

**Commonwealth of Kentucky**

**Finance and Administration Cabinet  
Division of Postal Services**

**Statewide Mail Users Guide**

For More Information: (502) 564-3769

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## STATEWIDE MAIL USERS GUIDE

In all cases, state agencies must select the most cost-effective mailing arrangement that is available and meets the needs, statutory or regulatory requirements for each type or piece of mail.

The information contained within this document is designed to guide agencies in making these decisions regarding mailing letters, documents or packages.

The Finance and Administration Cabinet, Division of Postal Services is the single state agency tasked with providing postal and inter-office (messenger) mail and package pick-up and delivery services throughout the Frankfort campus. Additionally, the division advises agencies concerning U.S. Postal Services rules and regulation, cost-effective mailing practices and package delivery and pick-up services under Master Agreement for use by all state agencies.

Employees may NOT have personal mail delivered to their work address. This includes letters, documents and packages, regardless of size.

## SUSPICIOUS MAIL

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In the event suspicious mail or package is received by a state agency, please follow the guidelines established by your agency in addition to those provided by the U.S. Postal Service including:

- Stop
- Do not handle the package. Do NOT taste, smell or open the item
- Isolate the area
- Call 9-1-1
- Wash your hands

A poster with guidelines and tips to recognize suspicious mail is available for download at no cost at <http://www.usps.com/cpim/ftp/posters/pos84.pdf>

## DIVISION OF POSTAL SERVICES

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Mail pickup and delivery services are provided to all Executive Branch office locations in Frankfort by the Finance and Administration Cabinet, Division of Postal Services.

Consulting regarding appropriate and cost effective mail processing may be available to non-Frankfort locations.

### Web site

Information about services available from the Division of Postal Services is available at <http://finance.ky.gov/ourcabinet/caboff/OAS/postal>

## Locations and Hours of Operation

The Division of Postal Services is open Monday through Friday from 7:30 AM until 5:00 PM, Eastern Time.

The main postal services facility is located at 1230 Wilkinson Boulevard in Frankfort. A satellite location is available at:

- Transportation Cabinet Building, 200 Mero Street; Phone (502) 564-4868

## Pick-up and Delivery - Routine

United States Postal Service (USPS) mail and messenger mail is picked up and delivered twice each day – once in the morning and once in the early afternoon. Outbound parcel packages (USPS and other commercial carriers) are picked up at the same time. Larger locations or those with recurring or seasonal excess mail volume may be serviced three times per day.

Generally, all outgoing USPS mail is delivered to the Frankfort Post Office on the same day it is received by the Division of Postal Services.

## Special Pick-up or Delivery

Non-routine mail pick-up as well as non-standard item handling MAY be available upon request. Contact the Division of Postal Services at (502) 564-3769 for more information.

## Messenger Mail

Mail sent from one Frankfort office to another MUST be sent using Messenger Mail. The Division of Postal Services will make every effort to deliver messenger mail to its destination on the next scheduled mail run.

To ensure accurate and timely delivery of messenger mail:

- Thoroughly mark out previous addressee names
- PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY
- Use the full name of the individual and the correct agency/department name and address -- do not use abbreviations
- Do not over-stuff messenger envelopes
- Do not place contents in an additional envelope inside the messenger mail envelope.
- Do not mix messenger mail in the same pick up location as your outgoing mail which requires postage.
- Pull all messenger mail from large mailings to save postage costs.

**DO NOT SEND** metal, glass or other fragile items through routine messenger mail.

## Messenger Mail Envelopes

Messenger mail envelopes are designed for repeated use. Please return excess messenger mail envelopes to the nearest mail room or give them to your mail carrier for redistribution to other customers.

BEFORE ordering new messenger mail envelopes from the Commonwealth's office supply master contract, check with the Division of Postal Services for redistribution of excess envelopes returned by other agencies.

## Personal Mail

During regularly scheduled pick-up and delivery, the Division of Postal Services will pick up personal mail that has proper postage and weighs less than one (1) pound. USPS regulations require that packages weighing more than one (1) pound must be presented to a USPS postal facility by the sender.

Employees may **NOT** have personal mail delivered to their work address. This includes letters, documents and packages, regardless of size.

## Prohibited Items

Articles and materials may be nonmailable if they may harm people or property or have mailing restrictions imposed upon them by the regulations of other governmental agencies. Items that are outwardly or of their own force dangerous or injurious to life, health, or property may not be mailed.

The knowing deposit of such matter in the mail is a crime punishable by fine, imprisonment, or other penalty.

Generally, the following items may not be included in USPS mail:

- Paper Clips
- Keys
- Binder Clips
- Buttons
- Staples
- Bundles of ID Cards

These items jam or damage the mailing equipment and can cause physical injuries to the person processing the piece.

For additional information about prohibited items or for international restrictions, please contact the Division of Postal Services.

## Business Reply Mail

This service is a postage-paid account provided by the USPS for mailers wanting to pay the postage on return pieces of mail. Agencies need to determine the criteria if postage paid envelopes are appropriate. The Division of Postal Services recommends the following - **IF THE RECIPIENT IS REQUIRED TO RESPOND, DO NOT PAY FOR THE POSTAGE (e.g. tax returns).**

The Finance and Administration Cabinet has paid a \$190.00 Business Reply Permit Fee for use by all state government agencies. In the event business reply services are necessary, and agencies receive more than 800 business reply mail returns each year, each agency will be responsible for an additional \$605.00 accounting fee charged for each BRM advance deposit account at each post office where the mail is to be returned. This fee must be paid each twelve (12) month period. In the event business return mails are less than 800 annually for your agency, a per piece charge may be less expensive. If you have questions, about business reply mail, please contact the Division of Postal Services.

## PACKAGE SERVICES

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The Commonwealth has negotiated Master Agreements with vendor(s) to provide package/small parcel services. Information about these Master Agreements can be obtained from the Division of Postal Services or the Office of Procurement Services.

To reduce the cost state agencies pay to ship parcels, the Smart Government Initiative postal services workgroup determined that Frankfort offices that ship fewer than 100 parcels per year shall not establish accounts with external parcel service vendors.

Agencies that ship fewer than 100 packages shall prepare the packages for shipping per directives provided by the Division of Postal Services. The packages will be picked up by the Division of Postal Services (see routine or special pick-up and delivery services) staff rather than a vendor. The appropriate parcel vendor(s) will collect all of the packages from the Division of Postal Services.

Vendor charges for parcels will be passed to the agencies via routine billings from the Division of Postal Services.

## WEB-BASED POSTAGE AND POSTAGE METERS

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Cabinet and agencies in the Executive Branch shall not use web-based postage accounts or postage meters in Frankfort offices, without prior approval by the Division of Postal Services.

These services may only be used by non-Frankfort based offices not serviced by the Division of Postal Services.

## BEST PRACTICES IN MAILING AND SHIPPING

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Agencies must balance the sometimes conflicting needs for timely mail delivery and low cost. In addition to the information provided here, please contact the Division of Postal Services for any questions on the most cost effective mode of mailing to meet your business needs.

### Addresses

The **most important** aspect of any mail piece is the address. Using a correctly formed address will help ensure your mail is delivered timely and at the lowest cost possible.

An example of a correctly formatted address:

ACCT # 345TE6-9000  
ATTN B FRANKLIN  
THE ELECTRIC COMPANY  
500 E MAIN ST RM 222  
FORT KNOX KY 40121-5637

- The entire address should be printed using a 10 to 12 point font business-appropriate font (such as Times New Roman, Calibri, Arial, etc.)
- CAPITALIZE the entire address
- Do not use "**Bold**" print or font when addressing mail
- Eliminate all punctuation except the hyphen in the zip code field
- Use USPS address and two-letter state abbreviations  
(see [http://www.usps.com/ncsc/lookups/usps\\_abbreviations.html](http://www.usps.com/ncsc/lookups/usps_abbreviations.html))
- Use single-spaced, block style (left-justified) formatting
- Use one space between the city and state
- Use two spaces between the state and Zip Code or Zip+4 Code
- The street address and city, state, and Zip Code must be the last two lines of the address block
- Do not include an "ATTENTION" line, phone number or any other information after or below the zip code.

Always place the address lengthwise in the center of an envelope larger than regular letter size envelopes.

Never tape an addressed envelope to the outside of a larger envelope or package.

### Window Envelopes

When using window envelopes, the address must be the only information visible through the window.

Make sure that adequate clearance is maintained between the address and all of the edges of the window.

The contents of the envelope should fit snugly in the envelope to prevent the address from shifting.

If the address enclosure does not fit in the window, use an envelope without a window.

## OCR and Barcode Read Areas

Mail that can be automatically processed may qualify for certain discounted postal rates. First, addresses are scanned by an Optical Character Reader (OCR) and a barcode is printed on the envelope. The mail is then sorted by barcode and routed to the designated location.

In order for mail processing equipment to function successfully, the address must conform to the following criteria:

- The read area must contain only the destination address of the piece. The OCR Read area is one (1) inch from the left to one (1) inch from the right, and 5/8 inch from the bottom to three (3) inches from the bottom.
- The Barcode Read Area must be clear of all address information or art work. The Barcode read area starts at the lower right corner of the piece extends up 5/8 inch and left 4 3/4 inches.
- The last line of the addressee must be within 2 1/4 inches of the bottom of the piece.
- If the apartment number does not fit on the address line, it should be placed on the preceding line.

All official mailings should be addressed using a mechanical printer (inkjet, laser, dot matrix, etc.) or typewriter. Handwritten addresses may not be recognized or sorted on automated equipment. As a result, handwritten mail is subject to additional processing steps and is not eligible for discounted pricing. Delivery of mail with handwritten addresses may be delayed.

## Enclosures

All mail must be enclosed in an appropriate envelope or package and sealed for transport by the USPS. The type of items enclosed determines the mailing classification.

## Sizes and Types

The size of the envelope should properly accommodate the contents. For use in the USPS system there are basically two categories of envelopes: letter size and "flats."

Mail items that do not fall between the minimum and maximum sizes noted below will be returned to the sender or billed at a higher rate.



**Letters**

	<i>Minimum</i>	<i>Maximum</i>
Length	5"	11 1/2"
Height	3 1/2"	6 1/8"
Thickness	.007 inch	.25 inch

**Post Cards**

	<i>Minimum</i>	<i>Maximum</i>
Length	5"	6"
Height	3 1/2"	4 1/2"
Thickness	.007 inch	.0095 inch

**“Flats”**

	<i>Minimum</i>	<i>Maximum</i>
Length	over 11 1/2"	15"
Height	over 6 1/8"	12"
Thickness	over 0.25"	0.75"

**Priority Mail and Parcel Post**

Maximum size 108 in. ( <i>length and girth combined</i> )
Maximum weight 70 pounds

**Mail Classifications**

The USPS classifies mail by various components including weight, contents, delivery times, etc. Rates vary by size and classification. General characteristics of each class of mail include:

<b>Class of Mail</b>	<b>Speed</b>	<b>Low Cost</b>	<b>Free Forwarding and Return</b>	<b>Extra Services</b>
<b>Express Mail</b>	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
<b>Priority Mail</b>	Yes	Maybe	Yes	Yes
<b>First-Class Mail</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>Standard Mail</b>	No	Yes	No	Only for parcels
<b>Periodicals</b>	Yes	Maybe	Yes	No
<b>Package Services</b>	No	Yes	No	Yes

As indicated above, extra services such as restricted delivery, registered mail, return receipt, collect on delivery, insurance, etc. are available for certain classes of mail. These services incur additional charges but may be necessary to meet the business needs of the Commonwealth. Please consult the Division of Postal Services for complete explanations, restrictions and current pricing.

## Other Suggestions to Improve Your Communication Delivery

### **Avoiding Mailing**

Unless an original hard copy is needed, using the phone, e-mail or fax is faster and cheaper. Letters afford only one-way communication; the phone, e-mail or fax can provide interactive two way communication. Instead of mailing multiple copies of the same letter, mail one letter and allow the recipient to make and distribute needed copies. Alternatively, for copies, send electronic copies.

### **Combine Mailings**

It is always cheaper to send one package regardless of the weight than it is to send multiple packages to the same location.

### **Plan Ahead**

Contact the Division of Postal Services in advance to determine the most efficient means of delivery for circulars, books, catalogs, pamphlets and other non – standard mailings.

### **Purge and Update Mailing Lists**

Mailing lists should be reviewed and purged periodically. Remove mail recipients that are no longer essential to the business of the agency.

The Commonwealth Office of Technology offers automated address validation and readiness assessment services. Mailing lists and databases can be prepped to meet current formatting requirements, duplicate or redundant records can be identified and unnecessary cost can be avoided. More information about this service can be obtained from COT <http://technology.ky.gov>.

### **Verify Agency Return Addresses**

All agencies and department should verify their official return mail address annually with the Frankfort Postmaster, whenever timely receipt of mail is lagging or prior to ordering agency stationary and envelopes.

## MORE INFORMATION

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Additional information is available from the Division of Postal Services at 502-564-3769 or <http://finance.ky.gov/ourcabinet/caboff/OAS/postal> .

The U.S. Postal Services explains options available for mailing on their web site (<http://usps.com>) or in *A Customer's Guide to Mailing* (<http://pe.usps.com/text/dmm100/intro.htm>).