

12 FAM 120 COURIER DUTIES

*(CT:DS-113; 07-11-2005)
(Office of Origin: DS/C/DC)*

12 FAM 121 PRIMARY DUTY

(CT:DS-113; 07-11-2005)

Couriers ensure secure transport of U.S. diplomatic pouches across international borders.

12 FAM 122 ACQUIRING POUCH CUSTODY

(CT:DS-113; 07-11-2005)

- a. Each pouch must be invoiced, labeled, sealed, and prepared according to the provisions of 5 FAH-10 H-500. In addition to the list of prohibited contents in 5 FAH-10 H-531, personal items of any kind must not be included in any pouch nor in the courier's workbag.
- b. The originating office prepares a Form DS-7600, Diplomatic Pouch Certification and Receipt, which lists all pouches that the courier will accept for secure transport to other posts or the Department.
- c. After ensuring that each form accurately documents all pouches in the shipment, the accepting courier signs and dates it. The courier uses the form to obtain signatures of the cleared U.S. citizen employees who receive the individual pouches (see 12 FAM 128 for policy on acquiring custody of bulk shipments).
- d. Couriers should not accept pouches that are improperly prepared or documented.

12 FAM 123 PROHIBITING INSPECTIONS

(CT:DS-113; 07-11-2005)

- a. The courier ensures that the rights and privileges set forth in the Vienna Conventions concerning pouches are not infringed (see Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, Article 27). Chief among these is the stipulation that "the diplomatic bag shall not be opened or detained."
- b. If host government officials insist on x-raying or opening a pouch, the

courier should make every attempt to immediately call the post's regional security officer (RSO), management officer, deputy chief of mission (DCM), chief of mission (COM), or duty officer. If the local officials persist, the courier must abort the scheduled stop or layover and either continue to the next scheduled stop or return to the originating post.

- c. Except as otherwise provided herein or in 5 FAH-10, no regional diplomatic courier officer (RDCO), courier supervisor, nor courier has the authority to open and inspect sealed classified pouches that are in transit. They may recommend that the pouch control officer open and inspect pouches that are not properly prepared and documented. Couriers may also request that the pouch control officer open transient pouches if there is reasonable cause for such a request.

12 FAM 124 POUCHING FUNCTIONS

(CT:DS-113; 07-11-2005)

At some posts, couriers may perform a full range of pouching functions, including the opening and closing of classified pouches. The authority is limited to posts with a diplomatic courier presence (i.e., those posts housing a diplomatic courier office) and only with IRM authorization and Office of Diplomatic Courier Service (DS/C/DC) concurrence (see 12 FAM 123 for the prohibition against opening transient pouches).

12 FAM 125 MAINTAINING CONTROL

(CT:DS-113; 07-11-2005)

- a. Couriers must stay with their pouches until delivered (see 12 FAM 126 for policy on relinquishing control and 12 FAM 127 for policy on maintaining control with escort assistance when pouches are transported in an aircraft cargo hold).
- b. DS/C/DC may require a second courier to accompany the designated courier to any post for any shipment when needed to ensure the security of the pouches (e.g., where host government procedures may separate the shipment from cleared U.S. citizen control).
- c. When classified pouches require overnight or other temporary storage en route to their destination, the courier takes them to a post or military installation with adequate and approved classified storage facilities in accordance with 12 FAM 530. If unable to obtain an individual signature for each pouch stored in accordance with 12 FAM 126, the courier must continue to maintain control of the pouches.

12 FAM 126 RELINQUISHING CUSTODY

12 FAM 126.1 General Procedure

(CT:DS-113; 07-11-2005)

- a. The courier must deliver all pouches intact to an authorized individual at either a classified pouch room or secure transit point (e.g., the airport convenient to the addressee post). Before exchanging pouches, both parties must examine each other's acceptable identification documents. (see 12 FAM 126.2 and 12 FAM 152.2)
- b. Before releasing pouches, the courier must obtain an individual signature for each pouch delivered or left in temporary secure storage regardless of the number of pouches.
- c. The courier must record on the DS-7600 one of the following identification documents of the individual who signed for receipt of the pouches:
 - (1) Diplomatic passport number;
 - (2) Official passport number (when authorized);
 - (3) U.S. State Department identification card serial number;
 - (4) DS Special Agent, Security Engineering Officer, Security Technical Specialist, or Diplomatic Courier credential number; or
 - (5) Other evidence or indicia of authority upon which the courier relied.

12 FAM 126.2 Acceptable Personnel Identification

(CT:DS-113; 07-11-2005)

- a. All personnel must first ensure the identity of an authorized individual who receives, delivers, transfers, or dispatches pouches with them.
- b. The acceptable forms of identification for full-time, U.S. Government employees are:
 - (1) A valid U.S. diplomatic or official passport (those issued since 1986 indicate employment status on the last page) indicating that the bearer is a U.S. Government employee on an overseas assignment;
 - (2) An official identification card issued by the Department of State, including credentials of special agents and security officers, or identification cards issued at posts that conform to the Department's "Smart" identification card format and conventions **(Other locally issued or post specific identification cards are not acceptable.)**;

- (3) An official identification card issued by the Agency for International Development; and
 - (4) Form DCS-9, Defense Courier Service Identification, issued by the Department of Defense (see 12 FAM Exhibit 126.2).
- c. Provided that they have top secret clearances, U.S. government employees and its contractors may exchange pouches with couriers. In addition to their diplomatic or official passports, persons other than full-time permanent U.S. government employees must also identify themselves to the courier with escort letters that confirm their top secret clearances (see 12 FAM 152.2).
 - d. In rare circumstances, a post may have hired a local U.S. citizen to serve as a courier escort. The RDCO may authorize a pouch exchange if the local U.S. citizen presents a tourist passport and an escort letter, which complies with the requirements of 12 FAM 152.2. Posts employing such individuals must notify the appropriate regional courier office by telegram of their names, passport numbers, and clearance levels.

12 FAM 126.3 Custody After Delivery

(CT:DS-113; 07-11-2005)

- a. U.S. citizen employees of a post or the Department are responsible for the custody of courier pouches received from diplomatic or other couriers who are acceptable to DS/C/DC.
- b. Post employees must ensure that classified pouches in their custody are stored in approved classified storage facilities. Residences are not acceptable as approved facilities (see 12 FAM 533.1).
- c. When DS/C/DC notifies a post that a load is too large for the capacity of the routinely used courier vehicle, the post must arrange for appropriate transportation and adequate storage.

12 FAM 127 TRANSPORTING POUCHES IN AN AIRCRAFT CARGO HOLD

(CT:DS-113; 07-11-2005)

- a. When pouches are loaded into the hold of an aircraft, the courier must personally supervise the placing of the pouches into the hold and must remain outside the aircraft observing the hatch until it is closed and departure is imminent. When the courier must go through airport security procedures after the pouches are loaded, the courier leaves the security watch of the aircraft hold in the care of the escort (see 12 FAM 155). To the maximum extent possible, the courier should try to be the

last passenger to board and the first passenger to deplane. (Sometimes escorts load the pouches and inform the courier that they are onboard. Security conditions at certain locations dictate this method of operation.)

- b. The courier must arrange to disembark first at each transit stop and go directly to the cargo hold. There, the courier must identify the post's escort (see 12 FAM 151). The courier must stand beneath the aircraft to observe the hold during all stops.
- c. At the final destination, the courier must meet planeside with the escort (see 12 FAM 151). In the escort's presence, the courier must personally take possession of the pouches as they are unloaded from the aircraft hold. The courier must accompany the pouches through immigration, customs, and other airport security procedures.

12 FAM 128 BULK SHIPMENTS

12 FAM 128.1 General

(CT:DS-113; 07-11-2005)

Pouch shipments are sometimes too large in size, numerous in pieces, or hazardous in composition for the courier to individually handle. Other circumstances could also make it necessary to prepare the shipments over several days, or at a time when the courier is unavailable to supervise or oversee the preparation.

12 FAM 128.2 Definitions

(CT:DS-113; 07-11-2005)

Cookie Sheet. Informal reference to a pallet by many couriers and airport employees.

Containerize. The process of loading multiple cargo items into an enclosed ULD (i.e., a container). Containers form a three-dimensional geometric shape with sides, a top, and a bottom. However, references to "palletize" herein and in 12 FAM 155.3 apply to "containerize" even though pallets have only a bottom. But "containerize" does not include "palletize."

Palletize. The process of placing and securing multiple cargo items onto a pallet in a manner that allows for handling as a single unit. Pallets are flat rectangular sheets of metal in various sizes that conform to aircraft cargo hold dimensions. With only a bottom, the pallets are open and exposed. Individual cargo items are secured with nets, straps, and other restraints. This process is often referred to as building a pallet, or cookie sheet in an informal setting.

ULD. Unit Load Device. Aviation terminology referring to pallets, containers and other transport apparatus that are used to facilitate ease of movement, handling, loading and unloading. It combines multiple cargo items into one consolidated piece that can be lifted by mobile devices.

12 FAM 128.3 Uninventoried Palletized Loads

(CT:DS-113; 07-11-2005)

- a. When the RDCO determines that shipping requirements or conditions necessitate palletizing pouches at a time when the courier is unavailable to supervise the process, the RDCO may authorize the courier to utilize the provisions of this section.
- b. When authorized to accept an uninventoried palletized load, the courier will accept the pouches without conducting a piece count. In such situations, the courier must nonetheless sign the Diplomatic Pouch Certification and Receipt form without personally inventorying the pouches.
- c. The courier and the cleared U.S. citizen escort who oversaw the building of the pallet must then qualify the courier's signature on the Diplomatic Pouch Certification and Receipt form. They must do that by each signing a Form DS-1878, Proxy Inventory for Courier-Accompanied Pouches. This form attests that despite the courier's signature on the Diplomatic Pouch Certification and Receipt form, the courier did not personally inventory the pouches. It relieves the courier from responsibility for conducting a piece count. However, that does **not** relieve the courier from any other responsibilities established herein, such as maintaining control of the pouches subsequent to acceptance (see 12 FAM 155.3 for the courier escort's responsibilities).
- d. After the pouches have been palletized, it may be impractical or impossible for the courier to conduct an accurate inspection and inventory of all the pouches. Notwithstanding such inability, the courier should, to the extent possible, examine and identify as many pouches as possible.
- e. When signed by both the escort and the courier, the Form DS-1878 becomes an official record of receipt and acceptance by the courier of the pouches. The courier must attach a copy of it to the Diplomatic Pouch Certification and Receipt form, which is submitted to the Regional Courier Division.

12 FAM 128.4 ULD Pouches

(CT:DS-113; 07-11-2005)

- a. ULD containers themselves may constitute a diplomatic pouch when they

conform to the requirements of 5 FAH-10 H-500.

- b. If the ULD meets the definition of a “crate” pouch in 5 FAH-10 H-552.1, the courier may accept it in the same manner as any other pouch. Not only must the ULD meet the requirements of a crate pouch, it must also conform to the provisions contained within 5 FAH-10 H-500 (H-553, H-554, and H-561 regarding pouch tags, seals, and markings in particular).
- c. The ULD must be loaded in a secure location or facility by cleared American personnel. It must be sealed and bear a serial or crate number.
- d. When one or more ULD’s is loaded with multiple smaller pouches, the dispatcher must prepare two Diplomatic Pouch Certification and Receipt forms:
 - (1) An inner form itemizes all of the individual pouches contained within the ULD (analogous to a Pouch Invoice, Form OF-244).
 - (2) An outer form itemizes all of the ULD’s. The courier must sign the outer Diplomatic Pouch Certification and Receipt form upon accepting the ULD pouches.
- e. When prepared in conformity with the provisions of 5 FAH-10 and the policies established herein, the ULD container itself is a diplomatic pouch. It must be treated as such and the courier must enforce all of the privileges accorded to it under the Vienna Convention.

12 FAM 128.5 Pallets and Containers That Do Not Qualify as Pouches

(CT:DS-113; 07-11-2005)

- a. Open pallets are never considered pouches.
- b. Containers that are not loaded by cleared American personnel, or that are not loaded at a location or secure facility meeting criteria established in 12 FAM 125 and 12 FAM 530, do not qualify for treatment under this section.
- c. Containers that cannot be secured and sealed from intrusion do not constitute crate pouches.
- d. A pallet or container that does not qualify as a pouch is considered nothing more than a shipping receptacle and treated accordingly.

12 FAM 129 UNASSIGNED

12 FAM EXHIBIT 126.2 FORM DCS-9, DEFENSE COURIER SERVICE IDENTIFICATION

(CT:DS-113; 07-11-2005)

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| EXPIRATION DATE: PHOTO | DEFENSE COURIER SERVICE FORT MEADE, MD 20755 FOR IDENTIFICATION ONLY 1 MAY 88 |
| NOT A PASS | |
| I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THE INDIVIDUAL WHOSE NAME AND SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER IS PRINTED ON THIS CARD IS A DEFENSE COURIER SERVICE COURIER AND IS AUTHORIZED TO TRANSPORT DEFENSE AND OTHER QUALIFIED MATERIAL FOR TRANSPORTATION THROUGH THE DEFENSE COURIER SERVICE. | |
| SSN | NAME OF BEARER |
| CARD NUMBER C 0001 | SIGNATURE OF BEARER |
| COMMANDER, DEFENSE COURIER SERVICE | |

| PROPERTY OF UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT | | | | |
|---|--------|------------|--|---------------|
| HEIGHT | WEIGHT | COLOR HAIR | COLOR EYES | DATE OF BIRTH |
| IN THE EVENT OF INCAPACITATION OF THE HOLDER OF THIS CARD: A. NOTIFY THE NEAREST DEFENSE COURIER SERVICE COMMANDER OF YOUR MILITARY OR US GOVERNMENT ACTIVITY TO IMMEDIATELY ASSUME PHYSICAL CUSTODY OF ANY MATERIAL, AND, B. NOTIFY THE COMMANDER, DEFENSE COURIER SERVICE, FT MEADE, MD 20755 | | | | |
| NAME/GRADE/POSITION OF COURIER | | | DATE ISSUED | |
| WARNING: THIS CREDENTIAL IS THE PROPERTY OF THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT. ITS COUNTERFEITING, ALTERATION, OR MISUSE IS A VIOLATION OF 18 U.S.C. 499, 506, AND 701. | | | POSTMASTER: RETURN TO THE COMMANDER, DEFENSE COURIER SERVICE, FT MEADE, MD 20755 | |
| IF FOUND, DROP IN NEAREST UNITED STATES MAIL BOX | | | | |