AND REPORTING

- A. General. DHS requires all Components 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 as outlined in this Chapter allows the DHS Mail Manager, the USCG Mail and Small Package Shipping Manager, and Administrators to have a clear and quantifiable view of mail operations to assist in making informed management decisions regarding mail operations.
- B. Mail Center (MC) Reporting Requirements. DHS Management Directive 119 (series) requires units identified as a MC to collect and report data as indicated below. MCs are required to collect and submit the required reports monthly to Commandant (CG-611) via email to HQSpostal@uscg.mil using the format provided. Reports are due NLT the 7th day of each month following a reporting month. The following areas make-up the reporting elements:
- (1) General Mail Program Information
 - (2) Mail Volume Data
 - (3) Expenditures
- C. Data Collection/Reporting Elements. Due to periodic changes in data collecting and reporting requirements, documents have been developed and are updated at the beginning of each FY. Supporting documentation for this requirement can be found in CG Portal under the Postal Management Community.

CHAPTER 11. MAILING/SHIPPING PERSONALLY IDENTIFIABLE INFORMATION (PII) AND SECRET/CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION

- A. General. Personally Identifiable Information (PII) is defined as: Data that can be used to distinguish or trace a person's identity, or any other personal information that can be linked to a specific individual. Examples of PII include: name, date of birth, home mailing address, telephone number, social security number, home e-mail address, ZIP Code, account numbers, certificate/license numbers, vehicle identifiers (including license plates), uniform resource locators (URLs), Internet protocol addresses, biometric identifiers (e.g., fingerprints), photographic facial images, any unique identifying number or characteristic, and other information where it is reasonably foreseeable that the information will be linked to a specific individual, regardless of whether individual is a U.S. citizen, legal permanent resident, visitor to the U.S., or employee or contractor to the Department/Coast Guard.
- B. Mailing of Personally Identifiable Information (PII). Personnel responsible for mailing PII through the USPS must ensure the envelope or package is prepared using similar care and preparation as would be used when sending classified material, (see Reference (a)). When mailing PII documents/files via any mail carrier, which contain information on two or more personnel, the following processes must be followed:
1. Ensure the envelope/packaging material is adequate for the volume/weight of item being mailed.
 2. Never place PII/SPII on an address label or include it in the address of any article.
 3. Reinforce seams of envelopes with clear packing tape.
 4. Reinforce packages with additional packing material (to avoid the contents from shifting within the container) and use additional packing tape to further secure larger envelopes/packages/boxes to help prevent contents from becoming separated or dislodged from the original container.
 5. When using a mailing label, place an identical label inside the item being mailed.
 6. If required to use USPS Extra Services (e.g. Certified/Registered) by law or directive, track the shipment in a timely manner to ensure/confirm delivery.
 7. Ensure all policy, guides, directives, and/or laws are adhered to with regards to "chain-of-custody" when mailing or receiving shipments containing PII.
- C. Shipments Containing PII. Shipments sent through FedEx or UPS containing PII, or high value items, must be monitored until picked-up by the carrier, and tracked through the carrier tracking system, until delivery is confirmed on the required delivery date (RDD). If not received by the RDD, the shipper must initiate tracer action. The below recommendations should be followed for all shipments, but are required for shipments containing PII:
1. Write the Air-Way Bill (AWB) number, in permanent ink, on the outside of the shipping container/package and place a duplicate copy of the AWB inside the shipment/package.

2. After inserting the AWB in the clear plastic envelope, use additional packing tape to secure the envelope on the outside of the container being used to make the shipment.
- D. Suspected Loss/Compromised PII. A mailing or shipment containing PII, believed to be lost or compromised constitutes a privacy incident. Upon discovery, personnel must immediately report all suspected or confirmed privacy incidents to the Commanding Officer in accordance with Privacy Incident Response, Notification, and Reporting Procedures for Personally Identifiable Information (PII), COMDTINST 5260.5 (series).
- E. Shipments Containing Classified Information. Both FedEx and UPS are approved and certified for overnight delivery of classified material up to the level of Secret for CONUS domestic shipments only. Shippers of Classified information must ensure:
1. All shipments containing classified material is prepared and transmitted in accordance with Reference (a).
 2. The shipment containing classified material is monitored until picked-up by the carrier, and tracked through the carrier tracking system, until delivery is confirmed on the required delivery date (RDD). If not received by the RDD, the shipper must initiate tracer action.

TERMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Accountable Mail

USPS numbered insured, certified, delivery confirmation, or registered mail.

Action Officer

An individual in a position of responsibility such as Commanding Officer, Executive Officer, Section Leader, Team Leader, Division Chief, XPO, or similar position that is empowered to make decisions.

Activity

Any USCG organization such as Headquarters, districts, cutters, stations, etc.

Business Reply Mail (BRM)

A service that allows a permit holder to receive First-Class Mail and Priority Mail back from customers and pay postage only for the returned pieces. These pieces must have a specific address and format. Postage and per piece charges are collected when the mail is delivered back to the permit holder.

Certified Mail

A service that provides the sender with a mailing receipt. A delivery record is maintained by the USPS. This type of mail must be sent at First-Class Mail or Priority Mail rates. Certified mail may be combined with return receipt service and restricted delivery service.

Classification

The grouping of mailable matter into mail classes and subclasses by rate categories, according to content, weight, size, and preparation standards.

Commercial Carriers

For the purpose of this Instruction, the term commercial carrier refers to contracted package delivery service companies such as FedEx, UPS, DHL, etc.

Consolidated Mailing/Shipping

Two or more articles placed in one container for direct mailing/shipping to one address or one installation.

Endorsement

An authorized marking on a mailpiece that shows handling instructions, a service, or a request for an ancillary service.

First-Class Mail (FCM)

A class of mail that includes all matter wholly or partly in writing or typewriting, all actual and personal correspondence, all bills and statements of account, and all matter sealed or otherwise closed against inspection. Priority Mail is a subclass of First-Class Mail. Any mailable matter may be sent as First-Class Mail.

Flat

The general term for flat-size mail, so called because the large mail is sorted without bending it so that the mail remains flat.

Flat-Size Mail

A flexible rectangular mailpiece that exceeds one of the dimensions for letter-size mail (11-½ inches long, 6-1/8 inches high, ¼ inch thick) but that does not exceed the maximum dimension for the mail processing category (15 inches long, 12 inches high, ¾ inch thick). Dimensions are different for Periodicals automation rate flat-size mail. Flat-size mail may be unwrapped, sleeved, wrapped, or enveloped.

Fleet Post Office (FPO)

A branch of a designated USPS civilian post office, which falls under the jurisdiction of the postmaster of either New York City or San Francisco, that serves Coast Guard, Navy, or Marine Corps personnel.

Indicia

Imprinted designation on mail that denotes postage payment (e.g., metered postage or permit imprint).

Insured mail

A service that provides indemnity coverage for a lost, rifled, or damaged article, subject to the standards for the service and payment of the applicable fee. Insurance is available for merchandise sent as First-Class Mail, Priority Mail Express, Priority Mail, USPS Retail Ground, and Package Services.

Letter

According to the Private Express Statutes, a message directed to a specific person or an address and recorded in or on a tangible object. Also a shortened way to refer to letter-size mail.

Letter-Size Mail

A mail processing category of mailpieces, including cards, that do not exceed any of the dimensions for letter-size mail (i.e., 11-½ inches long, 6-1/8 inches high, ¼ inch thick). Minimum size is at least 3-½ inches by 5 inches.

Library Mail

A subclass of Package Services for items sent to or from or exchanged between academic institutions, public libraries, museums, and other authorized organizations. Books, sound recordings, academic theses, and certain other items may be mailed at the Library Mail rate if properly marked.

Mail

For the purpose of this Instruction “Mail” is defined as letters, flats, memoranda, post cards, documents, publications, packages and other written or printed communications received for distribution or dispatch by the activity from the USPS; Commercial carrier (i.e. FedEx/UPS); or an intra-department envelope.

Mail Class

The classification of domestic mail according to content (e.g., personal correspondence versus printed advertising). It is codified in the Domestic Mail Classification Schedule.

Mail Center

DHS defines a Mail Center (MC) as a location with one or more full time employees dedicated or assigned to mailroom functions -and- spends on average, more than \$500 a month in U.S. mail expenditures. If both of these requirements are met, the location is considered a Mail Center for data collection and reporting purposes. In certain circumstances, Commandant (CG-611) may designate locations not meeting this criteria based on scope of operation/mission.

Mail Orderly

A mail orderly is an individual designated by proper authority to perform mail-handling duties that are limited to collection and delivery of mail from a unit MC, MSL, or Tenant Command Mailroom.

Mail Service Location (MSL)

Any location with less than the equivalent of one or more full time employee(s) (government or contractor(s)) processing official mail (and in some instances personal mail), and/or less than an average of five hundred dollars (\$500.00) in monthly mail expenditures. Mail Service Locations must maintain a Mail Security Plan.

Marking

Words or abbreviations printed on a mailpiece that show the class of mail, presort level, or ancillary service endorsement. See also *endorsement*.

Media Mail

A subclass of Package Services that consists of books, sheet music, printed educational material, film, videocassettes, and computer prerecorded media such as CD ROMs. Advertising restrictions apply.

Merchandise Return Service

A method whereby a merchandise return permit holder may authorize individuals and organizations to send parcels at the appropriate Priority or Package Services rate to the permit holder and have the postage and fees paid by the permit holder.

Metered Mail

A piece of mail on which the amount of postage has been either imprinted by a postage meter, or to which a postage meter tape has been applied.

Military Post Office (MPO)

A branch of a U.S. civil post office operated by the Army, Navy, Air Force, or Marine Corps to serve military personnel overseas or aboard ships.

Nonstandard Mail

First-Class mail weighing one oz. or less that:

- a. Exceeds any of the following:
 - (1) Height – 6-1/8”
 - (2) Length – 11-1/2”
 - (3) Thickness – 1/4”
- b. Requires payment of a surcharge.

Official Mail

Mail authorized by federal law to be sent by government officials without postage prepayment. It includes franked mail sent by members of Congress and penalty mail sent by U.S. government agencies.

Official Mail Matter

Any item belonging to or exclusively pertaining to the business of the government.

Official Shipment

For the purpose of this Instruction, the USCG Mail Program considers an Official Shipment as any Official item (matter) belonging to or exclusively pertaining to the business of the government, sent by use of a commercial carrier (i.e. FedEx, UPS, DHL, etc.). Whereas Official Mail is anythingailable, belonging to or exclusively pertaining to the business of the government, sent through the US Postal Service (USPS).

Package Services

A class of mail that comprises three subclasses: Bound Printed Matter, Library Mail, and Media Mail. There is no minimum weight limit for Package Services.

Parcel

Mail that does not meet the mail processing category of letter-size mail or flat-size mail. It is usually enclosed in a mailing container such as a box.

Penalty Mail

Official mail sent without postage prepayment by officers of the executive and judicial branches of the U.S. Government, by departments and agencies of the U.S. Government, and by specifically authorized individuals. Agencies then reimburse the USPS for the penalty mail service they receive. The term comes from the endorsement "Penalty for Private Use" printed on the mail.

Penalty Mail Stamp (PMS)

USPS stamps bearing the words "Official Mail USA" and "Penalty For Private Use \$300" for use by government agencies. Stamped stationery (plain stamped envelopes, printed stamped envelopes, and postal cards) is also included.

Permit

Any authorization required for specific types of preparation or postage payment. Specifically, an authorization to mail without postage affixed by using indicia or an imprint. Payment is made against an advance deposit account that is established with the USPS for postage and services. Permits also are required to participate in certain programs such as business reply mail.

Permit imprint

Printed indicia, instead of an adhesive postage stamp or meter stamp, that shows postage prepayment by an authorized mailer.

Periodicals

A class of mail consisting of magazines, newspapers, or other publications formed of printed sheets that are issued at least four times a year at regular, specified intervals (frequency) from a known office of publication. Periodicals usually must have a legitimate list of subscribers and requesters.

Personal Mail

Personal correspondence that has postage applied and paid for by the USPS mailer.

Personally Identifiable Information (PII)

Data that can be used to distinguish or trace a person's identity, or any other personal information that can be linked to a specific individual. Examples of PII include: name, date of birth, home mailing address, telephone number, social security number, home e-mail address, zip code, account numbers, certificate/license numbers, vehicle identifiers (including license plates), uniform resource locators (URLs), Internet protocol addresses, biometric identifiers (e.g., fingerprints), photographic facial images, any unique identifying number or characteristic, and other information where it is reasonably foreseeable that the information will be linked with other personal identifiers of the individual.

Printed matter

Paper on which words, letters, characters, figures, or images (or any combination of them) not having the character of a bill or statement of account, or of actual and personal correspondence, have been reproduced by any process other than handwriting or typewriting.

Priority Mail

First-Class Mail that weighs more than 13 ounces and, at the mailer's option, any other mail matter weighing less than 13 ounces mailed at Priority Mail rates. Priority Mail provides expedited delivery. Any mailable matter may be sent as Priority Mail.

Priority Mail Express

A mail class that provides expedited delivery service. This is the fastest mail service offered by the USPS. Priority Mail Express International Service is available between the United States and most other countries.

Priority Mail Express Military Service

A service available between the United States and designated APO and FPO addresses that provides Department of Defense and other authorized personnel stationed overseas with expedited delivery service to or from the United States.

Privacy Incident

Loss of control, breach, compromise, unauthorized disclosure/acquisition/access, or any similar term referring to situations in which unauthorized users have access or potential access to PII in usable form, whether physical or electronic. The term encompasses both suspected and confirmed incidents involving PII.

Private Express Statutes

A group of Federal statutes giving the USPS the exclusive right, with certain exceptions, to carry letters for others. They are based on the provision in the U.S. Constitution authorizing Congress to "establish

Post Offices and post roads” (See Title 39, USC, sections 401, 404, 601-606; Title 18, USC, sections 1693-1699; and Title 39, Code of Federal Regulations, sections 310 and 320 for complete definitions and suspensions).

Registered Mail

Provides the most secure service offered by the USPS. The sender receives a receipt at the time of mailing, and a delivery record is maintained by the USPS. This service also provides optional indemnity in case of loss or damage. Compare with certified mail and insured mail.

Required Delivery Date (RDD)

The date by which mail must reach its addressee.

Restricted Delivery

A service by which a mailer may direct delivery only to the addressee or to an agent of the addressee specifically authorized in writing by the addressee to receive his or her mail.

Return Receipt

A postal service available only on registered, certified, or numbered insured mail. USPS return receipts show to whom and when mail is delivered and is used only when the mailer must have proof of delivery or date of delivery.

Sensitive Personally Identifiable Information (SPII)

Personally Identifiable Information, which if lost, compromised, or disclosed without authorization, could result in substantial harm, embarrassment, inconvenience, or unfairness to an individual.

Shipment

Shipping is the physical process of transporting goods and cargo. Virtually every product ever made, bought, or sold has been affected by shipping. Despite the many variables in shipped products and locations, there are only three basic types of shipments: land, air, and sea.

Standard Mail

A class of mail weighing less than 16 ounces and is not required to be mailed as First-Class Mail or Periodicals. Mailers use Standard Mail to send:

- Printed matter, flyers, circulars, advertising.
- Newsletters, bulletins, and catalogs.
- Small parcels.

All Standard Mail prices are bulk prices, and each mailing must meet a minimum quantity of 200 pieces or 50 pounds of mail. **There is no single-piece Standard Mail postage.** In Standard Mail, there are prices for letters, flats/large envelopes, parcels, Marketing parcels and Parcel Select Lightweight parcels.

Surcharge

Fees charged in addition to the normal postage on nonstandard mail.

Tenant Command

For the purpose of this Instruction, the USCG Mail Program considers a Tenant Command as a unit/activity that although it is located on/near the base, has a separate chain of command from the Host or senior unit. In nearly all circumstance, Tenant Commands receive U.S. Mail (including the application of postage to outgoing official mail) support from the Host.

Unit Mail Clerk (UMC)

An individual designated by proper authority to perform mail related duties associated with the operation of a unit Mail Center (MC), Mail Service Location (MSL), or Tenant command mailroom. Mail Clerks are personnel that either work in (assigned to) a MC, MSL, or Tenant Command Mailroom, and processes U.S. Mail received/delivered directly to/from the unit MC/MSL via U.S. Postal Service (USPS).

USPS Retail Ground

USPS Retail Ground (formerly Standard Post) is primarily intended for single-piece mailings which consist of any mailable matter that is not required to be mailed as First-Class Mail and includes USPS Tracking at no additional charge. It is commonly used for gifts and merchandise. There are no bulk prices for USPS Retail Ground.

ZIP Code

A system of 5-digit codes that identifies the individual post office or metropolitan area delivery station associated with an address. ZIP+4 is an enhanced code consisting of the 5-digit ZIP Code and four additional digits that identify a specific range of delivery addresses. ZIP Codes on USCG penalty mail are mandatory.

ZIP+4 Code

A nine-digit numeric code composed of two parts: (a) the initial code: the first five digits that identify the sectional center facility and delivery area associated with the address, followed by a hyphen; and (b) the four-digit expanded code: the first two additional digits designate the sector (a geographic area) and the last two digits designate the segment (a building, floor, etc.).

Zone Chart

The USPS Official National Zone Chart Data Program is administered from the National Customer Support Center (NCSC) in Memphis, TN. Single-page zone charts for originating mail are available at no cost from local post offices or online at <http://postcalc.usps.gov/Zonecharts/>.

STATE AND TERRITORY ABBREVIATIONS

ALABAMA	AL	MISSOURI	MO
ALASKA	AK	MONTANA	MT
ARIZONA	AZ	NEBRASKA	NE
ARKANSAS	AR	NEVADA	NV
AMERICAN SAMOA	AS	NEW HAMPSHIRE	NH
CALIFORNIA	CA	NEW JERSEY	NJ
COLORADO	CO	NEW MEXICO	NM
CONNECTICUT	CT	NEW YORK	NY
DELAWARE	DE	NORTH CAROLINA	NC
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA	DC	NORTH DAKOTA	ND
FEDERAL STATES OF MICRONESIA	FM	OHIO	OH
FLORIDA	FL	OKLAHOMA	OK
GEORGIA	GA	OREGON	OR
HAWAII	HI	GUAM	GU
IDAHO	ID	PENNSYLVANIA	PA
ILLINOIS	IL	PUERTO RICO	PR
INDIANA	IN	RHODE ISLAND	RI
IOWA	IA	SOUTH CAROLINA	SC
KANSAS	KS	SOUTH DAKOTA	SD
KENTUCKY	KY	TENNESSEE	TN
LOUISIANA	LA	TEXAS	TX
MAINE	ME	UTAH	UT
MARSHALL ISLANDS	MH	VERMONT	VT
MARYLAND	MD	VIRGINIA	VA
MASSACHUSETTS	MA	VIRGIN ISLANDS	VI
MICHIGAN	MI	WASHINGTON	WA
MINNESOTA	MN	WEST VIRGINIA	WV
MISSISSIPPI	MS	WISCONSIN	WI
		WYOMING	WY

RETENTION REQUIREMENTS FOR POSTAL RECORDS AND FORMS

Retention periods for postal records and forms are located in the USPS Administrative Support Manual (ASM). Below is a list of the more commonly used records and forms and their retention periods.

	Title	Retention Period
PS Form 17	Stamp Requisition/Stamp Return	2 plus current fiscal year
PS Form 3533	Application for Refund of Fees, Products and Withdrawal of Customer Accounts	2 plus current fiscal year
PS Form 3541-M	Postage Statement — Periodicals — All Issues in a Calendar Month	4 years
PS Form 3582-P	BRM/Postage Due Invoice	2 plus current fiscal year
PS Form 3602-G	Postage Statement — Penalty Permit Imprint	4 years
PS Form 3630-G	Penalty Business Reply Mail Monthly Report	4 years
PS Form 3638-G	Penalty Mail Postage Due Monthly Report	2 plus current fiscal year
PS Form 3639-G	Penalty Merchandise Return Service Monthly Report	2 plus current fiscal year
PS Form 3800	Certified Mail Receipt	2 years
PS Form 3806	Registered Mail Receipt	2 years
PS Form 3811	Return Receipt	2 years
PS Form 3813-P	Insured Mail Receipt	2 plus current fiscal year
PS Form 3849	Redelivery Notice	2 years
PS Form 3854	Manifold Registry Dispatch Book	2 plus current fiscal year
PS Form 3883	Firm Delivery Receipt	2 years
	Registered mail records	2 years

NOTE: Records and forms pertaining to military forms and records are not included in USPS Handbook 101F or the Administrative Support Manual (ASM). Below is a list of those forms and retention periods.

All DOD Forms	2 years
OPNAV 5110/5 (directory card)	12 months after transfer
OPNAV 5110/9 (ordinary mail manifest)	6 months
OPNAV 5110/9 (registered mail manifest)	2 years
Mail call log sheet	6 months
PS Form 2976	30 days