

# **14 FAH-4 H-300 PROCEDURES FOR MAIL AND CORRESPONDENCE**

## **14 FAH-4 H-310 OUTGOING OFFICIAL MAIL**

*(CT:DPM-2; 05-06-2009)  
(Office of Origin: A/LM)*

### **14 FAH-4 H-311 INTRODUCING AN ITEM INTO OFFICIAL MAIL**

#### **14 FAH-4 H-311.1 Procedures at Mail Drops**

*(CT:DPM-2; 05-06-2009)*

- a. Every Department facility has one or several mail drops where outgoing items are staged to be mailed or messengered and where incoming mail and correspondence awaits pick-up. Depending on the bureau, items may be delivered and picked up from desks or offices, or employees may have to deliver and pick up from the mail drop. In Washington, items and mail are picked up and distributed between the HST building and State annexes by the Department's internal mail and messenger system (IMMS).
- b. At the mail drop, items to be mailed must have a proper return and delivery address (see 14 FAH-4 H-311.3 and 14 FAH-4 H-311.4), and be in the form of letters, flats and packages not to exceed 70 lbs per box, and groups of boxes not to exceed 5 boxes. In Washington, bureaus and offices must make arrangements to deliver outgoing packages weighing more than 70 lbs or more than five boxes to the mail operations center at SA-44.
- c. Items intended for dispatch into the U.S. Postal Service (USPS) must not exceed 108 inches length and girth and 70 pounds in weight. These items can be addressed **only** to domestic addresses.
- d. To send items by commercial transportation companies, bureaus and offices are responsible for dropping the items, properly addressed and

funded, into the drop box at HST or elsewhere, or making arrangements with the company for pick-up.

## **14 FAH-4 H-311.2 Addressing Standards**

*(CT:DPM-2; 05-06-2009)*

- a. The following guidelines for addressing a mail piece are in U.S. Postal Service (USPS) Publication 28, Postal Addressing Standards:
  - (1) Use simple sans serif type with uniform stroke thickness;
  - (2) Type or machine-print in dark ink on a light background with a uniform left margin;
  - (3) Left-justify every line in the address block;
  - (4) Use two-letter State abbreviations;
  - (5) Use one space between city and State and two spaces between State and ZIP+4 code;
  - (6) Use appropriate ZIP+4 code (if unknown, use 5-digit ZIP code).

JOHN DOE  
JOHNSON MANUFACTURING  
500 E MAIN ST STE 222  
KANSAS CITY MO 64100-1234

- b. See also USPS Quick Service Guide 602, Basic Standards for All Mailing Services, for a short three-page guide.

## **14 FAH-4 H-311.3 Return Address for Department of State Offices**

*(CT:DPM-2; 05-06-2009)*

The return address for Department of State offices must include the name of the sender, the office symbol of the originating office, and the room number and building designator.

## **14 FAH-4 H-311.4 Delivery Address for Department of State Offices**

*(CT:DPM-2; 05-06-2009)*

- a. For all official Department addresses, the office symbol must be on the second line of the address.
- b. For Main State (HST), include the room number if known. Use ZIP code **20520**-aaaa, where aaaa denotes the room number. Three-digit room

numbers use a leading zero. For example:

JOHN DOE  
WHA/AND  
HST ROOM 4915  
DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
WASHINGTON DC 20520-4915

- c. For posts abroad, include the employee's section if known. Use the post's unique "street" address and ZIP code **20521**-xxxx, where xxxx denotes the post-specific ZIP+4 code assigned by DPM. A listing of post-specific "street" addresses and ZIP+4 codes is available on the DPM Web site.

For example:

JOHN DOE  
POLITICAL SECTION  
2010 ABIDJAN PL  
DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
WASHINGTON DC 20521-2010

**NOTE:** Do not use this address to send classified items to posts abroad via USPS Registered Mail. See 14 FAH-4 H-320 for procedures on transmitting classified mail and correspondence.

- d. For State annexes (SA), include the room number if known. Use ZIP code **20522**-yyzz, where yy denotes the annex number and zz denotes the floor. For example:

JOHN DOE  
A/LM/PMP/DPM  
SA-1 ROOM L120  
DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
WASHINGTON DC 20522-0101

- e. State Annex 44 has unique ZIP code 20547-xyyy assigned to it, where "xx" denotes the annex number and "yy" denotes the floor. For example:

JOHN DOE  
ECA-IIP/EX/S  
SA-44  
DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
WASHINGTON DC 20547-4405

## 14 FAH-4 H-312 POSTAGE METERS

*(CT:DPM-2; 05-06-2009)*

- a. See 14 FAM 736 regarding funding for domestic and overseas official mail.

b. Acquiring equipment:

- (1) The Department's official mail manager (OMM) in A/LM/PMP/DPM is the contact person for information on the purchase, rental and disposal of postage meters and mailing equipment;
- (2) The United States Postal Service (USPS) regulates the use of postage meters, which cannot be purchased but must be rented or leased through an authorized provider. Authorized providers can be located on the USPS Web site under Postage Meters;
- (3) Mailing accessories such as scales, stackers, conveyers, etc. can be purchased or leased from a variety of commercial companies, using bureau or post funds.

c. Using postage meters:

- (1) Washington metropolitan area and all domestic offices except CA: Postage meters and mailing systems in the Department are centrally funded, inventoried, and monitored by the Department's OMM;
- (2) Domestic offices: Official mail originated by Department domestic offices is metered at those offices where using a meter is determined to be cost effective. Otherwise, official mail is stamped;
- (3) Category A, C, D, and E posts may use meters or stamps for official U.S. postage as the situation warrants;
- (4) At posts abroad, use of meters for local postage is regulated by the host country postal system.

## **14 FAH-4 H-313 CHOOSING A MAILING METHOD**

*(CT:DPM-2; 05-06-2009)*

- a. The class and size of mail is important. It determines the cost and how fast the mail will be delivered. Savings can be realized by using the proper class of mail and by assuring mail pieces are prepared in a manner that qualifies it for the lowest postage cost. Contact the Department official mail manager (OMM) in A/LM/PMP/DPM with questions on the appropriate class of mailing.
- b. For large or repetitive mailings, it is imperative to involve the OMM in the beginning of the decision making process. See 14 FAH-4 H-313.2.

## **14 FAH-4 H-313.1 USPS Classes of Mail**

*(CT:DPM-2; 05-06-2009)*

- a. The United States Postal Service has four classes of mail:
  - (1) First Class Mail;
  - (2) Periodicals;
  - (3) Standard Mail; and
  - (4) Package Services, consisting of the following subclasses:
    - Parcel Post
    - Bound Printed Matter Flats
    - Media Mail Parcels
    - Library Mail Parcels.
- b. Different types of items can be mailed in different classes:
  - (1) Discount letters and cards may be mailed as First Class Mail (DMM 230) or Standard Mail (DMM 240);
  - (2) Discount flats may be mailed as First Class Mail (DMM 330), Standard Mail (DMM 340), Bound Printed Matter (DMM 360), Media Mail (DMM 370) or Library Mail (DMM 380);
  - (3) Discount parcels may be mailed as First Class Mail (DMM 430), Standard Mail (DMM 440), Parcel Post (DMM 450), Bound Printed Matter (DMM 460), Media Mail (DMM 470), or Library Mail (DMM 480); and
  - (4) Mailing of periodicals is addressed in Mailing Standards of the United States Postal Service, Domestic Mail Manual (DMM) 707.

### **14 FAH-4 H-313.1-1 First Class**

*(CT:DPM-2; 05-06-2009)*

- a. First class mail receives expeditious handling. Service objectives for delivery are 1-3 days, although delivery in that time frame is not guaranteed.
- b. The Department meters first class mail and dispatches it to the nearest USPS postal facility at the end of each business day.

### **14 FAH-4 H-313.1-2 Periodicals**

*(CT:DPM-2; 05-06-2009)*

Periodicals must meet USPS prescribed criteria. Periodicals are published at

a stated frequency with an intent to continue publication indefinitely. Only newspapers and periodicals meeting USPS mailability standards are authorized to be mailed at the periodical rate.

### **14 FAH-4 H-313.1-3 Standard Mail**

*(CT:DPM-2; 05-06-2009)*

- a. Standard mail may receive deferred handling. Service objectives for delivery are 2-9 days, although delivery in that time frame is not guaranteed.
- b. The Department sends bulk dispatches of irregularly published documents at standard mail rates.

### **14 FAH-4 H-313.1-4 Package Services**

*(CT:DPM-2; 05-06-2009)*

- a. Package Services mail receives deferred handling and there is no service objective or guarantee of delivery time.
- b. The Department dispatches official items packed as parcels at package service rates, unless otherwise requested by the originating office. After metered postage is applied, parcels are dispatched directly to USPS.

### **14 FAH-4 H-313.2 Bulk Mail Dispatches**

*(CT:DPM-2; 05-06-2009)*

- a. The Department makes official bulk mail dispatches as needed. Periodicals such as newsletters and bulletins are dispatched at the periodical rate. All other bulk dispatches are made at the standard mail rate. Contact the Department official mail manager in A/LM/PMP/DPM before submitting publications for bulk mailing.
- b. Program-level users who develop large mailings must design mail pieces so that they are eligible for the lowest postage costs. Contact the Department official mail manager in A/LM/PMP/DPM to discuss the benefits of discounted mailing options, mail piece design and publication design before having a new publication printed.
- c. Bulk mail shipments with a combined volume of more than 6 cubic feet or combined weight of more than 250 lbs may require funding by the sending bureau or office; see 14 FAM 736.1.

## **14 FAH-4 H-314 USING USPS CERTIFIED MAIL (GREEN PS FORM 3800)**

*(CT:DPM-2; 05-06-2009)*

- a. USPS Certified Mail is the Department's primary method of mailing items which require certification of receipt. It provides proof of mailing at time of mailing and the date and time of delivery or attempted delivery. No insurance coverage is provided. Due to the volume of Certified Mail, originators are not routinely informed of the USPS certified number. Delivery of Certified Mail can be verified with the Form OF-120, Diplomatic Pouch Mail Registration tracking number if used.
- b. Certified Mail must be sent as First Class Mail or Priority Mail. Additional services that may be purchased are restricted delivery service or return receipt (PS Form 3811). To request Certified Mail services, indicate the desire for the service by attaching a note to the item requesting Certified Mail and any additional services required. The mail operations center will attach a green PS Form 3800, Certified Mail, to the item which has a unique number for tracking purposes.
- c. Unclassified Department official items with registry Form OF-120, Diplomatic Pouch Mail Registration, whether originating from domestic or overseas offices, are automatically introduced into the USPS as Certified Mail.
- d. The Department does not fund the postage fees of Certified Mail originating from domestic offices or other agencies. Other agency items received from posts abroad are picked up by the parent agencies for processing.

## **14 FAH-4 H-315 USING USPS REGISTERED MAIL (RED USPS LABEL 200)**

*(CT:DPM-2; 05-06-2009)*

- a. USPS Registered Mail is the most secure service that the USPS offers. It incorporates a system of receipts to monitor the movement of the mail from the point of acceptance to delivery. Registered Mail provides the sender with a mailing receipt and, upon request, electronic verification that an article was delivered or that a delivery attempt was made. Registered Mail retains signature accountability until delivered to the mail recipient.
- b. USPS Registered Mail is considerably more expensive than Certified Mail and is not used unless the originator specifically requests it. USPS

Registered Mail should be used when mailing items with an extremely high dollar value and irreplaceable items. Although insurance coverage is available for Registered Mail when used by private senders, no insurance coverage is available from USPS for U.S. Government mail. For additional instructions or questions, contact the [DPM-Answerperson@state.gov](mailto:DPM-Answerperson@state.gov).

- c. When mailing classified material up to **SECRET** domestically, USPS Registered Mail or Express Mail must be used. The waiver of signature block must not be executed for USPS Express Mail. See 14 FAH-4 H-320 and 12 FAM 536.9-3.
- d. Registered Mail is sent as First Class Mail or Priority Mail. Additional services that may be purchased are restricted delivery service, signature confirmation (PS Form 153), or return receipt (PS Form 3811). To request Registered Mail services, indicate the desire for the service by attaching a note to the item requesting Registered Mail (indicate on the note that you would like to be advised of the tracking number) and any additional services required. The mail operations center will attach a red USPS Label 200 to the item which has a unique number for tracking purposes. Padded, plastic or Tyvek envelopes cannot be used for Registered Mail.
- e. The Department does not fund the postage fees of Registered Mail originating from domestic offices or other agencies. Other agency items received from posts abroad are picked up by the parent agencies for processing.

## **14 FAH-4 H-316 RECOGNIZING REPORTABLE MAIL DELAYS**

*(CT:DPM-2; 05-06-2009)*

- a. U.S. mail delays, as opposed to pouch delays, occur when mail takes an unusually long transit time from the postmark or date of the correspondence to the addressee. Pinpointing the cause of these delays is difficult since there are many complex mail handling systems involved in mail delivery.
- b. Mail control officers should not report complaints of mail delays on the basis of anecdotal information. Gather specific information before filing a complaint. Always include:
  - (1) Mail/parcel address;
  - (2) Return address (as it appears on the package);
  - (3) Registry number (if applicable);
  - (4) Any bar code information;

- (5) Mode (via USPS, UPS, FEDEX, etc.);
  - (6) Pouch dispatch information such as air waybill, pouch number, invoice number; and
  - (7) Miscellaneous information such as postmarks and where package was mailed from.
- c. A single complaint does not mean that service is deteriorating. When the number of delay complaints rises, a postmark transit time survey should be completed. The survey must cover a 2-week period using the postmarks of first class mail only. If only a single agency's mail is delayed, the problem could reside with the agency's mail room.
- d. Employees are encouraged to email pouch or mail inquiries to the DPM-Answerperson who will route your e-mail to the appropriate individual or office to answer your question.

## **14 FAH-4 H-317 THROUGH-319 UNASSIGNED**