

### Subpart A—Introduction to this Part

#### § 102-192.5 What does this part cover?

This part prescribes policy and requirements for the effective, economical, and secure management of incoming, internal, and outgoing mail in Federal agencies.

#### § 102-192.10 What authority governs this part?

This part is governed by Section 2 of Public Law 94-575, the Federal Records Management Amendments of 1976 (44 U.S.C. 2901-2904), as amended, that requires the Administrator of General Services to provide guidance and assistance to Federal agencies on records management and defines the processing of mail by Federal agencies as a records management activity.

#### § 102-192.15 How are “I”, “you”, “me”, “we”, and “us” used in this part?

In this part, “I”, “me”, and “you” (in its singular sense) refer to agency mail managers and/or facility mail managers. The context makes it clear which usage is intended in each case. “We”, “us”, and “you” (in its plural sense) refer to your Federal agency.

#### § 102-192.20 How are “must” and “should” used in this part?

In this part—

- (a) “Must” identifies steps that Federal agencies are required to take; and
- (b) “Should” identifies steps that the General Services Administration (GSA) recommends.

NOTE TO § 102-192.20: In their internal policy statements, agencies may require steps that GSA recommends. However, agencies may not change required steps into non-mandatory recommendations.

#### § 102-192.25 Does this part apply to me?

Yes, this part applies to you if you work in mail management in a Federal agency, as defined in § 102-192.35.

#### § 102-192.30 What types of mail does this part apply to?

- (a) This part applies to all materials that might pass through a Federal mail center, including—

- (1) All internal, incoming, and outgoing materials, regardless of whether or not they currently pass through a mail center; this includes envelopes, publications, postal cards, bulk mail, expedited mail, and individual packages up to 70 pounds that contain paper or publications; and

- (2) Materials carried by agency personnel, contractors, the United States Postal Service (USPS), and all other carriers of such items.

- (b) This part does not apply to shipments of parts or supplies from a material distribution center (a material distribution center is a warehouse that maintains and distributes an inventory of parts and supplies).

#### § 102-192.35 What definitions apply to this part?

The following definitions apply to this part:

*Accountable mail* means any mail for which the service provider and the mail center must maintain a record that shows where the mail piece is at any given time and when and where it was delivered; examples include USPS registered mail and all expedited mail (see definition below).

*Agency mail manager* means the person who manages the overall mail communications program of a Federal agency.

*Class of mail* means one of the five categories of domestic mail as defined by the United States Postal Service (USPS) in the Domestic Mail Manual, (C100 through C600.1.z). These are:

- (1) Express mail.
- (2) First class (includes priority mail).
- (3) Periodicals.
- (4) Standard mail (e.g., bulk marketing mail).
- (5) Package services.

*Commingleing* means combining outgoing mail from one facility or agency with outgoing mail from at least one other source.

*Commercial payment processes* means mechanisms for paying for USPS postage that are essentially the same as those used by private sector mailers. This means paying for postage before the postage is used (which the U.S. Treasury has determined is appropriate

for USPS postage). For meter or permit mail, this also means sending money to the USPS via Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) transactions to commercial banks designated by the USPS as their financial agents. For stamps and other USPS services, this means paying the USPS directly via cash, charge card, debit card, and money order, depending on the specific service being purchased.

*Expedited mail* means mail designated for delivery more quickly than the USPS's normal delivery times (which vary by class of mail). Examples of expedited mail include USPS Express Mail and overnight and two-day delivery by other service providers.

*Facility mail manager* means the person responsible for mail in a specific Federal facility. There may be many facility mail managers within a Federal agency.

*Federal agency (or agency), as defined in 44 U.S.C. 2901(14)*, means—

(1) Any executive department as defined in 5 U.S.C. 101;

(2) Any wholly owned Government corporation as defined in 31 U.S.C. 9101;

(3) Any independent establishment in the executive branch as defined in 5 U.S.C. 104; and

(4) Any establishment in the legislative branch, except the Senate, the House of Representatives, the Architect of the Capitol, and all activities under the direction of the Architect of the Capitol.

*Federal facility (or facility)* means any office building, installation, base, etc., where Federal agency employees work; this includes any facility where the Federal government pays postage expenses even though few or no Federal employees are involved in processing the mail.

*Incoming mail* means any mail that comes into a facility delivered by any service provider, such as the USPS, United Parcel Service (UPS), FedEx, or DHL.

*Internal mail* means mail generated within a Federal facility that is delivered within that facility or to a nearby facility of the same agency, so long as it is delivered by agency personnel or a dedicated agency contractor.

*Large agency* means a Federal agency whose total payments to all mail serv-

ice providers exceed \$1 million per fiscal year.

*Mail* means the types of mail described in §102–192.30.

*Mail center* means an organization and/or place, within or associated with a Federal facility, where incoming and/or outgoing Federal mail is processed.

*Mail costs* means direct or allocated expenses for postage and all other mail costs (e.g., payments to service providers, mail center personnel costs, mail center overhead, etc.).

*Mail piece design* means laying out and printing items to be mailed so that they can be processed efficiently and effectively by automated mail-processing equipment.

*Official Mail Accounting System (OMAS)* means the U.S. Postal Service's government-specific system used to track postage used by many Federal agencies.

*Outgoing mail* means mail generated within a Federal facility that is going outside that facility and is delivered by a service provider.

*Personal mail* means incoming or outgoing mail that is not related to official business of the Federal government.

*Postage* means money due or paid to any service provider for the delivery of mail.

*Presort* means a mail preparation process used to receive a discounted mailing rate by sorting mail according to USPS standards.

*Program level* means a subsidiary part of a Federal agency that generates a significant quantity of outgoing mail ("significant" in this context is relative to the overall size of the agency's mail budget; half of a small annual mail budget may not be significant in a small agency, whereas one-tenth or less might be significant in a large agency). The term program level may apply to an agency organizational entity, program, or project.

*Program level mail manager* is the person at the program level responsible for mail policy implementation, operations, and financial management; the program level counterpart of the agency mail manager.

*Service provider* means any agency or company that delivers mail. Some examples of service providers are USPS,

## § 102–192.40

UPS, FedEx, DHL, courier services, the Military Postal Service Agency, the Department of State's Diplomatic Pouch and Mail Division, and other Federal agencies providing mail services.

*Special services* means those mail services that require extra payment over basic postage; e.g., certified mail, business reply mail, registered mail, merchandise return service, certificates of mailing, return receipts, and delivery confirmation.

*Unauthorized use of agency postage* means the use of penalty or commercial mail stamps, meter impressions, or other postage indicia for personal or unofficial use.

*Worksharing* means ways of processing outgoing mail that qualify for reduced postage rates; examples include presorting, bar coding, consolidating, and commingling.

### **§ 102–192.40 Where can we obtain more information about the classes of mail?**

You can learn more about mail classes in the Domestic Mail Manual (DMM). The DMM is available online at <http://pe.usps.gov/default.asp> or you can order a copy from the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, P.O. Box 371954, Pittsburgh, PA 15250–7954.

### **§ 102–192.45 How can we request a deviation from these requirements, and who can approve it?**

See §§ 102–2.60 through 102–2.110 of this chapter to request a deviation from the requirements of this part. The authority rests with the Administrator of General Services and those to whom the Administrator has delegated such authority.

## **Subpart B—Financial Requirements for All Agencies**

### **§ 102–192.50 What payment processes are we required to use?**

All payments to the United States Postal Service or authorized service providers must be made using commercial payment processes.

(a) Agencies may no longer use the Intergovernmental Payment and Collection Payment (IPAC) process associ-

## 41 CFR Ch. 102 (7–1–10 Edition)

ated with the Official Mail Accounting System (OMAS), except where GSA has approved a temporary deviation for a specific agency, office, or component.

(b) Any deviation related to the requirements of this section that has not reached its expiration date on the effective date of this rule will continue in effect until it expires.

(c) Any new deviation request, or any request to extend an existing deviation, must include a plan for the agency to implement an accountable system for postage, as discussed in § 102–192.65.

(d) GSA provides detailed guidance on commercial payment processes and accountability on its web site, [www.gsa.gov/mailpolicy](http://www.gsa.gov/mailpolicy).

### **§ 102–192.55 Why must we use these commercial payment processes?**

Federal agencies are required to use commercial payment processes because commercial payment requires obligation of the money before the postage is used (by contrast, use of the OMAS system allows the postage use and the obligation of funds to occur almost entirely independently of each other). Requiring the program level manager who generates the mail to obligate the money before the postage is used makes it much more likely that the same program level manager will be accountable for the money, thereby encouraging good judgment in using postage.

### **§ 102–192.60 How do we implement these commercial payment processes?**

Guidance on implementing a compliant payment process is in the GSA Policy Advisory, Guidelines for Federal Agencies On Converting to Commercial Payment Systems for Postage, which can be found at [www.gsa.gov/mailpolicy](http://www.gsa.gov/mailpolicy).

### **§ 102–192.65 What features must our finance systems have to keep track of mail costs?**

All agencies must have an accountable system for making postage payments; that is, a system that allocates postage expenses at the program level within the agency and then makes program level managers accountable for obligating and tracking those expenses.