

PS5800.10 MAIL MANAGEMENT MANUAL



Change Notice

DIRECTIVE AFFECTED: 5800.10
CHANGE NOTICE NUMBER: 02
DATE: 8/19/98

1. PURPOSE AND SCOPE. To provide instructions for using the United Parcel Service in all Bureau institutions, clarify responsibility for processing and storing inmate funds, and revise procedures for processing inmate mail addressed to the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). Additionally, it clarifies the use of metered mail strips and explains the use of the Bureau security stamp.

2. SUMMARY OF CHANGES

a. **Program Statement, Page 2:** Section 5 makes reference to Pretrial/Holdover procedures. Section 6 specifies that Institution Supplements must be submitted for approval to the appropriate Regional Inmate Systems Administrator.

b. **Chapter 1, Page 4 & 5:** Section 108 C redefines the term "package" and requires that packages mailed from one Bureau institution to another must bear the security stamp.

c. **Chapter 2, Page 1:** Section 202 A deletes the word "Pre-metering" and replaces it with "prohibited metering."

d. **Chapter 2, Page 2:** Section 204 adds UNICOR's address and FAX number for requesting/ordering stock.

e. **Chapter 2, Page 4:** Section 208 B specifies the authorized use of the metered mail strip.

f. **Chapter 3, Page 4:** Section 305 deletes paragraphs "A" and "B" and makes reference to "special mail" procedures in the Correspondence Program Statement.

g. **Chapter 3, Page 8 & 9:** Section 309 is expanded to describe the manner in which unreceipted inmate funds received in the mail shall be placed in a night depository. It also outlines procedures for handling unsolicited funds.

h. **Chapter 3, Page 9:** Section 310 clarifies procedures when packages authorized under other Bureau policies do not need a BP-331 (BP-S331) or BP-383 (BP-S383).

i. **Chapter 3, Page 10 & 11:** Section 310 specifies that all incoming inmate packages, excluding release clothing, will be processed and inventoried on a BP-383 (BP-S383) form and that all packages must be inventoried within 48 hours excluding weekends and holidays.

j. **Chapter 3, Page 13 & 14:** Section 313 specifies that all outgoing inmate mail will be handled in accordance with the Correspondence Program Statement. This section also adds the requirement for inmates to address all Internal Revenue Service correspondence directly to the Chief, Criminal Investigation Branch.

k. **Chapter 3, Page 15 & 16:** Section 314 B and 315 specifies the use of United Parcel Service (UPS) for forwarding inmate packages at government expense.

l. **Chapter 4, Page 2:** Section 405 adds the requirement that all incoming and outgoing registered inmate mail shall be logged in a log book separate from staff mail.

m. **Chapter 4, Pages 5 through 7:** Section 412 outlines procedures for using the United Parcel Service.

3. TABLE OF CHANGES

<u>Remove</u>	<u>Insert</u>
Program Statement	Program Statement
Table of Contents	Table of Contents
Chapter 1, Pages 3 - 7	Chapter 1, Pages 3 - 7
Chapter 2, Pages 1 - 4	Chapter 2, Pages 1 - 4
Chapter 3, Pages 3 - 15	Chapter 3, Pages 3 - 16
Chapter 4, Pages 1 - 4	Chapter 4, Pages 1 - 7

4. ACTION. File this Change Notice in front of the Mail Management Manual.

/s/
Kathleen Hawk Sawyer
Director



Change Notice

DIRECTIVE BEING CHANGED: 5800.10
CHANGE NOTICE NUMBER: CN-01
DATE: March 5, 1997

1. PURPOSE AND SCOPE. To incorporate changes into PS 5800.10, the Mail Management Manual.

2. SUMMARY OF CHANGES

a. A check or money order missing the inmate's name or register number shall be posted to the inmate's account if his or her name and register number are on the envelope and staff can verify the inmate's identity (Review of Function initiative 212JHB.2).

b. Negotiable instruments incorrectly prepared (missing committed name or register number) and when the inmate cannot be identified on the envelope shall be returned to the sender, with a letter of explanation, by first class mail.

3. TABLE OF CHANGES

Remove

Chapter 3, Pages 7 and 8

Insert

Chapter 3, Pages 7 and 8
(CN-01)

4. ACTION. File this Change Notice in front of P.S. 5800.10, the Mail Management Manual.

\s\
Kathleen M. Hawk
Director



Program Statement

OPI: CPD
NUMBER: 5800.10
DATE: November 3, 1995
SUBJECT: Mail Management Manual

1. PURPOSE AND SCOPE. To implement procedures for processing all official and inmate mail as expeditiously and economically as possible in accordance with this Manual.

Effective January 1, 1995, the U.S. Postal Service (USPS) mandated that all government agencies use "Direct Accountability" methods which require direct payment of postage through the use of postage meters, business reply mail, or stamps, and eliminates the "penalty indicia" currently used for official mail.

2. PROGRAM OBJECTIVES. The expected results of this program are:

a. All official and inmate mail will be processed expeditiously and efficiently.

b. All outgoing official mail will be processed using Direct Accountability methods.

3. DIRECTIVES AFFECTED

a. Directives Rescinded

PS 5800.06 Mail Management Manual (6/1/91)

b. Directives Referenced

PS 1320.03 Claims Under the Federal Tort Claims Act
(1/4/93)

PS 2000.02 Accounting Management Manual (10/15/86)

PS 5265.10 Correspondence (12/18/97)

PS 5266.07 Publications, Incoming (11/1/96)

PS 5580.05 Inmate Personal Property (9/30/96)

PS 5800.07 Inmate Systems Management Manual (12/24/91)
PS 5800.08 Receiving and Discharge Manual (6/15/93)

4. STANDARDS REFERENCED

a. American Correctional Association 2nd Edition Standards for Administration of Correctional Agencies: 2-CO-5D-01

b. American Correctional Association 3rd Edition Standards for Adult Correctional Institutions: 3-4429, 3-4432, 3-4433, 3-4434, 3-4435, 3-4436, 3-4437 and 3-4438.

c. American Correctional Association 3rd Edition Standards for Adult Local Detention Facilities: 3-ALDF-5D-01, 3-ALDF-5D-04, 3-ALDF-5D-05, 3-ALDF-5D06, 3-ALDF-5D-07, 3-ALDF-5D-08.

d. American Correctional Association Standards for Adult Correctional Boot Camp Programs: 1-ABC-5D-01, 1-ABC-5D-05, 1-ABC-5D-06, 1-ABC-5D-07, 1-ABC-5D-08, 1-ABC-5D-09, 1-ABC-5D-10.

* 5. PRETRIAL/HOLDOVER PROCEDURES. The procedures required in this Program Statement are applicable to pretrial and holdover inmates, with exceptions for pretrial inmates noted in Chapter 3, Section 313. Specific procedures for pretrial and holdover inmates are included in Chapter 3, Section 307. *

* 6. INSTITUTION SUPPLEMENT. Many requirements of this Manual are security level related and are affected by local requirements. The Institution Supplement must be submitted for approval to the appropriate Regional Inmate Systems Administrator. It must address, but is not limited, to the following topics: *

a. Delivery and collection of mail (including special mail) for inmates who do not have ready access to these services.

b. Distribution of official mail.

c. Delivery of inmate mail to housing units.

d. Allowance for receipt of publications.

e. Procedures for processing legal and special mail, to include packages.

f. Processing mail into and out of special units (e.g., protective custody units).

7. DISTRIBUTION. Each institution may also provide a courtesy copy to its local servicing post office.

/s/
Kathleen Hawk Sawyer
Director

MAIL MANAGEMENT MANUAL

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CHAPTER 1

GENERAL

101. INTRODUCTION

Mail is the primary means of communication between inmates and the community. As such, it is vital that mail be well-managed and that services be provided professionally and expeditiously.

Management of mail in the correctional environment is an especially demanding proposition. Staff must be familiar not only with the processing of personal and official mail, but also must be primarily aware of situations that can lead to breaches of security and order in the institution.

Every contingency that arises cannot, as a practical matter, be addressed in a program statement. Staff, therefore, must exercise good judgement and common sense when questions arise for which answers are not specifically provided.

Mail staff shall have daily contact with personnel of the United States Postal Service (USPS) and the local Postmaster. Good relationships shall be fostered so that mail problems can be resolved to benefit both the USPS and the Bureau.

102. SUPERVISORY STAFF

The Inmate Systems Manager shall be accountable for all functions of the department including the processing of inmate and official mail. Some institutions have an Assistant Inmate Systems Manager, who shall assist the Inmate Systems Manager with providing direct supervision to Inmate Systems Supervisors and monitoring the mail room operations. The Inmate Systems Supervisor shall monitor mail procedures to ensure the timely processing, accountability and processing of funds, and proper handling of special mail. Special care shall be given to the detection of contraband and other prohibited acts.

103. MAIL ROOM SECURITY

Although extraordinary protection measures are not required, the mail room shall be secure from immediate and casual entrance. A window or half-door should be provided in order to conduct business while excluding access. The mailroom should generally be situated in a single room, without outside windows. Where outside windows exist, they should be secured (e.g. security screens) to prevent easy access.

The entrance to the mail room will be secure at all times.

Unauthorized personnel may not be permitted access to money or to the forms and equipment used to process money.

Staff shall open all incoming mail, newspapers, magazines, books, and packages and inspect the material for contraband prior to distribution.

Only one inmate at a time may be allowed to work in the mail room. Inmates who are allowed to work in the mail room shall be under constant and direct supervision and shall not have access to mail, (including newspapers and magazines), certified or special mail, packages, receipts, log books, or forms. Inmates shall not be permitted, under any circumstances, to process or deliver any class or type of inmate mail. Inmate work shall be limited to janitorial and loading/unloading services. Addresses shall be protected when inmates are loading/unloading bags and boxes. When inmates assist in loading/unloading of packages, mailroom staff shall ensure the packages are sealed prior to the inmates access to the package. Inmates shall not be permitted access to the mail room while first class or package mail is processed.

All mailing labels, envelopes and other official preprinted mailing supplies of the Bureau shall be secured and may not be made available or accessible to inmates, under any circumstances.

The inmate clerk may deliver institution (e.g., official) mail provided staff deposit this material in a locked container. Inmates shall not be allowed to distribute inmate files, money, medication, or any other sensitive material to which an inmate should not have access.

104. SCHEDULE OF OPERATIONS

The Bureau provides mail service to inmates on a five-day schedule, Monday through Friday. Usually, weekend mail services are not provided. Mail room staff shall hold "open-house" for the general population at least twice a week and make regular visits to administrative and special housing units. To ensure inmates have the opportunity to address mail concerns, local procedures must be developed in institutions where the general inmate population does not have access to the mailroom.

Each Warden shall determine if local procedures are needed to handle holiday mail. For example, weekend mail service may be provided during the Christmas season and at other times when a holiday occurs during the Monday through Friday period.

105. PUBLICATIONS AND REQUESTS FOR GUIDANCE

Each Inmate Systems Manager shall insure that a copy of the following is current and in the mail room:

È Mail Management Manual

- È United States Postal Service (USPS) Domestic Mail Manual (DMM)
- È Inmate Systems Management Manual and the Program Statements on Correspondence, Inmate Personal Property, and Incoming Publications (with related institution supplements)
- È USPS International Mail Manual, if warranted by local need.

The mail room staff shall notify the Inmate Systems Manager when mail handling problems arise which are not clearly defined. The Inmate Systems Manager shall then forward a written request for guidance to the local servicing postmaster. Copies of the correspondence and replies shall be retained in the mail room for review. The Regional Inmate Systems Administrator and Central Office Inmate Systems Administrator shall also be provided copies.

Mail room staff shall obtain postage rate charts through the local servicing post office. These charts shall be kept current and placed in areas where inmates have access (e.g., Commissary, Mail Room, Units, etc.).

Reference documents, USPS guidance, and approved variances shall be retained and filed for future review. The Inmate Systems Manager shall insure that this file and these documents are maintained and current.

106. EQUIPMENT

Inmate Systems Managers may consult with the local servicing post office to determine the type of equipment to be used in the mail room.

Institutions are required to use a postage meter or stamps to pay for official mail being processed through the USPS. Equipment for use in metering official mail shall consist of an electronic scale interfaced with a postage meter capable of being "reset" by telephone. This equipment shall be obtained under contract with a maintenance agreement. When new meters are to be ordered, the Central Office, Inmate Systems Branch must be contacted for guidance and to obtain the agency code used on the application for a meter license. The application for meter license is obtained from the local servicing post office. Those UNICOR locations that have significant mail volume warranting a meter separate from the institution, shall request approval via memorandum from the Federal Prison Industries Controller.

If used, letter openers, box openers with razor blades, etc, shall be carefully accounted for and kept secured when not in use. Inmates shall not have unsupervised access to this equipment under any circumstances.

Appropriate ink-pad type rubber stamps containing endorsements required in either the Domestic Mail Manual (DMM) or this Manual shall be obtained and used.

A secure depository shall be used to secure funds until the cashier has issued a receipt for the funds. The secure depository may be a locked box bolted to a desk or wall. Monies will be placed in the locked box or depository when no staff are present in the mail room.

107. PROTECTIVE CLOTHING

Smocks or aprons may be worn, at the Warden's discretion, while processing mail, to protect the official uniform. The smock or apron may not be worn outside the institution. Institutions may issue protective clothing to Mail Room staff.

108. TYPES OF MAIL

A. Official Mail. Official mail is mail whose cost is borne by the Government of the United States and relates exclusively to the business of the Government. Official mail services relate to staff official mail and to inmate packages officially forwarded as a result of institution administration.

B. Inmate Correspondence. "General correspondence" is incoming or outgoing correspondence other than special mail. Whether sealed, unsealed, stamped or unstamped, inmate correspondence is forwarded according to the procedures of Chapter 3, Paragraph 313 of this manual and the Program Statement on Correspondence.

* C. Packages. A package is a bundle, usually of small or medium size, that is packed, padded, wrapped, or boxed. Additionally, an article weighing 16 ounces or more containing other than paper material or excessive paper materials shall be considered a package and will require approval in accordance with Section 310 of this Manual. While packages are encompassed within the broad term ?general correspondence?, they receive distinct processing and ordinarily require approval prior to receipt.

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* All inmate personal property packages must be authorized via the Authorization to Receive Package (BP-331) form. The package shall have prior approval, verified by the initiating department, and be signed by the department head concerned. Each package received from another institution shall contain an Inmate Personal Property Record (BP-383), or Authorization to Mail Package (BP-329). When a package is received from another institution with a BP-329, the box must also bear a Bureau security stamp in accordance with the Receiving and Discharge Manual. *

Receiving staff are to apply the inspections and security precautions with respect to inmate packages.

Packages received, which fall under the authorization of the Program Statements on Correspondence or Publications, Incoming shall be opened for inspection, but shall not need prior approval. Regular publication mailings, for example, a monthly "Book of the Month Club," do not require prior approval each month (see Chapter 3 for further details).

109. STAFF PERSONAL MAIL

Staff may not receive personal mail at the institution through the institution mail room (this does not apply to mail USPS delivers to staff quarters), nor use the institution mail room for processing or forwarding personal mail. In order to provide a location address for staff in transfer, the institution may be used as a forwarding address, provided arrangements have been made for home delivery of personal mail within 45 days after arrival at the new location. Staff personal mail shall not be dispatched from institutions.

110. OCCUPANT OR CURRENT ADDRESSEE MAIL

Mail addressed to "Occupant" or "Current Addressee" shall be considered delivered when received at the institution; it shall become the Warden's property; and shall be disposed of as the Warden stipulates. (Note: Mail addressed to "a personal name and occupant," for example: "Tom Williams or current occupant," is considered addressed to the person named and processed as mail to that person. If the named person is not at the institution, the mail shall be considered as belonging to the "current occupant" and shall be disposed of as the Warden stipulates).

111. AUTHORITY FOR DISPOSAL OF MAIL

Authority to dispose of or destroy mail addressed to a specific person rests solely with the USPS. Bureau staff have no such authority and shall return undelivered mail to the local USPS.

112. PRIVATE CARRIERS

Private carriers, such as UPS, etc., may ship and carry weapons and ammunition or other potentially dangerous materials. Therefore, they shall not be permitted inside an institution's secure perimeter without going through the proper security checks. Material these carriers deliver shall be received outside the institution and thoroughly inspected prior to delivery into the institution. This provision covers package delivery and is not to be construed to prevent access to the institution by shipping companies requiring access with full loads. When there is doubt, the Captain must be contacted. Private carriers shall not be confused with the USPS. When using private carriers for forwarding, post office boxes shall not be used as any portion of the address. Private carriers do not have access to, nor can they use, USPS post office boxes. When addressing correspondence or packages to be sent via a private carrier, be sure to use a street and number, route or road designation, in addition to the city, state, and zip code.

113. MANDATORY OPENING AND INSPECTING OF ALL MAIL AND PACKAGES

Staff are required to open and inspect all mail prior to distribution (including mail being returned to an inmate). **Except at minimum security institutions, all packages for inmates and staff shall be opened outside the secure perimeter (fences or walls).** Opening of packages in an outside storeroom or warehouse is the recommended method. At institutions where the secure perimeter is the building itself, local procedures must be developed to ensure inspection procedures are performed.

Inspections and searches are encouraged using modern techniques for searching packages such as a fluoroscope machine, transfrisker, metal detector, etc.

To increase security and preclude attempts to introduce contraband, packaging material (whether for inmate or staff) shall be removed, treated as "hot trash," and properly disposed of as required by local policy. It may not be used to forward packages within the institution.

Unit staff shall open special mail (see the Program Statement on Correspondence) in the inmate's presence. (See Chapter 3 relative to a package received as special mail.)

Packages addressed to inmates shall be opened and inspected before inmates are given access to the package or its contents. Once a package is opened, it comes under the purview of the institution. If a package is to be forwarded or returned, it will be resealed and mailed at government expense. To preclude having to open a package and then forward it because it was not authorized, mail room staff shall take approved BP-331 forms to the servicing postal facility. A package for which there is no approved BP-331 can be immediately refused as unauthorized and returned to the sender. A notation to this effect shall be made on the package at that time. (See Chapter 3 for further details.)

Packages addressed to staff shall be opened and inspected in an area not accessible to inmates. While packages for staff do not require pre-approval, packages addressed to staff containing items for inmates that were not pre-approved shall be returned (see Chapter 3 for further details). Certain packages addressed to the Warden shall not be opened. The Inmate Systems Manager shall consult with institution Executive Staff to receive direction on desired handling.

(Note: At administrative institutions, mail for minimum security level inmates may be treated as minimum security level mail if the Warden determines that this mail may be processed as such.) In minimum security level institutions, packages shall be opened prior to distribution; however, more latitude is allowed. For example, prior to being opened, packages may be brought into the institution and locked in the mail room or in a secure area not accessible to inmates.

Controlled narcotics, x-ray film, and other sensitive and controlled substances may be delivered in packages addressed to the institution hospital. Therefore, extra caution shall be exercised when opening them because the use of a fluoroscope machine or exposing x-ray film to light may ruin them. Packages are to be held in a secure area such as the rear gate, etc., depending on the institution security level, and inspected only in the presence of a hospital staff member and the staff member holding or delivering the package.

CHAPTER 2

OFFICIAL MAIL

201. PAYMENT FOR MAILINGS

Effective January 1, 1995, official mail shall no longer be forwarded via the Official Mailing Indicia. All official mail forwarded through the USPS by any Bureau activity shall be forwarded using some method of pre-payment (metering and postage stamps).

202. USE OF POSTAGE METERS

The postage meter shall be placed in an area with a telephone line in the immediate vicinity and in an area not accessible to inmates. The postage meter shall be reset by telephone (money placed on the meter) and the amount allowed for reset will depend upon the type of facility in which the meter is located.

Meters shall be reset with enough funds to allow approximately one month of mail to be processed. A log of resets shall be kept, and entries into the log shall include the date and amount of the reset, and the signature of the staff member requesting the reset. The reset statement subsequently sent from the contractor shall be placed with the log.

* A. Prohibited Metering. Metering of envelopes for use at a later date or for use as a "reply envelope" is prohibited. Once a piece of mail has been metered, this serves as the postmark. *

B. UNICOR Postage. Where UNICOR uses the institution's postage meter to mail their official mail, the following procedures are to be followed:

(1) A separate account code must be established for UNICOR on the meter.

(2) The UNICOR account on the meter shall be read on the 25th of each month, and this reading shall be reported via memorandum to the institution Controller. UNICOR shall be billed for usage through the institutional billing process.

(3) This reading shall also be entered in the log created to record funds being placed on the meter.

(4) If the 25th falls on a weekend or holiday, the meter shall be read on the previous workday.

C. Payment of Postage by Government. If a question arises concerning payment of postage at the government's expense, a request for clarification shall be made to the Inmate Systems, Operations Section, Central Office.

203. BUSINESS REPLY MAIL

Staff shall provide the Business Reply Mail (BRM) envelope to respondents when a reply to official business is necessary. Inmates may not have access to official business reply envelopes. Questions on use of this service shall be coordinated with the Central Office, Inmate Systems Management. Business reply licenses have been issued to the Bureau, which includes Community Corrections Offices (#14045) and UNICOR (#99035).

The USPS requires that agencies determine the method of payment for BRM with one of several methods. The Central Office has elected to fund a "site" fee for each institution and regional office. Site fees for Community Corrections Offices will be established on an as-needed-basis. The site fee permits the USPS to process all BRM to a given site, regardless of the quantity of BRM processed. The ISM, RISA, or CCM at newly established institutions, regional offices, or CCM Offices (or any other newly established Bureau mailing site) must go to their local servicing USPS facility and apply for a site BRM permit. The application shall show the appropriate license number--Bureau (#14045) and UNICOR (#99035)--and indicate that the initial and annual billing for the site fee is charged to the Central Office.

204. OBTAINING OFFICIAL MAIL SUPPLIES

* Envelopes, labels, and other items for use with official Bureau mail shall only be obtained from UNICOR. Requests for stock shall be forwarded to UNICOR, Customer Service Center, PO Box 11670, Lexington KY 40577-1670, or orders may be faxed to (606)254-9048. When ordering this material from UNICOR, the correct return address for the institution shall be provided either by sample or photocopy prior to sending the FAX. The Business Office shall be responsible for funding, issue, and control of stock on behalf of all offices. However, the Business Office shall consult with the ISM when ordering to assure that orders are correct as to design, return address, etc. *

A Bureau site may not obtain pre-printed envelopes which include a department, office, section, etc., identification in the return address. Official envelopes shall contain only the site's general return address. Department or office identification may be stamped, typewritten, or handwritten immediately below the site return address, if necessary.

205. OFFICIAL MAIL STATIONS

Official mail shall be dispatched only from official mail stations of the Bureau, the official mail room at the Central Office, each institution, Regional Office, Staff Training Centers and Community Corrections Offices.

Official mail **may not** be placed in street boxes or delivered by unauthorized staff directly to Post Offices. Authorized mail room staff shall process all official mail through the official mail station and then to the USPS.

206. FORWARDING OFFICIAL MAIL

Official mail, received at Bureau locations, which has been opened shall only be forwarded by re-covering the mail in another envelope and preparing the piece for re-sending as a new mailing. Official mail received which has not been opened does not need re-covering, but will be returned to the Post Office with endorsement for forwarding or other appropriate disposal.

To economize, "batch" mail should be used for forwarding all official mail whenever possible.

207. INMATE PACKAGES AS OFFICIAL MAIL

Except when otherwise specified in policy (for example, Program Statements on Inmate Recreation Programs and Inmate Personal Property), inmate packages shall be considered "official mail" when required to be mailed from the Bureau or required by the Government to be mailed as a result of its administration.

208. OFFICIAL MAIL PROCESSING

A. Incoming Mail. Staff pickup of departmental mail at the mail room is encouraged, provided the layout of the mail room allows security and easy staff access to the mail.

Official mail shall be separated from inmate mail and handled separately. Envelope mail shall be sorted by department for pickup. If an inmate is used to deliver official mail, the procedures addressed in Chapter 1 regarding mail room security shall be followed.

(1) Negotiable Instruments. Mail room staff shall secure all negotiable instruments (such as government pay checks) until delivery can be arranged with the appropriate department head.

Negotiable instruments retained overnight shall be secured in the night depository (not the mail room depository).

(2) Official Mail Packages. Official mail packages addressed to staff shall be opened and inspected. All security procedures related to packages shall be followed. A log shall be maintained for all incoming registered, certified, or insured letters and packages. A separate log may be used for each type of mail and appropriate receipts are to be obtained.

B. Outgoing Mail. To every extent practicable, staff shall address outgoing official mail to an office or official title as opposed to an individual by name. Addressing official mail to a named individual frequently causes mail to be misdirected. Also, if using personal names, Mail Room staff with a large volume of mail to process, may confuse a staff name with an inmate name and inadvertently provide official mail to an inmate. An error of this sort can have an extremely negative impact, but can be avoided by using only official titles as opposed to personal names.

All outgoing official mail shall be sealed in the office of origin. The initials and office of the sender shall be entered in the upper left corner of each piece. Other locations, such as Community Corrections Offices, Regional Offices, and staff offices in the Central Office may wish to place the mailer's name and office identification in the same manner to assist in controlling mail forwarded to, or returned from, institutions.

Staff shall deposit outgoing official mail in depositories located in the Warden's office and/or mail room. The "blue pouch" is used primarily for transferring inmate files. The pouch must be sealed prior to transmission. Staff shall assure that these pouches are continually circulated to other institutions. If pouches are not available, ordinary padded envelopes may be used.

Envelopes specially provided for handling files in the movement of inmates via bus/airlift are not to be used for mailing purposes.

* Institution metered mail strips are only to be used for official mail. Inmates shall not be provided or sold metered mail strips.

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CHAPTER 3

INMATE MAIL

301. GENERAL

All mail room staff shall be thoroughly familiar with the provisions of the Program Statements on Correspondence, which contains criteria for sending and receiving inmate correspondence; Inmate Personal Property, which provides guidance as to what constitutes inmate contraband and the processing of this material; and Incoming Publications, which provides guidance related to the treatment of incoming newspapers, magazines, books, etc.

Size and complexity of an institution, the degree of sophistication of the inmates confined, and many other variables (e.g. physical plant) require flexibility in correspondence procedures. The Warden may establish controls to protect inmates and maintain the institution's security, discipline, and good order. For example, if an inmate attempts to solicit funds or items (e.g., samples) or subscribes to a publication without paying for the subscription, staff may consider limiting the inmate's correspondence as specified in the Program Statement on Correspondence.

It is important that mail room staff conduct a continuous dialogue with other staff, particularly Unit Managers and the Captain, so that potential inmate management problems can be mutually identified and resolved. Also, Inmate Systems Managers and mail room staff must insure that inmates who do not have ready access to mail services can participate, as appropriate, in the correspondence program.

If a piece of incoming controlled mail (registered, certified, etc.) is lost or misplaced or a problem occurs with a money order, etc., the sender (not the inmate) must initiate the traces and follow-up action with the USPS or private carrier. The sender is in the best position to initiate tracing activities because it was the sender who paid the fees, completed the forms, and knew the mailing circumstances. In the case of outgoing controlled mail, staff shall assist the inmate to file tracer documents with the servicing facility.

302. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS OF INMATE (BP-407)

Upon admission to the institution, inmates complete a BP-407, Acknowledgements of Inmate. A current listing of inmates who have elected not to receive their general correspondence (by executing Part 1-I of the BP-407) shall be on file in the mail

room. General correspondence for these inmates shall be returned to the sender, unopened, with the endorsement "refused."

An inmate who refuses to sign the BP-407 shall receive general correspondence under the same conditions as if Part 1-II had been completed and signed. That is, staff shall complete the bottom portion of part 1-II and inmates shall receive their general correspondence after it is opened and all inspections are completed.

All special mail shall continue to be processed to the inmate as provided in the Program Statement on Correspondence.

Note: It is generally recognized that the Bureau has the authority to open, read, and inspect general correspondence prior to inmate access. The procedures prescribed here specifically allow an inmate to elect not to have mail opened and read. If this option is elected, mail (other than special mail) shall be returned. If the inmate elects to receive general correspondence and signs the appropriate portion of the form, correspondence is inspected and sent through. If the inmate does not make a choice, by refusing to sign the form, the inmate shall receive general correspondence after staff open and inspect it.

303. INMATE SERVICES AVAILABLE

The Warden shall establish one or more depositories, which shall be centrally located, to ensure ready accessibility to the inmate population. Staff shall pick up and deliver the contents to the mail room daily. A separate depository shall be maintained for outgoing "Special Mail." Inmates shall be provided mail service for correspondence as outlined in the Program Statement on Correspondence. Other services such as stamp collecting, express mail, USPS box service, UPS (and other private carriers) are not provided. Express mail, UPS, telegrams, etc., when received as material coming into the institution, shall be routinely processed. When received on weekends, they are usually received and signed for by other than mail room staff and are secured until normal duty hours.

Staff shall develop and implement local procedures for delivery and collection of mail for inmates who do not have ready access to these services (e.g., segregation, hospital). Such procedures shall insure the receipt and delivery of correspondence and mail commensurate with the rest of the population. Of particular importance is that these procedures must insure the usual receipt and delivery of special mail. For example, local procedures must insure receipt and marking of special outgoing mail in a manner that shall accomplish this as if the inmate had ready access to the special mail depository.

304. PROCESSING INCOMING INMATE MAIL

After receipt, inmate mail must be immediately separated from official and staff mail. Do not open inmate mail at this time.

Determine those inmates currently at the institution, using a SENTRY roster. Remove mail for inmates no longer at the institution and forward appropriately, later in the day. This list shall be kept current by adding the names of all new admissions, deleting the names of those inmates who have been released, and noting all correspondence restrictions in effect. It is important that each piece of mail be matched against various directories prior to opening to assure that ONLY MAIL FOR INMATES PRESENTLY AT THE INSTITUTION IS OPENED. Mail for inmates not presently at the institution shall be returned, unopened, to the local servicing post office with endorsement for forwarding or other appropriate disposal.

A. Random Reading. Consistent with the provisions of Bureau regulations codified at 28 CFR 540.14, as contained in the Program Statement on Correspondence, all incoming general correspondence, and all outgoing mail (except "special mail") is subject to random reading by staff. The objectives to be accomplished in reading incoming or outgoing mail differ from the objectives of inspection. In the case of **inspection** (to which all incoming general correspondence is subjected), the objective is primarily to detect contraband. The random **reading** of mail is intended to reveal, for example, plans to commit criminal acts or to monitor a particular problem confronting an inmate. Care shall be taken when opening correspondence to avoid cutting or otherwise damaging the contents.

While reading correspondence, a staff member may incidentally learn of information concerning the private lives of inmates or their correspondents. Bureau staff must be sensitive to the fact that most information in correspondence is of a private nature and must be handled discreetly. Unless there is a legitimate correctional concern relating to the institution's security, safety, or orderly running, the contents of reviewed correspondence are not to be revealed to any other person.

Inmate correspondence that is opened and rejected or that is to be returned or forwarded for other reasons, must be re-covered, sealed, and forwarded at government expense.

B. Special Mail. Separate "Special Mail" from general inmate mail. Special Mail shall be logged and picked-up by unit staff, for staff to open in the inmate's presence.

C. Mail Returned to Inmate. Mail being returned to an inmate shall be processed as general or special correspondence, as appropriate. Returned mail may not be provided to inmates until appropriate examinations are completed. Returned special mail

shall be processed as special mail (open in inmate's presence, check for contraband only, etc.).

D. Examination. Examine each letter carefully for contraband, unauthorized material, negotiable instruments, money, etc. An item received that cannot be searched or examined without destruction or alteration (e.g., electronic greeting cards, padded cards, double faced photograph), shall be returned to sender. The material to be returned, along with the correspondent's copy of the BP-328 (BP-S328), shall be re-covered and sent to the correspondent. An appropriately completed BP-328 (BP-S328) shall also be provided to the inmate.

Return addresses shall be closely reviewed. Correspondence between confined inmates must be approved in accordance with the Program Statement on Correspondence. Correspondence not properly approved shall be rejected, using a BP-327 (BP-S327).

E. Delivery. After all inspections are accomplished, re-close each letter (staple, tape, etc.), finish the final sort, and prepare for delivery as directed by local procedures. Caution shall be taken when re-closing letters with a stapler to ensure contents are not stapled. Incoming correspondence shall be delivered daily Monday through Friday. Delivery of letters may not be delayed and shall ordinarily be accomplished within 24 hours of receipt, excluding weekends and holidays.

305. SPECIAL MAIL

The Bureau policy on inmate correspondence identifies certain types of incoming correspondence as "special mail," to be opened only in the inmate's presence. For this special handling to occur, Bureau policy requires that the sender be adequately identified on the envelope and that the envelope be marked "Special Mail-Open Only in the Presence of the Inmate" or with similar language. Refer to the Correspondence Program Statement for those offices which are not required to use the "Special Mail" statement.

Staff shall use professional judgement in determining whether correspondence is from either the Chambers of a Judge or a Member of the U.S. Congress, Senate, or Executive Office. Other Congressional and judicial correspondence shall be afforded special mail handling provided the sender is adequately identified on the envelope and the envelope has the special mail marking in accordance with the Program Statement on Correspondence, Section 13.

*

The Bureau has prepared an instruction sheet, BP-493 (BP-S493) for an inmate to include with correspondence sent by the inmate to the attorney representing that inmate. This instruction sheet advises the attorney of the required procedures for incoming attorney-client correspondence to be afforded special mail privileges. Specifically, the attorney must be adequately identified on the envelope as an attorney and the envelope must be marked "Special Mail - Open Only in the Presence of the Inmate," or with similar language clearly indicating that particular item of correspondence qualifies as special mail and the attorney is requesting the correspondence be opened only in the inmate's presence. Inmate Systems Managers shall ensure that copies of the instruction sheet for special mail handling of incoming attorney-client correspondence are provided as admission and orientation hand-outs and are placed in inmate housing areas, attorney visiting rooms, and other locations accessible to inmates.

The use of the title "Esquire" without additional indication of the sender's occupation does not establish the bearer as an attorney or legal aid supervisor. Mail from individuals using the title "Esquire" as the exclusive identification of their status shall not be handled as special mail, even if the envelope contains some special mail markings. However, use of the title "Esquire" after the sender's name, in addition to the same name being included in the return address of the law office, does sufficiently identify the sender as an attorney. Alternatively, the use of the term "Esquire" after the sender's name, in addition to some notation on the envelope that the sender is an attorney, i.e., Attorney-Client Communication, is also sufficient identification.

Other Mail. The Warden may treat incoming mail that does not meet all of the requirements for special mail handling in the same fashion as special mail, including opening it in the inmate's presence and inspecting it only for contraband. It is recommended the institution supplement outline local criteria used to identify incoming special mail.

306. IN/OUT PROCESSING REQUIREMENTS FOR SPECIAL AND LEGAL MAIL

Inmate correspondence shall ordinarily be processed and delivered within 24 hours. Special and legal mail is afforded priority and every reasonable effort shall be made to assure delivery of special mail within 24 hours. Delivery time is essential in the filing of court documents or other legal papers, therefore, mail room staff, as well as staff making the actual delivery to the

inmate (usually unit staff), must adhere to delivery time frames for special mail.

Staff shall open inmate special mail in the inmate's presence. Staff are to check for contraband and funds at this time. A receipt shall be issued for funds and delivered to mail room staff or the night depository, as appropriate, usually by unit staff.

Mail room staff shall maintain a log detailing receipt and delivery of special mail. Additionally, special/legal mail shall be time-stamped, or a handwritten note shall be made on the envelope, to show date and time received in the mail room. Although inmates may be asked to sign for this mail, they are not required to do so.

Correspondence that meets the conditions of outgoing special mail that is subsequently returned by the USPS, shall be processed to the inmate (open only in presence, etc.) as incoming special mail. Unit staff should consider logging this mail in their unit log book.

Inmate Systems Managers shall periodically review the special/legal mail delivery process to ensure that policy requirements are met. ISM's shall specifically consult with unit staff and review requisite record keeping to ensure that delivery time frames are being met.

When an inmate is not at the institution, the special mail remains sealed and is forwarded to the inmate regardless of the 30-day forwarding period of general mail. Staff shall use all means practicable to locate inmates for the purposes of forwarding special mail (e.g., SENTRY, card files, telephone calls). If the inmate has been transferred, the mail will be forwarded to the inmate at the final transfer destination.

If the inmate is out on writ, staff shall use all means practicable to forward special mail. When forwarding special mail, mail room staff shall note forwarding details in the log. If an address is not available at the end of 30 days, each piece of mail shall be returned to the sender with an explicit letter of explanation from the Inmate Systems Manager of the attempts to forward the mail along with an offer of additional assistance.

If the inmate has been released to the community, forward the mail to the forwarding address provided by the inmate. If a forwarding address is not available, forward the mail to the U.S. Probation Office in the release district, provided the inmate is, or was, under supervision.

If the inmate was released by expiration of sentence and a forwarding address is not available, return the correspondence to the sender with a notation of the date and type of release and a statement that no forwarding address is available.

307. INCOMING DEPOSITORY AT FDC/MCC/MDC'S

FDC/MCC/MDC's shall provide a depository for attorney/client correspondence in an area which is readily accessible to attorneys. Facilities which house pretrial inmates may also provide this service. This depository shall provide the means for an attorney to "hand deliver" legal material to an institution for delivery to a client.

A notice shall be placed on the depository, "A return address shall be provided for each item deposited in this box." A return address is needed in case the inmate has left the institution and cannot be located. Since postage presumably shall not have been placed on this material, the material requiring return shall be covered for mailing at government expense.

The procedure established for handling of incoming "Special Mail" shall be followed for processing this correspondence (must contain the special markings). Correspondence placed in this depository not qualifying as "Special Mail" shall be treated as incoming "General Correspondence."

308. INCOMING PUBLICATIONS

All incoming newspapers, magazines, and books shall be handled in accordance with the Program Statement on Incoming Publications. For inmates not at the institution, this type of material, provided it was received through the mail, shall be endorsed with a forwarding address (or other appropriate endorsement) and returned to the USPS for forwarding or disposal, as appropriate. Under no circumstances shall this material be retained at the institution for general use, as for example, in the library or another department.

Some publications have characteristics of both newspapers and magazines. Whether a publication is permitted from any source or only from a publisher (e.g., newspaper) shall be determined by common definitions of those terms, as well as in the characteristics referred to in the Program Statements on Correspondence and Incoming Publications. A publication is determined to be a newspaper, if it is printed on pulp-like paper stock and is folded and/or divided into sections.

309. NEGOTIABLE INSTRUMENTS

A receipt shall be prepared for all money received via mail. The mail room copy of the Federal Prison Point of Sale (FPPOS) receipt is to be retained for one year. All money and receipts shall be secured in the mail room secure depository pending processing by the cashier. The cashier shall collect all money and receipts daily, except Saturday, Sunday, and holidays. If, for some reason, they are not picked up on the day they are received, all money and receipts shall be removed from the mail room secured depository and placed in the night depository. All negotiable instruments not collected by the cashier will be placed in an envelope. The envelope must be sealed, signed across the seal, taped shut, and a notation such as "Mail Room Unprocessed Funds" shall be placed on the front of the envelope.

Note: When funds are collected from the night depository the next business day, Business Office staff are not responsible for counting unreceipted funds which mail room staff placed in the depository. **No other funds shall be placed in the night depository unreceipted.**

Sealed "Special Mail" already delivered to the unit staff may contain inmate funds. If so, unit staff shall prepare receipts and deliver the receipts and money to mail room staff or night depository, as appropriate. See Chapter 10967, Accounting Management Manual, for deposit fund accounting requirements, particularly as provided for foreign money orders.

If the committed name and register number are on the envelope and staff can verify the inmate's identity, then the check or money order may be posted to the inmate's account even if it is missing the name or register number. These instruments shall be checked very closely to ensure that inmates are correctly identified and to ensure that the money is deposited to the correct account. When a negotiable instrument is made out to joint payees, see Chapter 10967, Accounting Management Manual, for processing instructions.

Negotiable instruments not accepted because they are incorrectly prepared (missing name or register number on both the check and envelope) and the inmate cannot be correctly identified shall be returned to sender with a properly completed BP-328 (BP-S328) via first class mail. A copy shall be retained on file for one year. Retained copies of negotiable instruments shall be distinctly marked "file copy" to avoid potential problems involved in copying negotiable instruments.

* Each payee shall be identified by name and number. A FPPOS receipt shall be prepared for all monies received. Both the cashier and the inmate shall receive a signed copy of that receipt. An inmate may receive more than one letter a day containing money. The money in each letter shall be receipted and processed separately. However, "Unsolicited Funds" such as funds received in a mail survey, contest, book or record clubs, etc. will be considered unsolicited and must be rejected. *

310. INMATE PACKAGE MAIL - INCOMING

All incoming inmate property packages must be authorized in advance **unless otherwise approved under another Bureau policy.** An Authorization to Receive Package or Property ,BP-331 (BP-S331) shall be used for this purpose. A BP-331 (BP-S331) shall remain valid for no longer than 60 calendar days from the date of approval.

* Use of a BP-331 (BP-S331) or BP-383 (BP-S383) is not needed for items approved under other Bureau policies. *

Note: Some packages are authorized under other Bureau policies (for example, magazines, special mail, paperback books, educational or legal materials). Inmates should be advised that they are not required to have these packages pre-approved. These packages must be marked with words such as "Authorized by Bureau Policy." They are intended to alert mail room staff that enclosed materials contain matter which does not require prior approval. These markings assist mail room staff to identify and process the material and avoid erroneous return(s). The Inmate Systems Manager shall assure this subject is covered in A&O material(s).

A package received without an appropriately completed BP-331, or without markings indicating authorized materials enclosed, is considered unauthorized and shall be returned to the sender. A package containing an expired BP-331 (BP-S331) shall also be returned to the sender. If necessary, a return address shall be obtained from the inmate.

If upon inspection, a package marked with the special mail markings or marked as material otherwise approved under Bureau policy, contains property or other than approved material, the entire contents shall be resealed and returned at government expense. An appropriately completed BP-328 (BP-S328) shall be executed and distributed.

If a package contains materials approved under Bureau policy, the material must still be inspected to assure it meets the specific requirements of policy. For example, the package may be marked as magazines and contain only magazines, but each magazine must be reviewed to assure it meets the criteria of the Program Statement on Incoming Publications. If one or more were questionable, the procedures of the Program Statement on Incoming Publications shall be followed while the remaining magazines will be accepted.

To facilitate package processing, the BP-331 (BP-S331) shall be taken to the servicing postal facility. If there is a package for an inmate with no corresponding BP-331 (BP-S331), and the package does not contain markings as stated above, the package shall be annotated "Refused Return to Sender - Authorization for Receipt Not Obtained." If a package is at the post office addressed to an inmate in care of a staff member, there is no BP-331 on file, and/or the package is not marked as stated above, the package shall be refused and returned.

Local arrangements shall be developed to permit receipt of regular publications, such as "Book of the Month Club." For example, a BP-331 (BP-S331) may be executed annually for these approved cases.

Local procedures shall be developed to receive and process appropriately marked legal materials or special mail, received as a package, inside the institution. This material shall be opened in the inmate's presence. Unopened packages shall not be permitted inside the institution's secure perimeter. However, special mail packages may be brought into the secure perimeter if they are immediately segregated and placed in secured "hot" storage inside the institution. Most packages shall be opened prior to admission inside the secure perimeter of the institution. Whether opened or unopened, this material is under the institution's control. Packages shall be opened and inspected in accordance with procedures stated above and may be inspected at any other time as necessary for security reasons.

* If there is an authorization to receive personal property on file, the inmate may receive the package, which may be re-opened and inspected in the inmate's presence. Local procedures shall delegate the responsibility for issuance. All authorized packages which enter the institution must be inventoried on a BP-383 (BP-S383) or BP-331 (BP-S331) in the inmate's presence within 48 hours, excluding week-ends and holidays. This provision excludes packages containing release clothing (these packages shall be stored in R&D until the inmate is released).

If the package is cleared for issuance, the inmate shall acknowledge receipt on the original of the Package Authorization BP-331 (BP-S331), or the BP-383 (BP-S383), Inmate Personal Property Record, as appropriate. *

If the package is to be issued from another department, that department shall be called to arrange pick-up of the package. The employee to whom the package is issued shall acknowledge receipt on the original of the package authorization form, which shall then be forwarded to and filed in the inmate central file. The inmate shall sign the shipping copy of the package authorization form at the time of receipt. The issuing department shall retain this copy for its own record.

Originals of package authorization forms (or the appropriate copy of the BP-383), fully executed to signify delivery, shall be filed in the inmate central file.

311. UNAUTHORIZED MATERIAL AND CONTRABAND

Mail room staff must be thoroughly familiar with, and have readily available, the current Program Statement on Inmate Personal Property. Mail room staff must be familiar with the definition(s) and processing requirements related to contraband, as outlined in this directive.

Contraband is any unauthorized material in the inmate's possession. Any physical things sent to an inmate that constitute contraband are considered unauthorized material. Mail room staff shall ensure that inmates do not receive contraband. Serious contraband (such as illegal drugs, firearms, weapons, etc.), shall not be returned to the sender but must be retained **with** any correspondence and referred to the Special Investigative Supervisor (SIS) as evidence for investigation and appropriate disposition. A correspondence rejection **shall not be** prepared. However, mail room staff shall prepare a memorandum detailing the circumstances and general description of the physical item(s). This memorandum, along with the correspondence shall be given to the Inmate Systems Manager for signature.

The item(s) shall be given to the SIS, who will document receipt of the items on the memorandum. The memorandum shall be placed in the FOIA exempt section of the inmate's central file.

Minor or nuisance physical things (such as body hair, plant shavings, small artifacts and items, sexually explicit personal photographs, etc.) are not authorized and shall be returned to the sender. A BP-328 (BP-S328) shall be completed. The

correspondence and a copy of the BP-328 (BP-S328) shall be provided to the inmate. The material to be returned and a copy of the BP-328 (BP-S328) shall be covered and returned to the sender. A copy of the BP-328 (BP-S328) shall be filed in the inmate central file.

Section 9.d.(7) of the Program Statement on Correspondence, provides circumstances for rejection of correspondence. Subsection (7) directs rejection of "Sexually explicit material (for example, personal photographs)" The authority to return sexually explicit personal photographs, as further described in the implementing information of subsection (7), is specifically delegated to ISM staff when completing mail inspections. Written correspondence shall continue to be rejected only by the Warden (or appropriate Associate Warden, if so designated). Note: This permits the return of unauthorized material, as opposed to a rejection of correspondence because of content. It also provides a method to process serious contraband and the related correspondence for retention as evidence for prosecution of either the sender or the inmate, if appropriate.

Ordinarily, mail shall not be delayed because of investigatory processes. During an investigation of incoming mail, the investigating office shall perform reviews in a manner that shall not delay delivery. The Inmate Systems Manager shall establish a procedure that mutually meets the needs of the investigators and the requirement to generally deliver mail within 24 hours and packages within 48 hours.

An inmate may not receive through the mail, stamps or stamped items such as envelopes embossed with stamps or postal cards with postage affixed. If such items are received, they shall be returned, at government expense, with a BP-328 (BP-S328) explaining that such items may not be sent to an inmate. A copy of the form shall be placed with the inmate correspondence for delivery to the inmate.

If private sector business reply envelopes or cards are contained in otherwise authorized mail, there is no prohibition from leaving it with the authorized mail. If an inmate uses business reply mailers to order subscriptions or other materials with no intention of paying for material ordered, confer with the appropriate Unit Manager and refer to the procedures specified in the Program Statement on Correspondence.

An inmate may receive mail from other government agencies (e.g., Veterans Administration, Selective Service, Social Security, etc.), with an enclosed BRM indicia for the inmate's use in replying to that agency without charge.

This would also apply to indicia provided for absentee balloting (Eligibility to vote is determined by each voting locality).

312. REJECTED CORRESPONDENCE

When correspondence is to be rejected, mail room staff shall refer to the potential reasons for rejection and related procedures contained in the Program Statement on Correspondence. A BP-327 (BP-S327), Returned Correspondence, shall be completed. The correspondence shall be copied and the entire packet presented to the Warden, or the appropriate Associate Warden designated by the Warden, for signature and return to sender. See Paragraph 311 in this Manual and the Program Statement on Correspondence for further details.

313. OUTGOING INMATE LETTER MAIL

Staff assigned to work in the mail room must be thoroughly familiar with the Program Statement on Correspondence. Of special concern are the instructions related to sealing outgoing letters, restricted correspondence, special mail, correspondence between confined inmates, and payment of postage.

All outgoing letter mail shall ordinarily be processed within 24 hours, excluding weekends and holidays. In any event, inmate correspondence and mail is under the purview of institution authorities. Staff shall assure that special mail, correctly deposited in the special mail depository, shall not be opened, but shall be processed (remain sealed, stamped or labeled on reverse, dated, institution name noted, and dispatched within 24 hours) as provided in the Program Statement on Correspondence.

Correspondence placed in the special mail depository is not ordinarily picked up over weekends. Therefore, mail picked up from the special mail depository on Monday shall be marked as having been received on the immediate preceding Saturday (since the depository would have been emptied on Friday but not have been opened over the weekend).

* All outgoing inmate mail shall be handled in accordance with the Program Statement on Correspondence. Inmates are informed * during A&O that the Bureau retains the right to open an inmate's outgoing mail (except special mail) under the conditions specified in the correspondence policy. To receive special mail treatment, the inmate must deposit mail in the special mail depository.

Inmate correspondence may be mailed using envelopes supplied by the institution or purchased from the Commissary. Envelopes supplied by the institution shall be standard business size, ordered only from UNICOR, and contain a PRINTED return address of the institution (specified at the time of ordering) in accordance with the Program Statement on Correspondence, section 7. If an inmate fails to place correct identifications in the return address, the material shall be opened to identify the inmate. If the inmate can be identified from the contents, the mail shall be returned for correct preparation. If the sender cannot be identified from either the envelope or the contents, the correspondence shall be annotated as to circumstances and filed for a period of two years, and then destroyed.

- * The Bureau of Prisons has received a request from the Internal Revenue Service that inmates in Bureau institutions send any Internal Revenue Service correspondence directly to the attention of the Chief, Criminal Investigation Branch at the service center to which the letter is addressed. Staff may place the notation directly on the envelope prepared by the inmate. Staff are only adding the attention line to assure the envelope is directed to the Criminal Investigation Branch of the IRS Center. *

Special attention shall be given to all inmate correspondence addressed to state tax centers and shall include the following notation below the inmate's return address: "This correspondence is from an inmate in custody of the Bureau of Prisons." Locally produced SENTRY labels are suggested for this purpose.

Stamps may not be used as negotiable instruments or legal tender as payment for materials ordered from private vendors. If stamps are enclosed as payment, the stamps, envelope, and contents shall be returned to the inmate. The inmate shall be directed to use the authorized method of payment through Trust Fund withdrawals.

314. INMATE PACKAGES - OUTGOING

A. Outgoing as Personal Mail. Packages mailed as a matter not resulting from institution administration are personal and shall be forwarded at the inmate's expense. These packages shall ordinarily be forwarded within 48 hours.

Such packages shall be forwarded using stamps the inmate supplied. The inmate may obtain additional services (insurance, return receipt, etc.). The inmate shall provide stamps for basic postage and the cost of each additional service. The stamps shall be placed on the package at the time of mailing. A BP-329 is to be completed noting all details related to the mailing.

The USPS Firm Mailing Log, if used, shall clearly show the package is "Personal" including the inmate's name and a notation as to the amount of postage (in stamps) the inmate provided. In the event of a loss or damage, any claims made relative to these mailings may be made either by the inmate (with staff assistance) or by the recipient, to the USPS.

(1) Contraband. Nuisance contraband that is to be mailed out, or personal property that must be sent out as a result of excessive accumulation, shall be forwarded at the inmate's expense in accordance with the Program Statement on Inmate Personal Property.

(2) International Mailing of Packages at Inmate's Expense. Inmates who desire to mail packages internationally must comply with the rules of the USPS and the rules of the recipient country. Mail room staff shall assist to determine these rules. If the material cannot meet the specifications of the receiving country, mail room staff should consult with the Unit Manager and the inmate to obtain a domestic mailing address. If unable to obtain the address, and the inmate is not permitted to retain the property, it shall be considered contraband and disposed of in accordance with the procedures contained in the Program Statement on Inmate Personal Property. These procedures do not apply to property temporarily stored for pretrial inmates.

B. Outgoing as Official Mail. Inmate packages forwarded as a matter of institution administration shall be forwarded at government expense. If the package is to be forwarded to another institution, a BP-383 (BP-S383) shall also be completed.

* Packages forwarded between institutions shall not be insured and shall be forwarded via UPS. Inmate personal property mailed home at government expense shall also be sent via UPS. Packages for * transferred inmates shall be shipped within 72 hours.

The logbook, or certified labels when used, shall clearly reflect the package is "Official."

International Mailing of Property Packages. Every attempt shall be made to have the inmate provide a domestic mailing address for forwarding packages of property. When a package must be forwarded as international mail, mail room staff shall consult with the servicing postal facility to determine the rules required of the country to which the package is to be forwarded. If the package cannot meet the requisite rules because it is official mail, the inmate shall be given the opportunity to have the material forwarded at his or her own expense. (See Paragraph 314.A.(2) above regarding international mailings).

315. FORWARDING INMATE GENERAL MAIL

As stated previously, letter mail may not be opened until staff verify that an inmate is at the institution. Unopened mail may be returned to the USPS in the original cover. Regardless of class of mail, if an inmate is not at the institution, an endorsement shall be made on the envelope which provides a forwarding address or a notation of "Addressee Unknown - Return to Sender," and the mail returned to the post office.

Only the post office can determine whether a piece of mail will be forwarded. Therefore, under its authority, the post office will forward or dispose of mail.

If it is required to forward a package, it will be resealed and forwarded at government expense. If it is being returned to the sender because a forwarding address is not available, this shall be noted on the package, sealed and returned via UPS. Receipts or other identifications attached to the original package shall be retained with the documentation used to return the package. *

A USPS "Change of Address" kit(s) shall be available to each inmate being transferred so the inmate may notify correspondents of a change in address. The kits shall be obtained from the local servicing USPS facility. (Note: The "kit" is a USPS form notice to publishers, business, correspondents, etc., NOT the USPS "TO: Postmaster (of old address).")

Although the kit is provided free, the inmate shall place postage on each notice used. Although it is the Bureau's responsibility to have the kits available, it is the inmate's responsibility to use these kits. Inmates shall be informed that the Bureau forwards mail for only 30 days and using the kits assures that mail is directed to the correct, new location after the 30-day forwarding period expires.

Inmate general mail (as opposed to special mail) shall be forwarded to the new address for a period of 30 days. General mail shall be forwarded to the address in the SENTRY database. After the 30-day period, general mail received shall be returned to the sender with the notation "Not at this Address - Return to Sender." After 30 days, the SENTRY address shall be used to forward special mail.

General mail for inmates released on writ shall be processed as directed by the inmate on the BP-398 (BP-S398).

CHAPTER 4

SPECIAL POSTAL SERVICES

401. COD ("CASH ON DELIVERY") SERVICES

COD services are not available for staff or inmate mail. The mail officer shall refuse call slips or mail provided by USPS for COD materials in writing or as required by the local servicing USPS facility.

402. POSTAGE DUE MAIL

Postage due mail service is not available for staff or inmates. It is the mailer's responsibility to provide correct postage. The mail officer shall refuse postage due mail. However, if postage due mail is tendered to the mail officer without collection of postage due, the mail shall be processed without further collection action.

403. EXPRESS MAIL SERVICE - STAFF OFFICIAL MAIL

Staff at institutions and Regional offices may use USPS Express Mail Service, if available, for official matters. Contact your local USPS facility about availability. The least expensive service that meets our needs shall be used. When used, the account number "137" - Bureau of Prisons or "132" - UNICOR, shall be inserted in the "Customer Account" box. (The Mail and Reproduction Supervisor in the Central Office shall place account numbers on receipts for the Central Office). The receipt shall have the name of the mailer, the mailer's initials, and the initials of the department head authorizing the service. After delivery of the material to the post office, the mail officer shall forward the original receipt to the Central Office Mail and Reproduction Supervisor. The receipts may be collected and forwarded quarterly.

The USPS Express Mail Service shall only be processed through the official institution mail room to the postal facility servicing the institution. For example, staff may not take USPS express mail to a postal facility near their home for convenience.

The Central Office funds Express Mail, system-wide, and the receipts are used at the Central Office to verify the USPS billing. A photo-copy of the receipt may be retained locally, as desired. Copies could be helpful when the Express Mail bill is challenged or further information is sought, particularly when

Express Mail charges result from locations other than the postal facility servicing the institution.

Use of private overnight carriers, such as Airborne Express, DHL, Federal Express, etc., is the responsibility of each institution and shall be controlled and funded locally. Use of private overnight carriers shall be used when less expensive than the U.S. Postal Service.

404. REGISTERED MAIL - STAFF OFFICIAL MAIL

Any mail item forwarded at government expense shall not be forwarded as registered mail. Receipts, when needed, shall be obtained by certifying the item.

When a piece of official registered mail is **incoming**, the mail room officer shall receipt for the item at the post office. Prior to delivery, the mail officer shall enter the registry information on a log and obtain a receipt from the recipient.

405. REGISTERED MAIL - INMATE USE

Inmates may use registered mail services only at their expense and only if sufficient postage stamps are placed on the registered piece to cover the expense of all registered mail services.

* All incoming and outgoing registered mail shall be logged in a log book separate from staff mail. *

406. INSURED MAIL - INCOMING

Insured mail shall be received and processed as previously stated for package items, or as special or general inmate mail. However, the mail staff shall make and maintain a log and receipts shall be obtained from inmates. The inmate shall note the condition of insured material and the inmate shall be advised that the mailer is to file the claim, if a claim is necessary.

407. INSURED MAIL - OUTGOING

Staff mail is not forwarded as insured mail since the Government is self-indemnifying. If receipts are necessary, use certified mail.

Inmate may insure personal packages (e.g. hobby craft) provided the inmate completes an appropriate BP-329 (BP-S329) and provides correct postage. Payment is made by applying stamps (see Chapter 3).

A. When completing the BP-329 (BP-S329), the inmate shall make a declaration of item value and may request postal insurance which shall be made in increments stated in the DMM. The BP-329 (BP-S329) advises the inmate that the USPS shall only indemnify a package for the **actual** value of an item, regardless of declared value.

B. When the inmate is making a personal insured mailing, paying with stamps, and a "Return Receipt" is requested, the return receipt shall clearly show the inmate's name. When received, the receipt shall be provided to the inmate.

C. Inmate personal packages must be securely prepared to preclude, inasmuch as possible, breakage or damage to the item(s) being mailed.

408. CERTIFIED MAIL - STAFF OFFICIAL

A. Incoming Mail. Official certified staff mail shall not be intermingled with inmate certified mail. The mail officer shall maintain a log to record delivery to staff, obtaining the signature of staff at the time of delivery. If a "Return Receipt" (green card) has been attached, the mail room officer shall sign the card as recipient.

B. Outgoing Mail. Certified mail shall usually be restricted to those items requiring evidence of mailing (such as inmate case files, etc.). Stub type receipts are employed to certify mail. Stub receipts shall be returned to the originating office for filing and retention, and the originating office shall be required to produce the receipt if tracing action is necessary. Staff must clearly show the sending department on the receipt so that delivery of the receipt, back to that department, can be made when it arrives. (See Chapter 3, Inmate Packages.)

409. CERTIFIED MAIL - INMATE USE

A. Incoming Mail. Inmate certified mail shall be rated either as general correspondence (opened and inspected) or special mail (opened in the presence of inmate) as previously stated. If a "Return Receipt" has been attached, mail room staff shall sign the receipt, which shall be dispatched in the next regular mail. A log shall be maintained which the inmate shall be required to sign prior to delivery, thus completing the chain of receipts.

At institutions which elect to have unit staff sign for all receipt mail (certified, etc.), unit staff shall have the inmate sign a receipt log prior to delivering the receipt-type mail.

Certified mail shall be considered to have been delivered when the mail officer signs a receipt at the post office. A piece of mail obtained for an inmate who is not at the institution shall either be forwarded or returned to sender if a forwarding location is not available. In either case, the piece shall be re-covered and re-certified. It shall be logged into the inmate certified mail log to show final disposal (i.e. new certified number and address to which forwarded). When returning the piece to the originator, an appropriate notation shall be made on the original envelope to inform the sender why the mail was not delivered.

B. Outgoing Mail. Certified mail shall be sent first class at inmate expense. Inmates may request certified mail service provided they bear the full expense of basic postage, the cost of certification, and the cost of return receipts, if requested.

All costs are paid with postage stamps. Inmates may determine the costs by reviewing the postal cost chart(s).

The piece of correspondence to be certified shall be brought to the mail officer fully prepared for dispatch with the appropriate postage stamps affixed. Return receipts, if requested, may be obtained at this time from the mail officer and shall be completed, clearly showing the inmate's name. (When the receipt is returned, it shall then be given to the inmate, not filed by the mail officer.)

The certified mail number shall be entered both on the receipts and the mailing piece at this time. The receipt stub (if this is the type used) shall be returned to the inmate after receipt by the USPS, and if tracing is necessary, the inmate must provide the receipt stub. If a stub-type receipt is not used, the piece shall be entered on the institution's copy of the USPS Firm Mailing Log and receipted for at the post office. The inmate shall not receive a receipt in this case, but shall rely on the firm mailing log retained in the mail room if tracing is necessary.

410. BOX SERVICES

Establishment of additional boxes at the local servicing post office with specific intra-institution addresses (e.g., units, etc.) can greatly facilitate the sorting process and are encouraged. Inmate Systems Managers shall consider overall

volume and additional costs at the postal facility when establishing extra box services.

411. MAIL IMPRINTS

An imprint, when used, requires the payment of postage when material is entered into the USPS. The mail imprint authority for the Bureau is G-231 and for UNICOR G-175. Only the Central Office shall obtain and use the imprint.

*** 412. UNITED PARCEL SERVICE (UPS)**

The Tender Agreement requires the UPS to ensure all Bureau sites have access to UPS service, and that they establish mutually convenient pickup and delivery schedules (ordinarily Monday through Friday, excluding weekends and holidays). Each Bureau location shall initiate contact with its local UPS office to establish daily service.

Each Bureau location shall use UPS ground service to transport all official inmate personal property and small packages. The maximum package weight and size limitations are specified in the "Guide to UPS Services," available from the local UPS representative.

UPS shall provide training to Bureau staff at each location regarding UPS procedures and package tracking capabilities. Each institution shall contact their local UPS office to establish a date for training.

Under normal circumstances, delivery of packages within the contiguous U.S. will occur within approximately five days or less. The Bureau reserves the right to decline acceptance of a package without cost to the government when the package is not authorized in accordance with Bureau policy.

A. Tracking and Logging. Due to cost considerations, the Bureau will not use the UPS computerized tracking system for packages. However, as the Bureau is required to comply with the Federal Tort Claims Act, UPS will assist the Bureau with processing any such claims for packages transported by UPS and provide tracking and/or delivery information. Should it be necessary to trace a package, telephonic contact is to be made with the UPS Tracking Hotline at (800) 457-4022. When confirmation of delivery documentation is necessary, a hard copy receipt may be requested.

For inmate packages shipped at government expense to locations other than Bureau institutions, the sending institution must annotate the UPS Shipping Record to request a Delivery Confirmation Response and Signature Required. The Request-Specific Reply Address service (the sending institution address) shall also be used for these mailings. When these services are used, the UPS Delivery TRAC label shall be placed on the package. The local UPS representative must be advised during initial activation of the account that the Request-Specific Reply Address service shall only be used when inmate packages are mailed at government expense to locations other than Bureau institutions. All confirmation response documentation listed in this paragraph shall be filed and retained in the Receiving and Discharge file. A UPS daily shipping record shall be maintained to track all incoming and outgoing inmate personal property and other official outgoing packages. ISM staff must request from the local UPS office the "UPS Daily Pickup Shipping Record" for all outgoing packages and inmate personal property. Inmate property shall be logged into this record, annotating the following:

- # inmate name and number
- # addressee
- # zip code
- # weight

This record shall be maintained on file for two years.

B. Use Limitations. UPS shall not be used for overnight delivery. Overnight services for staff official business small packages must be restricted to urgent and exceptional circumstances, as governed by a separate contract.

Pitney Bowes meter strips shall not be used when using UPS.

The Bureau reserves the right to use other carriers when more cost effective.

C. International and Territorial Shipment. The Bureau shall not use UPS to ship small packages and inmate personal property internationally or to U.S. territories. All international and territorial shipments of small packages and inmate personal property should be shipped via the U.S. Postal Service.

D. Contractor. The following information is provided for procurement purposes:

Tender Agreement UPS 232 has been negotiated between the Bureau and UPS for the shipment of small packages and inmate personal property.

United Parcel Service (UPS)
316 Pennsylvania Ave. SE #500
Washington DC 20003
(202) 675-4225

E. Ordering. Recognizing that individual institutions may have different local operating requirements, no specific ordering instructions are provided. Each institution shall develop local procedures for ordering that fully meet all applicable policy, procedures, terms, and conditions of the agreement.

F. Reporting. Orders placed against this agreement shall not be reported in the Federal Procurement Data System (FPDS) reports, regardless of dollar value. The Central Office shall collect and report expenditures against this contract, using project code 21L.

G. Payment. UPS will bill each ordering site directly weekly. Billings will consist of a weekly service charge assessed by UPS for pickup and delivery at each site each business day, plus charges for actual packages shipped. Payment shall be made within 30 days in accordance with the Prompt Payment Act. Payments are to be made via Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT), (UPS banking information to accomplish EFT payment will be distributed separately). Business Offices should ensure each payment is identified with the site's UPS "Shipper" account code, the invoice number, and UPS "Period Ending" date supplied on each invoice. All packages mailed via UPS shall be annotated in a firm "UPS Pickup Record." ISM shall maintain this log and provide it to the Business Office each week for verifying the weekly billings. Institutions must code the payments to cost center F329, Project 21L. Regional Offices must code the payments to cost center F229, Project 21L. *

CHAPTER 5

MISCELLANEOUS ADMINISTRATION

501. SENSITIVE UNITS

Local procedures shall be developed to handle mail for special units (e.g., protective custody units). The general principles for processing mail into and out of the USPS shall be followed; however, within the institution, mail for these units shall be handled in a manner that shall not disclose names, register numbers, or locations related to these inmates. These procedures may be entirely independent of the procedures outlined herein.

502. RECORDS

Postal related records shall be retained in accordance with the General Records Schedules, Schedule 12. The disposal periods provided are mandatory. Postal related records may not be retained beyond the period specified. Collateral records and forms filed in the inmate case files are not considered postal records, but are records to be retained until the inmate case file is destroyed.

503. FORMS

All forms prescribed in this manual are available through regular forms ordering procedures. All forms except BP-329 and BP-331 are also available on BOPDOCS.

BP-S327	-	Returned Correspondence
BP-S328	-	Stamps, Negotiable Instrument or Other Items Returned to Sender
BP-329	-	Authorization to Mail Package
BP-331	-	Authorization to Receive Package
BP-S383	-	Inmate Personal Property Record
BP-S398	-	Disposal of Mail for Inmate Released on Writ
BP-S407	-	Acknowledgements of Inmate
BP-S408	-	Acknowledgements of Inmate (Continuation)
BP-S493	-	Special Mail Notice

504. TORT CLAIMS BY INMATES FOR MAIL MATTERS

The Bureau does not insure inmate property when forwarded as matters of institution administration because these articles are forwarded as official mail (see Chapter 3). If property is damaged while in the control of the Bureau, the inmate shall be instructed to file a tort claim. (See the Program Statement on Claims Under the Federal Tort Claims Act.) If documentation

clearly indicates that a package left Bureau control and the item was thereafter lost or damaged by the USPS in the mail process, the inmate shall be instructed to file a claim with the USPS.

It is permissible for an inmate to insure an official mailing, provided the inmate pays for all costs associated with the mailing (postage and insurance fees). This shall be an entirely voluntary option and the inmate would have to be informed that the nature of the mailing changes from one of Government responsibility to one of personal responsibility, including follow-up and filing of claims against the USPS.

505. INMATE CLAIMS TO THE USPS

Paragraph 504 does not apply when inmates forward mail using postage stamps and pay for special services, such as insurance or certification. In these cases, the inmate or the recipient files the claim with the USPS.

If an inmate files a claim with the USPS, the mail officer shall contact the local USPS facility, obtain appropriate USPS forms for the inmate, and verify dispatch and receipt from available mail room records.