



March 17, 2022

Mr Ivan D. Butts
President
National Association of Postal Supervisors
1727 King St., STE 400
Alexandria, VA 22314-2753

Certified Mail Tracking Number:
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Dear Ivan:

As a matter of general interest, the Postal Service plans to revise Handbook PO-209, *Retail Operations Handbook*.

The purpose of the revisions are to remove and/or update obsolete terminology, procedures and reporting technologies to align with the recent revisions to the Handbook F-101, *Field Accounting Procedures*.

Enclosed on compact disc (CD) are the following:

- A final draft copy of the following chapters of Handbook PO-209, *Retail Operations Handbook*, one with and one without changes identified:
 - Chapter 11, *Financial Accountabilities*
 - Chapter 12, *Stamp Stock and Cash Accountability*
 - Chapter 17, *Refunds, Exchanges, Claims, and Inquiries*

Please contact Dion Mealy at (202) 507-0193 if you have any questions concerning this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Shannon Richardson", with a long, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

Shannon Richardson
Director
Contract Administration (APWU)

Enclosure

11 Financial Accountabilities

11-1 Field Managers

Field unit managers have the following responsibilities:

- a. Comply with the financial procedures defined in Handbook F-101, *Field Accounting Procedures (FAP)*, which includes proper reporting of all financial transactions, monitoring inventory levels, remitting funds in excess of authorized reserves, and the overall monitoring of field unit operations.
- b. Track items and collect, when appropriate, any money owed to the Postal Service.
- c. Maintain adequate security for all accountable items.
- d. Ensure that all required counts are performed, including stamp stock credits, cash credits, unit reserve stock, lobby sales stock, and retail floor stock. Field unit managers must comply with count requirements which include completing them within the required time frames, documenting the results, and promptly reporting and resolving any noted discrepancies.

Subchapter 2-4 of Handbook F-101 describes field unit manager responsibilities by daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly, and semiannually periods.

11-2 Security

11-2.1 **Employee Responsibility**

The field unit manager or supervisor must provide adequate security for all accountable items. Accountable items include postal funds, stamp stock, blank money order stock, philatelic products, accountable receipts, and imprinters.

The field unit manager or supervisor may delegate responsibility for accountable items to other field unit employees under the supervision of the field unit manager.

In addition, field unit managers have the following responsibilities:

- a. Determine how each field unit will best use its available security equipment for protecting accountable items.
- b. Advise the next level of management, in writing, of security equipment inadequacy or malfunction.

- c. Periodically examine equipment that is used to protect stock or funds to confirm proper working order.
- d. Ensure that equipment purchases are consistent with the criteria documented in Handbook AS-701, *Material Management*.

11-2.2 Priority Levels

Field unit managers must ensure that employees provide the appropriate level of security for accountable items. Priority one items require the highest level of security, while priority three items require the lowest level.

[Exhibit 11-2.2](#) lists accountable items by their priority level.

Exhibit 11-2.2

Accountable Items by Priority

Priority	Accountable Item
1	Postal funds (e.g., cash, checks, and money orders), credit and debit card receipts, and blank money order forms.
2	Postage stamps, international reply coupons, migratory bird hunting and conservation stamps (e.g., bird stamps), and philatelic products.
3	Stamped envelopes stamped postal cards, money order imprinters, and nonsaleable stamp stock.
4	USPS-related merchandise, packaging products, and official licensed retail products.

11-2.3 Equipment

The following types of equipment must be used to secure accountable items (in order of priority use):

- a. Burglar-resistant chests in fireproof safes or security containers located in walk-in vaults.
- b. Postal Service standard vaults or security containers.
- c. Security chests or burglar-resistant chest portion of fireproof safes.
- d. Fireproof safes or vaults built to Postal Service standards.
- e. Lockable metal cabinets and file drawers.

Note: The equipment used to secure accountable items will vary among field units due to equipment availability.

11-3 PS Form 1412, Daily Financial Report

All postal retail unit (PRUs), regardless of size or revenue, must report their financial activity to Accounting Services electronically at the close of each business day. PS Form 1412, *Daily Financial Report*, provides individual retail associates (RAs) and PRUs with a uniform method to report financial transactions.

PS Form 1412 is available in both manual and automated types as described in [Exhibit 11-3](#).

Exhibit 11-3
PS Form 1412

Type of Form	Description
Manual PS Form 1412	④ Covers the scope of financial transactions for individual RAs and postal retail units (PRUs). ④ Provides a running record of receipt controls of all retail and philatelic sales, money order transactions, stamp accountability, and cash retained.
Automated PS Form 1412	④ Consists of paper tapes and reports provided by approved mechanical devices such as e1412 and Retail Systems Software (RSS) systems. ④ Records all financial transactions made by RAs.

RAs must prepare PS Form 1412 whenever financial transactions are performed at the PRU. RAs must be identified by name or clerk number on all PS Form 1412 supporting documents (e.g., tapes, lists, and receipts).

11-4 Self Service Kiosks

11-4.1 Overview

- a. A self-service kiosk (SSK) that allows the customer to perform some basic transactions that are conducted at the full-service retail counter. A SSK allows customers to do the following: Weigh and mail letters, flats and parcels
- b. Look up ZIP Codes.
- c. Purchase First-Class Mail stamps.
- d. Pay PO Box rents
- e. Accept pre-paid packages and provide receipt

SSKs do not accept cash. Payment types are limited to credit and debit cards. The SSK prints out a receipt for the customer for each transaction.

The daily closeout process is automated and takes place at a scheduled time each evening, during off-peak hours. A PS Form 1412 is created daily and transmitted via the network to the Enterprise Data Warehouse (EDW) and postal accounting systems. Each SSK is assigned a unique 10-digit unit finance number (UFN) for reporting purposes.

11-4.2 Machine Service Manual

The *SSK Machine Service Manual* is available on the Delivery and Retail Web site. Go to: <https://blue.usps.gov/retail/equipment/welcome.htm>

Click on the *Self-Service Kiosk* tab.

11-4.3 Reports

A hard copy of the SSK PS Form 1412 is not generated automatically. When needed, an SSK PS Form 1412 report can be found in EDW through the following path: Accounting > Shared Reports > SAFR > Store Revenue Reports > 1412 by Site by Day.

11-5 Self-Service Postal Centers (SOPO)

The Self-Service Only Post Office (SOPO) represents a cost-effective access channel to meet the demand for Postal access in emerging communities, or to boost convenience in established locales. The SOPO is an unmanned location providing convenience for package induction, stamp purchases, PO Box rental and mailing and shipping needs. The Self-Service Only locations address the needs of customers seeking a better digital experience.

11-6 Postage Products

11-6.1 Overview

Postage products include a variety of postage stamps such as semi postal stamps, commercial precanceled stamps, migratory bird stamps, philatelic stamps, and regular postage stamps. These products are sold at PRUs, contract postal units (CPUs), stamp vending machines, and SSKs. Postage products are accountable items that must be protected at all times by providing adequate physical security.

11-6.2 Revenue Account Identifier Codes

RAs must record the sale of postage products in the corresponding revenue account identifier code (AIC) as indicated in the [Exhibit 11-6.2](#).

Exhibit 11-6.2

Product Revenue Account Identifier Codes

Revenue AICs	Master Title	Controls
007	Forever Stamp Sales — Window Services at RSS, and e1412	Postage stamps are accountable items, which must be controlled as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Provide security.▪ Record sales.▪ Maintain records of stamp stock activities.
011	Forever Stamp Sales — by Internet, Mail and Phone	
014	Forever Stamp Sales — SSK	
015	Forever Stamp Sales — Global	
016	Forever Envelop Sales	
017	Forever Stamp Card Sales	
018	Forever Philatelic Postage	
083	Local Commemorative Envelopes	
084	Breast Cancer Stamp Sales	
086	Precanceled Stamps	
090	Postage Stock Sales	
091	Bird Stamp Sales	
092	Philatelic Product Sales	
094	Stamp by Mail, Internet, and Phone	
096	Vending Equipment Postage Sales	

11-7 Retail Products

Retail products include a variety of retail items such as Ready Post mailing products and other retail products sold at PRUs.

11-7.1 **Revenue Account Identifier Codes**

[Exhibit 11-7.1](#) lists the AICs in which to record the sale of packaging products and describes how to control these products.

Exhibit 11-7.1

Product Revenue Account Identifier Codes

Revenue AICs	Master Title	Controls
093	Packaging Product Sales	Packaging products are accountable items, that must be controlled as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Provide security.▪ Record sales.▪ Maintain records for packaging product activities.▪ Physically count packaging products (AIC 093) each quarter.
098	Postal-Related Merchandise Sales	
231	Official Licensed Retail Products	

11-8 Passports

Postal Service Headquarters, coordinating with the Department of State Headquarters, establishes the postal operational, accounting, and other procedures for passport application acceptance at designated Post Offices nationwide.

Postmasters and station managers select and designate employees to provide passport service.

PS Form 5659, *Daily Passport Application (DS-11) Transmittal*, is the log of individual passport application activity for both the Department of State and the U.S. Postal Service.

See the *Administrative Support Manual*, part 422, for detailed policy and procedures related to passports.

Refer to Handbook F-101, chapter 7-4.2, for accounting for passport fees.

11-9 Financial Differences: AICs 247 and 647

PRUs must use the following two AICs to report adjustments related to banking and miscellaneous items:

- a. AIC 247, Financial Differences Overage.
- b. AIC 647, Financial Differences Shortage.

Adjustments may also be credited or debited by Accounting Services for financial adjustments related to a unit's banking, transmitted PS Form 1412 transactions, money orders, and stock ledger discrepancies.

Accounting Services issues expenses to PRUs as a result of reconciling the following financial activities:

- a. Sales audit expenses.
- b. Reconciliation exceptions (e.g., banking, credit and debit cards, change funds, and Sure Money).
- c. Stamp stock shipment exceptions (stock ledger).
- d. Money order reconciliation exceptions.

A negative amount (appears in parentheses) in General Ledger (GL) 56203 on the Financial Performance Report (FPR) Line 44 Miscellaneous Expenses is a credit or reduction in expense. A positive amount is a debit or increase in expense.

To identify the source of individual AIC 247 and AIC 647 expenses, access the following: Accounting Data Mart (ADM) report: Accounting>Shared Reports>Postmaster Folder>FPR Net Financial Differences (AIC 247/647) — Line Detail.

To review, identify, or research AIC 247 and AIC 647 expenses, use the reports in the Postmaster folder in the ADM.

Refer to Handbook F-101, chapter 8, for detailed procedures for creating, documenting, monitoring, and offsetting AIC 247/647 expenses.

11-10 Banking

The Postal Service conducts business in only U.S. currency (includes coins). Therefore, field unit employees must not accept any foreign currencies as payment. Postal Service employees must safely control U.S. currency, customer checks, and money orders as follows:

- a. Do not loan, withdraw, or deposit postal funds in an unauthorized bank account.
- b. Do not exchange U.S. currency with other types of funds.
- c. Do not use postal funds for personal purposes.
- d. Safeguard postal funds from the public and conceal them from view.
- e. When postal funds are not continuously observed, maintain funds in a locked receptacle.
- f. Deposit all Postal Service funds to a Postal Service relationship bank account established by Corporate Treasury. (See Handbook F-3, *Treasury Management*.)
- g. Refer to Handbook F-101, chapter 9-1.2, for detailed banking procedures for PRUs.

11-11 Credit and Debit Cards

11-11.1 Credit Cards

The Postal Service accepts the following credit cards for the purchase of most Postal Service products and services as detailed in this section:

- a. American Express (AMEX).
- b. Carte Blanche.
- c. Diners Club.
- d. Discover.
- e. JCB.
- f. MasterCard.
- g. Visa.
- h. China Union Pay.
- i. PIN Debit
- j. Samsung Pay (available only at Full Window Service).
- k. All contactless phone/wallets/wearables (Only Non-POS locations only)
(Available for FWS, SSK February 2022)

Note: Credit and debit card terminals will not accept any unauthorized card.

Credit cards are not accepted for payment for the following:

- a. Trust fund deposits at the PRU including but not limited to:
 - *PostalOne!* Accounts
 - Permit Imprint accounts.
 - Periodicals accounts.
 - Business Reply Mail and Postage Due accounts.
- b. Precanceled stamps.
- c. Money orders (principal amount).
- d. Payment for periodicals or mailings.
- e. Collect on Delivery (COD) funds.
- f. Money by wire (principal amount).
- g. Payment for an employee debt.-
- h. Passport application fees payable to the U.S. Department of State.
- i. Gift cards.

Note: Customers may order stamps and make purchases with American Express, Discover, MasterCard, and Visa credit cards by calling 800-STAMP-24 (800-782-6724) or when purchasing products at www.usps.com

Acceptance Procedures

Fallback Procedures:

If an EMV chip card cannot be read by terminal three (3) separate times, the terminal will automatically fall back to a Mag-Stripe transaction.

The procedure for accepting credit cards is as follows:

- a. The customer inserts [chip card] /swipes [magstripe] the card into the terminal and follows the prompts. If the chip cannot be read three times then, the customer is prompted to swipe the chip card through the magnetic card reader and follow the prompts. If the credit card is approved, a receipt will print.

- b. Cash Management
Handbook F-101, *Draft 12*

For these credit cards...	The signature on the receipt must match...
American Express, Carte Blanche, China Union Pay, Diners Club, Discover Card, and MasterCard.	the signature on the back of the credit card and the name embossed on the front of the credit card.
Visa and JCB.	the signature on the back of the credit card.

*****Note only Magstripe transactions need to be verified.*****

- c. SSAs may not accept unsigned credit cards, if a customer presents an unsigned credit card, the SSA may accept the credit card for payment as follows: **(Note: only for Magstripe transactions only)**

- (1) The customer must sign the back of the credit card.
- (2) The customer must provide two forms of identification — one must be a photo ID.
- (3) The signature must match identification.
Note: Credit cards with the words “See ID” or containing two signatures on the signature panel may not be accepted (applies to both personal and business credit cards).

In addition, SSAs may accept business credit cards in accordance with the following requirements:

- The card may or may not have an individual name embossed on front along with a business name.

- d. The SSA records credit card transactions in AIC 762, *Credit Cards Remitted*, on PS Form 1412.

Note: Credit card receipts must be kept in a separate and secure location. They should be kept secure enough that only those with an official “need to know” have access to them.

11-11.2

PIN-based Debit Cards

SSAs may accept the following PIN-based debit cards for payment for all postal products and services:

- ACCEL.
- Armed Forces Financial Network.
- ATH.
- Culiance (CU24)

- China Union Pay
- Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) cards.
- Interlink/PAVD.
- Maestro.
- NYCE.
- Pulse
- Shazam.
- STAR

Any changes to the list of accepted PIN-based debit cards will be announced in the *Postal Bulletin*.

If the customer presents a debit card that is not authorized, the terminal will not approve the transaction.

The procedure for SSAs accepting PIN-based debit cards is as follows:

- A. In FWS units [Large Post Offices], the RA selects the payment options on the POS screen, the customer will insert, swipe, or tap the debit card on the CDU (Customer Display Unit) [Note: tap will be available with new FWS terminals]. In non-POS units [Small Post Offices], the customer will insert, swipe, or tap the card the debit card on the CDU.
- B. The customer is prompted to enter their personal identification number (PIN) on the CDU.
- C. When the system prompts “Cash back,” ask the customer if he or she would like cash back. [Note: The CDU displays the cashback amount (set amounts) to be selected by the customer]
 - a. Cash back is only offered if cash is available in draw.
 - b. Cash back can only be given to customers making a purchase.
 - c. Cash retained limits must not be increased.

The customer selects the amount of cash back requested, if applicable. Cash back amounts must be in increments of \$10.00 up to a maximum of \$50.00

- D. If approved, a Post Office and a customer receipt will be printed. Receipts will show the amount purchased, the cash back amount, and the grand total. [Note: In FWS, the customer has an option to select 1. Print receipt 2. Email Receipt 3. Print and Email Receipt.]
- E. Give the customer receipt to the customer.
- F. Record PIN-based debit card transactions in AIC 772, *Debit Cards Remitted*, on PS Form 1412.

Note: PIN-based debit card receipts must be kept in a separate and secure location. They should be kept secure enough that only those with an official “need to know” have access to them.

11-12 Checks

11-12.1 **Check Acceptance**

Employees may accept personal checks, bank checks, government agency checks, business checks, traveler's checks, and American Express (AMEX) gift checks for customer transactions when presented with a valid photo-bearing ID as follows:

- a. Checks are accepted for all postal products, except money order and Sure Money transactions.

Note: U.S. Treasury checks, traveler's checks, and AMEX gift checks are acceptable for the purchase of postal money orders.

- b. Customer checks must be made payable to "U.S. Postal Service" or "Postmaster."
- c. Traveler's checks and AMEX gift checks are accepted only when at least 50 percent of the face value is used to purchase Postal Service products or services.
- d. Checks may be accepted for payment of a Collect on Delivery (COD) item provided the check is made payable to the sender.
- e. Checks that have been mailed in for payments must be endorsed "by mail" on the face.

11-12.2 **Checks Prohibited for Cashing**

Do not cash the following types of checks:

- a. Checks that appear altered.
- b. Checks from a third party.
- c. Checks for anyone other than the payee(s) named on the face.
- d. Checks for which the signature on the ID does not match the signature on the check.
- e. Checks for more than the amount imprinted as a limit on the face of the document.
- f. Checks payable to a business, an organization, society, institution, government agency, corporation (LLC or others), or partnership. These items must be deposited or negotiated at their bank or financial institution.
- g. Checks issued by an employee.

Refer to Handbook F-101, chapter 9-3, for detailed procedures for accepting and cashing checks.

11-12.3 **Returned Customer Checks and Bad Check List**

Returned checks are customer checks returned from Postal Service bank accounts. Returned checks are debited to a service wide expense account and Accounting Services handles check collection and resolution.

Field unit employees must not accept payment from the customer for returned checks that have been placed for collection.

All funds received as a result of check collection attempts, for these checks, are credited to a service wide expense account.

Refer to Handbook F-101, part 9-3.5, for the handling of returned checks.

Accounting Services generates a national bad check list. The list is sorted by

area and forwarded to each district finance manager (DFM) or designee for distribution within their district. (For RSS PRUs, this information is uploaded into the RSS system).

Accounting Services removes customers from the bad check list once their debt is paid. However, local management may continue to keep a customer on the bad check list, at their discretion, by manually adding it to the list received from Accounting Services.

11-13 Domestic and International Money Orders

Postal money orders can only be purchased using the following payment methods:

- a. U.S. currency and coins.
- b. U.S. Treasury checks.
- c. Traveler's checks payable in U.S. dollars. *
- d. American Express gift checks payable in U.S. dollars. *
- e. Pin-based debit cards.

* **Note:** Traveler's checks and American Express gift checks are accepted only when at least 50 percent of the face value is used to purchase postal products and services.

The maximum amount of any single domestic money order is \$1,000.

To comply with the Bank Secrecy Act, customers must complete a PS Form 8105-A and present valid identification as follows:

- a. For all sales of money orders, gift cards and Sure Money transactions totaling \$3,000 or more to the same customer in the same day. Fees charged for transactions do not count toward the \$3,000 limit. Separate transactions to one customer over the course of one day count toward the \$3,000 filing threshold.
- b. When cashing money orders that total more than \$10,000 per day, per customer,

To report any potentially suspicious activity involving the purchase or cashing of a postal financial instrument, use a PS Form 8105-B, *Suspicious Transaction Report* (STR) and complete the form as soon as possible after the suspicious transaction has ended.

Federal law prohibits notifying the customer that a suspicious report is being completed; therefore, RAs must complete the PS Form 8105-B after the customer leaves the counter line.

Submitting PS Forms 8105-A and PS Forms 8105-B

RSS and e1412 Post Offices using money order printers must submit PS Forms 8105-A and PS Forms 8105-B electronically. If the electronic form was submitted successfully, the Post Offices should not mail a paper copy of the PS Form 8105-A or PS Form-B to the BSA office.

There are two instances when an automated Post Office should mail a paper form.

- If the network is down and the form cannot be submitted electronically or if the RA does not receive an electronic confirmation that the online form was successfully submitted. In these instances, a paper form must be mailed to address on the front of the form.
- When an RA wants to add comments to a PS Form 8105-B being submitted electronically, in order to provide additional information about a suspicious transaction. The additional information must be submitted on a paper form and mailed to the address on the front of the form.

Post Offices that do not have the ability to submit PS Forms 8105-A and PS Forms 8105-B electronically must mail the forms to the address on the front of the form the same day the transaction occurs.

Use the most current edition of PS Forms 8105-A and 8105-B. Forms may be ordered from the Material Distribution Center.

If submitting a paper form, PRUs must log the PS Form(s) 8105-A before submitting. A sample tracking log is available on the Corporate Treasury's Web site. Go to: [http:// blue.usps.gov/corptreasury/](http://blue.usps.gov/corptreasury/). Click on *Bank Secrecy Act Compliance*, then click on *BSA Forms Links*.

11-14 Cashing Domestic and International Money Orders

11-14.1 All Postal Money Orders

PRU employees must cash domestic and international money orders in accordance with the following procedures as well as in accordance with any additional specific instructions from the postmaster or district:

- Verify that the money order is not on the Missing, Lost, or Stolen list in the current *Postal Bulletin*.
- Cash the money order only in the exact amount imprinted at time of issue, up to the authorized maximum amount. Use of a title (e.g., Mr. and Ms.) is not required when endorsing a money order. A money order made payable to more than one person will be cashed for either person if the conjunction "or" is used. If no conjunction is used, all persons named on the face of the item must sign and provide ID as required.
- Verify that the money order is authentic (see Notice 299, *Security Features of U.S. Postal Service Money Orders*). Check money order security features for signs of alteration, counterfeit, or fraud before cashing.

If necessary, call the Money Order Verification System (866-459-7822) as an additional tool to validate issuance of a postal money order.

Refer to Handbook F-101, subchapter 10-2, for more information on requirements and procedures for cashing postal money orders.

11-14.2 Money Order Security Features

To determine if a money order is authentic, hold the money order up to the light and look for the following security features:

- Ben Franklin images (watermarks) repeated on the left side (top to bottom). Watermarks are in the paper and will appear when viewing from the front or back of the money order when held up to the light.
- A dark security thread running (top to bottom) to the right of the Ben Franklin watermark with tiny letters “USPS” facing backward and forward.

If either of these security features is not present when the money order is held up to the light, the postal money order is fraudulent. Also, be aware of the following potential areas for fraud:

- Denominations are indicated on two locations and must be identical. Look for alterations in one or both places.
- Discoloration of the denomination amounts indicates erasure (fraudulent).
- Maximum value for domestic postal money orders is \$1,000.

Note: RAs can call the Money Order Verification System as a tool to validate issuance of a postal money order. For more information, see Notice 299.

11-14.3 Money Order Verification System

The Money Order Verification System is an interactive voice response (IVR) system for deterring fraud. The IVR system can assist PRUs and financial institutions when validating postal money orders.

To inquire on the validity of a recently issued money order, do the following:

- a. Call the Money Order Verification System at 866-459-7822
- b. Press 1 for Money Order Verification.
- c. Enter the following information when prompted:
 - ④ 11-digit money order serial number.
 - ④ Exact dollar amount of the money order.
 - ④ Issue ID number.

If the money order has been issued in the last 90 days and is at least 48 hours old, the IVR should reply that there has been a “match” if the money order is a valid issue.

There are instances where the issuing unit’s PS Form 1412, *Daily Financial Report*, data has not updated in the system in a timely manner. This will result in a nonmatch reply from the IVR system.

The IVR system is to serve only as an additional tool to help prevent fraud.

See the “Money Order Verification System Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)” at: <http://blue.usps.gov/accounting/pdf/MoneyOrderIVRFAQs.pdf>.

Refer to Handbook F-101, subchapter 10-3, for procedures for money order inquiries and replacements.

11-15 Accountable Paper

11-15.1 **Accountable Paper Definitions**

Accountable paper is defined as:

- Postage stock.
- Stamped papers.
- Nonpostal stamps.
- Philatelic products.
- Money order stock.

Postage stock is defined as:

- Postage stamps.
- Semi postal stamps.

Stamped papers are Stamped envelopes and postal cards (include regular, special, commemorative, and penalty mail issues).

Nonpostal stamps are migratory bird hunting and conservation stamps sold for the Department of the Interior.

Philatelic products are defined as:

- Mint sets.
- Stamp collecting kits.
- Gift packs.
- Other products in the items 8000–9999 series.

11-15.2 **Accountable Paper Terms**

The following accountable paper terms will help Postal Service employees understand the accountable paper procedures in this handbook.

Unit reserve:

- Consists of all stamps, stamped paper, and philatelic products in a PRU that has not been consigned to other accountabilities within the unit.
- Are in all PRUs.
- Has sufficient stock to meet customer demand; however, PRUs must maintain total unit accountability within established limits (see part 11 - 3.4)

Stamp Fulfillment Services (SFS):

- Receives and disburses stamps, stamped paper, and philatelic products.
- Provides accountable paper for all PRUs, CPUs and VPOs within its service area.
- Typically consists of a supervisor and one or more bargaining-unit employees assigned to work in or near a secure vault.
- Is administered by Stamp Services at Headquarters and serves as a centralized stamp distribution operation.

11-15.3 **Responsibilities**

11-15.3.1 **Postmaster or Unit Manager**

The postmaster or unit manager is responsible for ensuring that controls are in place for maintaining an accurate inventory for all accountable paper within the PRU. This responsibility includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- a. Providing adequate security for all accountable items.
- b. Monitoring inventory levels.
- c. Establishing and controlling segments within the PRU.
- d. Ensuring proper entry of all financial transactions.
- e. Ensuring that all required counts are performed.

11-15.3.2 **Employee**

All field unit employees are accountable for the following:

- a. All accountable paper issued to them as a stamp credit.
- b. All funds received from accountable paper sales until deposited as postal funds.
- c. Accurate and timely recording of all financial transactions.

All employees assigned responsibility for accountable paper are liable for losses in their accountability.

11-15.3.3 **Contractor**

A contractor is accountable for all accountable paper assigned to the CPU and VPOs.

11-16 Ordering Stock SFS

PRUs order accountable paper from SFS. The SFS provides a monthly schedule for ordering.

Refer to Handbook F-101, subchapter 11-4, for detailed procedures for ordering from the SFS.

Money Order Sources

The Supply Management Asset Planning organization requisitions money order stock from an appropriate money order supplier. Money orders are shipped from the printing vendor to the MDC. Refer to Handbook, F-101, section 12-2.

11-17 Receiving Stock Shipments From SFS

11-17.1 **Examining and Verifying the Shipment**

Examine and verify stock shipments as follows:

- a. Examine each shipping carton to ascertain that the address is correct, the seal is unbroken, and the contents are not damaged.
- b. Report tampering to the U.S. Postal Inspection Service and Office of Inspector General immediately.

- c. Count stock and verify to the computer-generated PS Form 17, Stamp Requisition/Stamp Return, with a witness.
- d. Sign and date the PS Form 17.
- e. Enter the total value of the PS Form 17 as stock received even if the physical quantity is not the same.

[Exhibit 11-17.1](#) provides specific verification procedures by item.

Exhibit 11-17.1

Verification Procedure by Item

For this item:	Verify the shipment as follows:
Panes in sealed packages	Follow the instructions on the package for verifying the contents before removing the sealed film wrapper on the individual packages.
Stamp booklets	Count the number of booklets in the denomination and type described on the unit package. Do this before breaking the package seal.
Coils	Count the stamp coils to verify the shipment contains the quantity of coils, type, and denomination of stock ordered. Do this before breaking the seal.
Stamped envelopes and postal cards	Count the number of boxes or packages and the denominations of the envelopes or cards against the carton labels and verify against PS Form 17.
Philatelic products	Count the number of items in open cartons. The total must agree with the quantity printed on the outside of the carton.

11-18 Returning Stock to the SDO or SFS

11-18.1 **Saleable Stock**

Saleable stock that may be returned to SFS includes stamps, stamped envelopes, postal cards, and philatelic products currently on sale.

SFS must authorize the return of saleable stock before the stamp stock custodian returns it.

11-18.2 **Non-saleable Stock**

Nonsaleable stamp stock items and products that may be returned to SFS for destruction includes the following:

- a. Obsolete stock that is removed from sale at all locations. If recalled for destruction, consider using philatelic products for promotional purposes or as gifts to employees. Obsolete editions of the *Postal Service Guide to U.S. Stamps* can be provided for philatelic, promotional, or educational purposes. (Stamp Services publishes an annual announcement in the *Postal Bulletin* about the disposition of obsolete editions.)
- b. Defective stock including any partial packages of stamps, stamped envelopes, postal cards, and damaged stock accepted from customers as described in the *Mailing Standards of the United States Postal Service, Domestic Mail Manual (DMM)*, 604.9.0.

Send stock to be destroyed to SFS only if the minimum amount has accumulated since the last shipment; [Exhibit 11-18.2](#) lists minimal amount of stock per CAG.

Exhibit 11-18.2

Minimal Amount of Stock to Be Destroyed per CAG

For CAGs...	The minimum amount is...
A–G	\$100
H	\$50
K and L	\$25

The stamp stock custodian must check the *Postal Bulletin* to know when to withdraw specific stamps and stamped paper items from sale. The schedule of returning nonsaleable stock is provided by SFS.

Prepare stock to be returned as follows:

- a. Ensure that the value is clearly marked on each item.
- b. Sort loose stamps by denomination and paste them on a letter size paper.

Note: A list of off-sale items is available on the Enterprise Data Distribution Web site. Go to: <http://edd/pls/posweb/ProdItem.Intro>.

Refer to SFS Toolkit. Go to <https://blue.usps.gov/accounting/> and click on the SFS toolkit or Handbook F-101, subchapter 11-6, for detailed procedures on accounting for returning stock.

12 Stamp Stock and Cash Accountability

12-1 Stamp Stock Assignment

Stamp stock credits and cash credits are assigned as follows:

- a. Retail Floor Stock
- b. Employee cash credits.
- c. Unit reserve stock.
- d. Unit cash reserve.
- e. Retail floor stock.
- f. Rural carrier consignment.
- g. Contract postal unit (CPU) credits.
- h. Mobile units.
- i. Stamps by Mail.

12-2 Stamp Stock Responsibility

The postmaster, manager, or supervisor is responsible for management of all stamp stock credits and cash credits assigned and must ensure the timely performance of all credit counts.

All employees with consigned credits are accountable for the value of their assigned stamp stock, cash, and money orders.

Unit reserve stock custodians are accountable for the value of their assigned stamp stock and money orders.

CPUs are accountable for the value of their assigned stamp stock, cash, and money orders.

12-3 Stamp Credits

12-3.1 **Definition**

A stamp credit is the value of the stamp stock and money orders consigned to a retail associate (RA) from the unit reserve stock at a postal retail unit (PRU).

Hold stamp credits to a reasonable multiple of the RA's weekly sales amount. A 2-week multiple is recommended. The postmaster, supervisor, or manager may adjust the value of stamp credits to be consistent with customer demand.

To maintain individual accountability, RAs must not trade or purchase stamp stock from one another employee.

In an emergency, a supervisor may authorize an RA to ship or receive stock from another RA as follows:

- a. The supervisor or RA completes a PS Form 17, *Stamp Requisition/Stamp Return*, in duplicate. Enter the names of both RAs and the amount of stamp stock on PS Form 17.
- b. The supervisor must witness and sign PS Form 17 as authorizing this transaction.
- c. The RA keeps a copy of the PS Form 17 until the next stamp credit count.

12-3.2 **Unit Reserve Stock**

The unit reserve stock custodian is accountable for the value of all items in the unit reserve stock, is responsible for managing the stamp stock inventory, and must report unit reserve stock activities.

Sales from the unit reserve stock are not allowed.

The unit reserve may be assigned to the postmaster, unit manager, or supervisor. At a finance station without a domiciled supervisor, a lead sales and services associate (LSSA) may be assigned the unit reserve. The LSSA may also be assigned a separate stock credit from which direct sales to the public are conducted. (A finance station is a postal retail unit that has three or fewer full-time RAs.)

Refer to Handbook F-101, *Field Accounting Procedures*, subchapter 13-4, for detailed procedures for conducting unit reserve stamp stock counts.

12-3.3 **Total Postal Retail Unit Stamp Accountability**

Maintain the total PRU accountability on PS Form 1412, *Daily Financial Report*. AIC 853, Stamp Accountability Closing Balance, on the unit's PS Form 1412 is a combination of all stamp accountabilities within the same unit finance number (UFN) at the PRU. This combination includes the following:

- a. Unit reserve stock.
- b. Retail floor stock.

- c. Individual stamp credits (e.g., retail associates, vending, Stamps by Mail[®], and philatelic).
- d. Lobby Sales - mPOS

12-3.4 **Stamp Credit Record Files**

The postmaster, manager, or supervisor is responsible for establishing and maintaining a stamp credit file for each employee. The file must contain the following items:

- a. PS Form 3294-P, *Cash and Stamp Stock Count and Summary*, or PS Form 3294-C, *Cash Credit Count and Summary*.
- b. PS Form 3368-P, *Accountability Examination Record*.
- c. PS Form 3369, *Consigned Credit Receipt*.
- d. PS Form 571, *Discrepancy of \$100 or More in Financial Responsibility*, if applicable.
- e. Letters of demand (LOD) for payment, if applicable.

Maintain a drawer or similar container of file folders, one for each credit, arranged in alphabetical or numerical order.

The retention period established for stamp credit file forms is not to exceed 2 years except for PS Form 3369 which is 3 years.

12-4 Individual Stamp Credit Counts

12-4.1 **Counting Requirements**

Supervisors must randomly count stamp credits maintained by bargaining unit employees at least once every 4 months.

Stamp credits maintained by non-bargaining employees must be counted by the non-bargaining employee and another employee at least once every 12 months.

Refer to Handbook F-101, subchapter 13-3, for detailed procedures on conducting stamp credit counts.

12-5 Contract Postal Unit Stamp Credit Count

The postmaster, manager, or supervisor of the host Post Office has the following responsibilities:

- a. Ensuring that CPU stamp credit counts are conducted randomly at least once every 12 months.
- b. Maintaining a separate file for CPU financial activities.

Refer to Handbook F-101, subchapter 13-7, for detailed procedures on conducting a CPU count.

12-6 Cash Credits

12-7.1 **Unit Cash Reserves**

PRUs may establish a unit cash reserve to supplement the needs of the unit. Use PS Form 3369 to assign the unit cash reserve to an individual who is directly accountable. When circumstances warrant, the unit cash reserve custodian may reassign all or part of the unit cash reserve using PS Form 3369. Any reassigned funds must be kept separate from other accountable credits assigned to the employee.

Report the unit cash reserve in AIC 753 on the unit's PS Form 1412. The unit cash reserve has no tolerance.

Note: CPUs may not have a cash reserve. Refer to Handbook F-101, section 13-8.1.2, for making changes to unit cash reserves.

12-7.2 **Cash Retained (RSS Units Only)**

RAs that are only consigned a cash credit are authorized a cash retained amount of \$100.99 (maximum amount), for which they are individually accountable. The RA documents the maximum authorized cash retained on PS Form 3369.

Individual RA cash retained amounts must be equal to AIC 753 as reported on the individual's PS Form 1412 and cannot exceed the approved amount.

12-7.3 **Contract Postal Units Cash Credit**

CPUs may keep \$100 or 10 percent of their stamp credit, whichever is less.

12-8 Segmented Inventory Accountability

Each unit must maintain a unit reserve stock and may have a number of different segments.

Retail Associates (RAs) who work at window services do not have a stamp stock inventory assigned and instead work from a shared retail floor stock.

RAs who work from the retail floor stock are assigned a \$100.00 cash retained credit, for which they are individually accountable.

Other segments may require stamp stock inventory assigned as individual accountability for which they are directly accountable.

12-8.1 **Segment Definitions**

The following segments enable the assignment of cash or stamp stock to various individuals or roles within a unit:

- a. **Mobile Unit Credits** — Stock for use by employees assigned to operate mobile units. This credit is directly accountable to an individual.
- b. **Retail Floor Stock** — A common inventory for use by retail employees who are not directly accountable for that inventory.
- c. **Stamps by Mail (SBM)** — An inventory for use in filling stamp orders received from customers by mail that is assigned to an individual who is directly accountable for that inventory. SBM is used where volume prohibits filling requisitions from the retail floor stock.
- d. **Special Event Credits** — Temporary credits for special events can be assigned to one of the accountable segments with stock issued directly from the unit reserve. At the completion of the event a count is conducted, and the balance is either returned to the unit reserve, prepared for destruction, or moved to the retail floor stock.
- e. **Lobby Sales** — A common inventory for use by Lobby Assistant to sell stamps on Lobby Sales segment on either the mPOS or SSK.

12-8.2 **Responsibilities**

Postmasters, managers, and supervisors at PRUs must comply with the procedures defined in this section. In addition, postmasters, managers, and supervisors are responsible for the following:

- a. Establishing and controlling segments within the unit.
- b. Monitoring inventory levels.
- c. Ensuring proper entry of all financial transactions.
- d. Remitting all funds in excess of authorized reserves.
- e. Monitoring operations, including count procedures.

All PRU employees are responsible for the following:

- a. Ensuring financial integrity.
- b. Maintaining security of all postal stock, funds, equipment, and facilities.
- c. Reporting all retail transactions.
- d. Providing receipts to each customer.
- e. Using the RSS cash drawers for all daily transactions as they occur.

Employees are accountable for cash, stamp stock, and money orders directly assigned to them.

12-9 Retail Floor Stock

Under the retail floor stock segmented inventory accountability (SIA) concept, two modifications are made to traditional controls:

- a. Cash is separated from stamp stock in retail credits.
- b. A shared retail floor stock replaces individual stamp credits for RAs.

The unit reserve stock custodian issues stock directly to the retail floor stock.

Although no individual RA is accountable for this stock, each RA making sales from this credit is responsible for ensuring accurate reporting of the sales from the retail floor stock. RAs are also responsible for adequate protection and security of retail floor stock.

Refer to Handbook F-101, subchapter 14-2, for detailed procedures on conducting retail floor stock counts.

12-10 Other SIA Segment Counts

Counts for stamp stock credits assigned to bargaining employees must occur at least once every 4 months.

Concurrent counts must be performed for employees assigned unit reserve stamp stock and other accountable credits. This begins a new cycle for the required “count frequencies” for all assigned credits.

Blank money order stock assigned to an accountable segment employee, must be verified each time the count for that segment is performed.

Refer to Handbook F-101, subchapter 13-3, for detailed procedures on conducting individual stamp credit counts.

12 -11 Single Drawer Accountability (SDA)

Single Drawer Accountability (SDA) is a single accountability comprised of stamp stock, cash, and money orders consigned specifically to RSS or e1412. 2, 4 and 6 hour offices which are overseen by an Administrative Post Office-APO.

Stamp counts are randomly mandated by Accounting Services based on financial risk and monitoring indicators. The APO is responsible for stamp stock management in accordance with this policy.

Refer to Handbook, F-101, click on e1412 Toolkit, select Single Drawer Accountability (SDA):<https://blue.usps.gov/accounting/e1412/e1412menu.htm>. Under the SDA Inventory tab, select SDA Count.

17 Refunds, Exchanges, Claims, and Inquiries

17-1 Service Failure Refunds

17-1.1 **Priority Mail Express Refunds**

If a Priority Mail Express item was not delivered or made available for the customer as guaranteed under the applicable service purchased, a refund request must be made within 30 days after the date of mailing.

Refunds for Priority Mail Express postage may be made only to the mailer or the holder of the Express Mail Corporate Account used to pay for postage. The mailer may apply for a refund online at www.usps.com/help (preferred) or must complete Part I of PS Form 3533, *Application and Voucher for Refund of Postage, Fees, and Services*, in duplicate and submit the form along with the original customer copy of Label 11-B to any Post Office.

- 17-1.2 **Signature Confirmation** Fees can be refunded for Signature Confirmation, USPS Tracking (USPS Marketing Mail only), Certified Mail and Return Receipt (hardcopy and electronic). A PS form 3533 may be submitted locally for a refund if service is not rendered. Adult and Restricted Delivery cannot be refunded online and must be refunded at the Retail Unit. Determine appropriate amount and follow normal accounting procedures as outlined in the Handbook F-101, *Field Accounting Procedures*, Chapter 21, Refunds and Exchanges.

17-2 Postage and Fee(s) Refunds

17-2.1 **Unused Dated Postage Meter Indicia**

Unused, dated postage meter indicia are considered for refund only if complete, legible, and valid. Authorized users must submit the request within 60 days of the date(s) shown in the indicia. The refund request must be submitted with a properly completed PS Form 3533.

Charges for processing a refund request for unused, dated meter indicia are as specified in the *Mailing Standards of the United States Postal Service*, Domestic Mail Manual (DMM).

17-2.2 **Metered Postage Items Ineligible for Refund**

The following metered postage items are ineligible for refunds:

- a. Loose indicia printed on labels or tape that have been stapled together or attached to paper or other medium in any manner.
- b. Reply envelopes or cards paid at the proper postage rate.
- c. Indicia printed on labels or tape removed from wrappers or envelopes.
- d. Indicia lacking clearly readable identification of the licensing Post Office, meter serial number, postage amount, or other required information.
- e. Indicia printed on mail dispatched and returned to sender as undeliverable as addressed, including mail marked “no such post office” and mail addressed for local delivery and returned after directory service was given or delivery was attempted.

17-2.3 **Unused Dated PC Postage Indicia**

Unused, dated PC Postage indicia are considered for refund only if complete, legible, and valid. Only authorized PC Postage users may request a refund. The request is processed by the provider, not the Postal Service. The refund request must be submitted within 30 days of the date(s) shown in the indicia. Disbursements of refunds for online postage is not permitted at local units.

17-2.4 **Click-N-Ship PC Postage**

Refer Click-N-Ship customers to the Click-N-Ship site. Log on to: www.usps.com/clicknship and click on the *MyAccount* link.

17-3 Exchanges

17-3.1 **Stamp Exchanges**

17-3.1.1 **Postal Service Fault**

The Post Office may correct mistakes in selling damaged, defective, or otherwise unserviceable stamps by exchanging stamps at full postage value.

17-3.1.2 **Damaged in Customer’s Possession**

Stamps that are damaged or otherwise unusable for postage (because of humidity, moisture, or other causes) while in a customer’s possession may be exchanged only for an equal number of stamps of the same denomination.

Unusable stamps accepted from a customer under these conditions must be those on sale at Post Offices within 12 months before the transaction.

Quantities of the same denomination totaling over \$10 in value must be returned in the same configuration as when bought (e.g., sheets, coils, and booklets).

Each such transaction is limited to \$100 worth of postage from each customer.

17-3.2 Exchange of Spoiled and Unused Postal Matter

Unusable and spoiled stamped envelopes; stamped cards, if uncanceled; and unused, precanceled stamps, and stamped cards are exchanged for other postage-stamped paper.

Only the buyer may exchange stamped envelopes with a printed return address and stamped cards with any printed matter of the buyer. If there is no purchaser's printing, any responsible person may exchange them.

17-3.3 Stamps Converted to Other Postage Forms

A customer may submit postage stamps for conversion to an advance deposit for permit imprint mailings, subject to the conditions set forth in the DMM.

17-3.4 Items Not Exchangeable

The following postage items are not exchangeable:

- a. Adhesive stamps, unless mistakes were made in buying, stamps were defective, or stamps were affixed to commercial envelopes and postcards.
- b. Stamps cut from stamped cards, or stamped envelopes.
- c. Parts and pieces of stamped cards.
- d. Stamped cards, stamped envelopes received for reply. Mutilated and defaced stamps.
- e. PC Postage cannot be exchanged at Post Offices. Customers must go online to the vendor's Web site to request exchange/refund for this service.

17-4 Inquiries and Claims

17-4.1 Domestic Claims

Accounting Service adjudicates all claims regardless of the amount of the claim.

Customers may file domestic insurance claims for loss or damage as follows:

- a. Online at www.usps.com/help (the preferred filing method is online)
- b. By mail (customers may mail the claim to Accounting Services).
- c. At any Post Office (customers may submit a completed claim form to any Post Office).

Customers will be requested to retain any damaged items and the mailing container (including any wrapping, packaging, and any other contents). In some situations, a customer may receive a request to present damaged item(s) to a Post Office for inspection, retention, and disposition in accordance with the claim's decision.

If a customer presents a damaged item at your office, follow the instructions on the PS Form 2856, *Damage Report of Insured Parcel and Contents*.

For damaged item(s) left at a Post Office, once the claim is resolved, if the claim was not paid the customer may pick up their damaged item(s). If the claim was paid, the items should be sent to the Mail Recovery Center. See <http://blue.usps.gov/accounting/claims.htm> for more information.

17-4.1.1 **Customer Claims Filed Online**

To file a claim online, customers should go to: <http://www.usps.com/insuranceclaims/online.htm>. A PS Form 1000 is not required for online claims because the form is built into the online system. Customers may upload JPG or PDF files to provide evidence of insurance, evidence of value, and, if applicable, proof of damage or missing contents.

17-4.1.2 **Customer Claims Filed by Mail**

If a customer is not able to file a claim online, they must call 1-800-ASK-USPS (1-800-275-8777).

The information on the claim form is self-explanatory. With the completed claim form include all information that applies to their claim, including evidence of insurance, evidence of value, and, if applicable, proof of damage or missing contents. Customers may send the completed claim form and attachments to the following address, which is published on PS Form 1000:

USPS DOMESTIC
CLAIMS PO BOX 80143
ST LOUIS MO 63180-0143

17-4.1.3 **Customer Claims Submitted at a Post Office**

If a customer brings the completed PS Form 1000 and required documentation to the Post Office, send the form and documentation immediately to the address on the claim form.

17-4.1.4 **Appeals Process for Denied Claims**

For domestic insurance claims that were denied, the procedure for customers is described here.

For a denied claim, customers may appeal a decision focusing on the basis of the claim denial within 30 days of the date of the original decision. If the original claim was filed online, the customer may file an appeal online or mail to the following address:

DOMESTIC CLAIM APPEALS ACCOUNTING SERVICES
PO BOX 80141
ST LOUIS MO 63180-0141

17-4.2 **International Claims**

To file an International Claim, customers must file an International Inquiry:

To initiate an **International Inquiry Online** at <https://www.usps.com/help/international-claims.htm>, the customer must be the U.S. sender and a registered *usps.com* account holder — U.S. senders without a registered *usps.com* account must create an account at the beginning of the online inquiry process.

- A. International Inquiries online includes, Priority Mail Express International with Guaranteed Delivery Date (PMEI-GDD), Priority Mail Express International (PMEI), Priority Mail International (PMI), and Registered First-Class Mail International.
 - a. Global Express Guaranteed (GXG) cannot be filed online.
 - b. First Class Parcel International Services (FCPIS) and First-Class Mail International (FCMI) are not eligible for Inquiries.

- B. Customers can call the Customer Care Center at 800-222-1811 if they are unable to file online.

Customer will be asked to provide the following information:

- A. Create an International **Online Inquiry** within the time limits **(Recommended for faster processing)**
The Customer will need to provide information regarding the mailing, including but not limited to the following:
 - 1. The USPS Tracking number that appears on the receipt.
 - 2. The sender's name, mailing address, email address, and telephone number.
 - 3. The addressee's name and mailing address.
 - 4. The addressee's email address and telephone number, if available.
 - 5. The date of the mailing, weight, postage paid, and additional fees (if applicable).
 - 6. A description of the contents.
 - 7. Evidence of Mailing
 - 8. Evidence of Value

Create an International **Inquiry by phone** within the time limits. Call 800-222-1811, and provide information regarding the mailing, including but not limited to the following:

- 1. The USPS Tracking number that appears on the receipt.
- 2. The sender's name, mailing address, email address, and telephone number.
- 3. The addressee's name and mailing address.
- 4. The addressee's email address and telephone number, if available.
- 5. The date of the mailing, weight, postage paid, and additional fees (if applicable).
- 6. A description of the contents and its value.

Evidence of Mailing: Original mailing receipt issued at the time of mailing. Evidence of Value (at least one of the examples listed below is required). Customers filing online claims must upload their both document types when the Inquiry is started as a jpg or pdf file. If the inquiry was filed by phone, the documents are requested by mail if the inquiry becomes a claim.

Evidence of Mailing
• Mailing Label
• Custom Forms
• Printouts of the online transactions
• Post Office shipping receipts
• Invoice or bill of sales
Evidence of Value
• Sales Receipt
• Copy of canceled check or money order
• Credit card billing statement
• Statement of value from a reputable dealer
• Estimates of repair costs from a reputable dealer
• Printouts of the online transaction

17-4.2.1 International Inquiries

Inquiry Submitted Online (preferred method)

After an Inquiry is submitted online it is immediately sent to the eCRS (International Inquiries Claims System).

The International Research Group (IRG) receives the inquiry (via eCRS Reporting), they will begin the inquiry process of communicating with the destination post on the sender's behalf.

Based upon the investigation results, if the item is found to be ineligible, correspondence is sent by the IRG informing the customer. If the IRG determines an inquiry is eligible for a claim, the Sender will receive an email that the inquiry has been "Claim Sent for Review".

STL Accounting Services is notified via eCRS Reporting that the Inquiry is now a claim. They will proceed with processing the claim.

Inquiry by Phone

Inquiry Submitted through Customer Care Center

If a customer calls the Customer Care Center (800-222-1811), the case is entered into eCRS during the call. (by a track & confirm agent)

Once the International Research Group (IRG) receives the inquiry (via eCRS Reporting), they will begin the inquiry process of communicating with the destination post.

- a) Based upon the investigation results, if the item is found to be ineligible, correspondence is sent by the IRG informing the customer.
- b) If IRG determines an inquiry is eligible for a claim, a claim packet is sent to the customer with instructions for completing the PS Form 2855 (International Claim for Indemnity), and sending it, along with supporting documentation to:

St. Louis Accounting Services
International Accounting Services
PO Box 80146
St. Louis MO 63180-0146

- c) The claim is not processed until it is received by STL Accounting Services.

17-4.2.2 **Customer Claims for Damaged, Rifled, or Missing**

International Articles

If a damaged article is in a foreign country, the customer can initiate an International Inquiry Online at <https://www.usps.com/help/international-claims.htm>, the customer must be the U.S. sender and a registered usps.com account holder — U.S. senders without a registered usps.com account must create an account at the beginning of the online inquiry process. Customers can call the Customer Care Center at 800-222-1811 if they are unable to file online.

Customers who receive a damaged article or one that has missing contents from a foreign country, except from Canada, or items mailed from the United States, and has been returned to sender damaged, must take the item to any Post Office immediately for inspection. The local post office is obligated to inspect the package for damage and fill out PS Form 2856, Damage Report of Insured Article and Contents (For USPS Internal Use Only. The local post office must follow the instructions at the bottom of PS Form 2856, and submit the completed form either by fax or by mail, as noted below

Fax or Mail the [PS Form 2856, Damage Report of Insured Parcel and Contents](#) to :

Fax: 651-306-6165

INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH GROUP
UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE
PO BOX 512318
LOS ANGELES CA 90051-0318

The inquiry will be created by an IRG agent once the damage report is received.

Customers who receive a damaged article or one that has missing contents originating from Canada must contact the Canadian sender and instruct them to file a claim with Canada Post.

In some European countries, damaged claims are payable to the sender only

(a waiver of rights is not allowed) and Priority Mail Express I claims do not require a Refunds, Exchanges, Claims, and Inquiries PS Form 2856). All other damaged claims are payable to the addressee (unless they waive rights to payment).

For more information, go to <https://www.usps.com/help/claims.htm>

For detailed instructions on assisting customers who are filing an international claim for damage, rifling, or missing international articles, refer to Handbook F-101, *Field Accounting Procedures*, section 20-2.3.

17-4.2.3 International Claims Adjudication Process

If the IRG determines that the customer inquiry qualifies as a claim, the customer will be sent a claim packet, which includes PS Form 2855, along with instructions. The customer must complete the form and attach evidence of mailing, evidence of value, and any other documentation requested to support the claim and send it to the following address:

USPS INTERNATIONAL CLAIMS
ACCOUNTING SERVICES
PO BOX 80146
ST LOUIS MO 63180-0146

All claims for International articles are adjudicated by Accounting Services regardless of the amount of the claim.

Supporting documentation for an international claim includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- a. **Evidence of mailing.** If the article was mailed from the United States, the original mailing receipt is evidence of mailing. If the article was mailed in another country, the original mailing receipt, customs label, wrapper (if appropriate), or any other markings on the mailing container that indicate how it was sent is also evidence of mailing.
- b. **Evidence of value.** The dated sales receipt, dated invoice, or statement of value from a reputable dealer is evidence of value. (A statement of value from the customer is also accepted but indemnity is limited to \$100.) Paid repair bills (if the claim is for partial damage), estimates of repair costs, or appraisals from a reputable dealer are also evidence of value. Repair costs may not exceed the original purchase price.
- c. **Return to Sender articles that do not include a reason for return or were returned in error.** The original wrapper, if reasonable, may be required. (An envelope, a cardboard box top, or piece of cloth is reasonable.) However, if a customer mails the article in a wooden box, it is not reasonable to return the box as the wrapper. In this situation, the customer should submit a copy of the wrapper and retain the wooden box until the claim has been resolved.

If an inquiry does not qualify to become a claim, the IRG sends a letter to the customer with the results of the inquiry investigation.

17-5 Notice 4314-C, We Want to Know

Notice 4314-C, *We Want to Know*, replaces PS Form 4314-C, *Consumer Service Card*, and promotes the following different immediate methods for customers to contact the Postal Service:

- a. Speaking to our postmaster/management staff.
- b. Calling 800-ASK-USPS (800-275-8777).
- c. Visiting www.usps.com.

Ensure that Notice 4314-C is stocked in all Post Offices and make the notice available to customers upon request. Resolve all person-to-person and telephone contacts within 14 calendar days.

17-6 Call Center Program

The Postal Service's toll-free customer service telephone number is 800-ASK-USPS (800-275-8777).

Complaints, service issues, redelivery, and vacation hold mail requests are electronically referred to local Post Offices through the MyPostOffice (MyPO). This is an electronic transfer of information through the Internet to the Post Office from the call center agent. The local Post Office must download the MyPO information by 9 a.m. each morning and again in the afternoon so that customer requests for these services are handled in a timely manner.

17-7 Mail Fraud

If customers are having trouble with a mail order company or suspect that they have been the victim of fraud, instruct them to contact the Postal Inspection Service or complete PS Form 8165, *Mail Fraud Report*, available at all Post Offices. The customer should return the completed form to the local Post Office or send to the following address:

ATTN: MAIL FRAUD
CRIMINAL INVESTIGATIONS SERVICE CENTER
433 W HARRISON STREET, RM 3255
CHICAGO IL 60699-3255

17-8 Unwanted Mail

Certain unsolicited or undesirable mail is prohibited from the mailstream, including obscene materials, violence-inciting materials, and some types of mail relating to lotteries.

17-8.1 **Sexually Oriented Mail**

Section 3010 of Title 39 U.S.C. gives people a way to protect themselves and their minor children from receiving unsolicited sexually oriented advertisements through the mail. Customers may invoke the protection as follows:

- a. Completing PS Form 1500, *Application for Listing and/or Prohibitory Order*.
- b. Filing the form with any postmaster or designated Postal Service representative.

Customers may file for themselves or for their children under 19 who live with them or who are under their care, custody, or supervision. An authorized officer, agent, fiduciary, surviving spouse, or other representative may file on behalf of a corporation, firm, association, estate, or deceased or incompetent addressee.

After a customer is on the list for 30 days, any mailer who sends them unsolicited sexually oriented advertisements is subject to criminal sanctions under 39 U.S.C. 3011 and 18 U.S.C. 1735-371.

This prohibitory order remains in effect for 5 years unless the customer asks to have it removed. At the end of 5 years, customers must file again to have the names reinstated.

17-8.2 **Unsolicited Mail**

Federal law prohibits the shipment of unordered merchandise. Such a practice may constitute an unfair trade practice. Merchandise mailed in violation of the U.S. Code may be treated as a gift by the recipient without any obligation to the sender. The laws governing this practice are enforced by the Federal Trade Commission.

17-8.3 **Direct Marketing (Remove Name)**

Some consumers would like to receive less advertising mail at home. Mail Preference Service, a service of the Direct Marketing Association, helps decrease the amount of national nonprofit or commercial mail customers receive. To register with the name removal file, customers should write to the following:

MAIL PREFERENCE SERVICE
DIRECT MARKETING ASSOCIATION
PO BOX 9008
FARMINGDALE NY 11735-9008

17-9 Mail Recovery Centers

The Mail Recovery Center (MRC) is located in Atlanta, Georgia. MRC is responsible for the final disposition of undeliverable First-Class Mail items, packages, and accountable mail items; and for protecting the privacy of the mail.

For more information on the MRC, visit: http://blue.usps.gov/supplymanagement/am_mrc_welcome.htm.

17-9.1 **First-Class Mail**

Send all First-Class Mail items (except postcards and postal cards), single-piece-rate Standard Mail items, and Package Services mail that cannot be forwarded or returned, to the MRC for disposition. Send dead letters daily and dead parcels weekly.

17-9.2 **Priority Mail Express**

Send Priority Mail Express articles that cannot be forwarded or returned during the specified holding period to the area MRC in a Priority Mail Express pouch.

17-9.3 **Postcards and Postal Cards**

Dispose of postcards and postal cards without a return address if the Post Office can shred or destroy them completely. If not, forward them to the area MRC.

11 Financial Accountabilities

11-1 Field Managers

Field unit managers have the following responsibilities:

- a. Comply with the financial procedures defined in Handbook F-101, *Field Accounting Procedures (FAP)*, which includes proper reporting of all financial transactions, monitoring inventory levels, remitting funds in excess of authorized reserves, and the overall monitoring of field unit operations.
- b. Track items and collect, when appropriate, any money owed to the Postal Service.
- c. Maintain adequate security for all accountable items.
- d. Ensure that all required counts are performed, including stamp stock credits, cash credits, unit reserve stock, lobby sales stock, and retail floor stock. Field unit managers must comply with count requirements which include completing them within the required time frames, documenting the results, and promptly reporting and resolving any noted discrepancies.

Subchapter 2-4 of Handbook F-101 describes field unit manager responsibilities by daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly, and semiannually periods.

11-2 Security

11-2.1 **Employee Responsibility**

The field unit manager or supervisor must provide adequate security for all accountable items. Accountable items include postal funds, stamp stock, blank money order stock, philatelic products, accountable receipts, and imprinters.

The field unit manager or supervisor may delegate responsibility for accountable items to other field unit employees under the supervision of the field unit manager.

In addition, field unit managers have the following responsibilities:

- a. Determine how each field unit will best use its available security equipment for protecting accountable items.
- b. Advise the next level of management, in writing, of security equipment inadequacy or malfunction.

- c. Periodically examine equipment that is used to protect stock or funds to confirm proper working order.
- d. Ensure that equipment purchases are consistent with the criteria documented in Handbook AS-701, *Material Management*.

11-2.2 Priority Levels

Field unit managers must ensure that employees provide the appropriate level of security for accountable items. Priority one items require the highest level of security, while priority three items require the lowest level.

[Exhibit 11-2.2](#) lists accountable items by their priority level.

Exhibit 11-2.2

Accountable Items by Priority

Priority	Accountable Item
1	Postal funds (e.g., cash, checks, and money orders), credit and debit card receipts, and blank money order forms.
2	Postage stamps, international reply coupons, migratory bird hunting and conservation stamps (e.g., bird stamps), and philatelic products.
3	Stamped envelopes stamped postal cards, money order imprinters, and nonsaleable stamp stock.
<u>4</u>	<u>USPS-related merchandise, packaging products, and official licensed retail products.</u>

11-2.3 Equipment

The following types of equipment must be used to secure accountable items (in order of priority use):

- a. Burglar-resistant chests in fireproof safes or security containers located in walk-in vaults.
- b. Postal Service standard vaults or security containers.
- c. Security chests or burglar-resistant chest portion of fireproof safes.
- d. Fireproof safes or vaults ~~not~~ built to Postal Service standards.
- e. Lockable metal cabinets and file drawers.

Note: The equipment used to secure accountable items will vary among field units due to equipment availability.

11-3 PS Form 1412, Daily Financial Report

All postal retail unit (PRUs), regardless of size or revenue, must report their financial activity to Accounting Services electronically at the close of each business day. PS Form 1412, *Daily Financial Report*, provides individual retail associates (RAs) and PRUs with a uniform method to report financial transactions.

PS Form 1412 is available in both manual and automated ~~and nonautomated~~ types as described in [Exhibit 11-3](#).

Exhibit 11-3
PS Form 1412

Type of Form	Description
Manual Nonautomated E1412 PS Form 1412	④ Covers the scope of financial transactions for individual RAs and postal retail units (PRUs). ④ Provides a running record of receipt controls of all retail and philatelic sales, money order transactions, stamp accountability, and cash retained.
Automated PS Form 1412	④ Consists of paper tapes and reports provided by approved mechanical devices <u>such as e1412 and Retail Systems Software (RSS) systems.</u> (RSS). ④ Records all financial transactions made by RAs.

RAs must prepare PS Form 1412 whenever financial transactions are performed at the PRU. RAs must be identified by name or clerk number on all PS Form 1412 supporting documents (e.g., tapes, lists, and receipts).

11-4 Self Service Kiosks

11-4.1 Overview

A self-service kiosk (SSK) that allows the customer to perform some basic transactions that are conducted at the full-service retail counter. A SSK allows customers to do the following:

- a. ~~a. Weigh~~ weigh and mail ~~l~~ letters, flats and parcels
- b. ~~b.~~ Look up ZIP Codes.
- c. ~~e.~~ Purchase First-Class Mail stamps.
- ~~d.~~ Pay PO Box rents
- d. Accept pre-paid packages and provide receipt

~~Accept pre-paid packages and provide receipt~~

-

SSKs do not accept cash. Payment types are limited to credit and debit cards. The SSK prints out a receipt for the customer for each transaction.

The daily closeout process is automated and takes place at a scheduled time each evening, during off-peak hours. A PS Form 1412 is created daily and transmitted via the network to the Enterprise Data Warehouse (EDW) and postal accounting systems. Each APC-SSK is assigned a unique 10-digit unit finance number (UFN) for reporting purposes.

11-4.2 Machine Service Manual

The *SSK Machine Service Manual* is available on the Delivery and Retail Web site. Go to: <https://blue.usps.gov/retail/equipment/welcome.htm>.

Click on the ~~Self Service~~Self-Service Kiosk tab. Under, "click on RSS ~~SSK Machine Service Manual~~ link.

11-4.3 **Reports**

A hard copy of the SSK_PS Form 1412 is not generated automatically. When needed, an SSK PS Form 1412 report can be found in EDW through the following path: Accounting > Shared Reports > SAFR > Store -Revenue Reports > 1412 by Site by Day.

11-5 Self-Service Postal Centers (SOPO)

The Self-Service Only Post Office (SOPO) represents a cost-effective access channel to meet the demand for Postal access in emerging communities, or to boost convenience in established locales. The SOPO is an unmanned location providing convenience for package induction, stamp purchases, PO Box rental and mailing and shipping needs. The Self-Service Only locations address the needs of customers seeking a better digital experience.

11-6 Postage Products

11-6.1 Overview

Postage products include a variety of postage stamps such as semi postal stamps, commercial precanceled stamps, migratory bird stamps, philatelic stamps, and regular postage stamps. These products are sold at PRUs, contract postal units (CPUs), stamp vending machines, and SSKs.

Postage products are accountable items that must be protected at all times by providing adequate physical security.

11-6.2 Revenue Account Identifier Codes

RAs must record the sale of postage products in the corresponding revenue account identifier code (AIC) as indicated in the [Exhibit 11-6.2](#).

Exhibit 11-6.2

Product Revenue Account Identifier Codes

Revenue AICs	Master Title	Controls
007	Forever Stamp Sales — Window Services at RSS, and e1412	Postage stamps are accountable items, which must be controlled as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ <input type="checkbox"/> Provide security. ■ <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Record sales. ■ <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Maintain records of stamp stock activities.
011	Forever Stamp Sales — by Internet, Mail and Phone	
<u>014</u>	<u>Forever Stamp Sales — SSK</u>	
<u>015</u> 014	<u>Forever Stamp Sales — Global</u> Forever Stamp Sales — SSK	
<u>016</u>	<u>Forever Envelop Sales</u>	
<u>017</u>	<u>Forever Stamp Card Sales</u>	
<u>018</u>	<u>Forever Philatelic Postage</u>	
083	Local Commemorative Envelopes	
084	Breast Cancer Stamp Sales	
086	Precanceled Stamps	
090	Postage Stock Sales	
091	Bird Stamp Sales	
092	Philatelic Product Sales	
094	Stamp By Mail, Internet, and Phone	

096

Vending Equipment Postage Sales

11-7 Retail Products

Retail products include a variety of retail items such as Ready Post mailing products and other retail products sold at PRUs.

11-7.1 Revenue Account Identifier Codes

[Exhibit 11-7.1](#) lists the AICs in which to record the sale of packaging products and describes how to control these products.

Exhibit 11-7.1

Product Revenue Account Identifier Codes

Revenue AICs	Master Title	Controls
<u>093</u>	<u>Packaging Product Sales</u>	<u>Packaging products are accountable items, that must be controlled as follows:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ <u>Provide security.</u>
<u>098</u>	<u>Postal-Related Merchandise Sales</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ <u>Record sales.</u>▪ <u>Maintain records for packaging product activities.</u>
<u>231</u>	<u>Official Licensed Retail Products</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ <u>Physically count packaging products (AIC 093) each quarter.</u>

11-8 Passports

Postal Service Headquarters, coordinating with the Department of State Headquarters, establishes the postal operational, accounting, and other procedures for passport application acceptance at designated Post Offices nationwide.

Postmasters and station managers select and designate employees to provide passport service.

PS Form 5659, *Daily Passport Application (DS-11) Transmittal*, is the log of individual passport application activity for both the Department of State and the U.S. Postal Service.

See the *Administrative Support Manual*, part 422, for detailed policy and procedures related to passports.

Refer to Handbook F-101, [part-chapter 7-4.2](#), for accounting for passport fees.

11-9 Financial Differences: AICs 247 and 647

PRUs must use the following two AICs to report adjustments related to banking and miscellaneous items:

- a. AIC 247, Financial Differences Overage.
- b. AIC 647, Financial Differences Shortage.

Adjustments may also be credited or debited by Accounting Services for financial adjustments related to a unit's banking, transmitted PS Form 1412 transactions, money orders, and stock ledger discrepancies.

Accounting Services issues expenses to PRUs as a result of reconciling the following financial activities:

- a. Sales audit expenses.
- b. Reconciliation exceptions (e.g., banking, credit and debit cards, change funds, and Sure Money).
- c. Stamp stock shipment exceptions (stock ledger).
- d. Money order reconciliation exceptions.

A negative amount (appears in parentheses) in General Ledger (GL) 56203 on the Financial Performance Report (FPR) Line 44 Miscellaneous Expenses is a credit or reduction in expense. A positive amount is a debit or increase in expense.

To identify the source of individual AIC 247 and AIC 647 expenses, access the following: Accounting Data Mart (ADM) report: Accounting>Shared Reports>Postmaster Folder>FPR Net Financial Differences (AIC 247/647) — Line Detail.

To review, identify, or research AIC 247 and AIC 647 expenses, use the reports in the Postmaster folder in the ADM.

Refer to Handbook F-101, chapter 8, for detailed procedures for creating, documenting, monitoring, and offsetting AIC 247/647 expenses.

11-10 Banking

The Postal Service conducts business in only U.S. currency (includes coins). Therefore, field unit employees must not accept any foreign currencies as payment. Postal Service employees must safely control U.S. currency, customer checks, and money orders as follows:

- a. Do not loan, withdraw, or deposit postal funds in an unauthorized bank account.
- b. Do not exchange U.S. currency with other types of funds.
- c. Do not use postal funds for personal purposes.
- d. Safeguard postal funds from the public and conceal them from view.
- e. When postal funds are not continuously observed, maintain funds in a locked receptacle.
- f. Deposit all Postal Service funds to a Postal Service relationship bank account established by Corporate Treasury. (See Handbook F-3, *Treasury Management*.)
- g. Refer to Handbook F-101, [part-chapter 9-1.2](#), for detailed banking procedures for PRUs.

11-11 Credit and Debit Cards

~~11-11.1~~ ~~11-11.1~~ Credit Cards

The Postal Service accepts the following credit cards for the purchase of most Postal Service products and services as detailed in this section:

- a. American Express (AMEX).
- b. Carte Blanche.
- c. Diners Club.
- d. Discover.
- e. JCB.
- f. MasterCard.
- g. Visa.
- h. China Union Pay.
- i. PIN Debit (not available for Special Event Terminals).
- j. Samsung Pay (available only at Full Window Service).
- k. All contactless phone/wallets/wearables (Only Non-POS locations only) (Available for FWS, SSK February 2022)

Visa

MasterCard

- ~~American Express (AMEX).~~
- ~~Carte Blanche~~Discover.
- ~~Diners Club.~~
- ~~Discover.~~
- ~~JCB/~~Carte Blanche.

~~MasterCard~~

~~Visa.~~

~~China Union Pay.~~

~~PIN Debit (not available for Special Event Terminals).~~

~~j. Samsung Pay (available only at Full Window Service).~~

Note: Credit and debit card terminals will not accept any unauthorized card. All of the above cards must be signed to be accepted. All the above cards must be signed to be accepted.

Note: This is only for Mag-stripe transaction and not for EMV cardsReference Handbook F-101, chapters 9.2.5 and 9.2.6 for signature requirements for credit cards.

Credit cards are not accepted for payment for the following:

~~a. Trust fund deposits at the PRU including but not limited to:~~

~~a.~~

- ~~▪ USPS Corporate accounts-PostalOne!~~
- ~~▪ PermitAccounts~~
- ~~▪ Permit Imprint accounts.~~
- ~~▪ Periodicals accounts.~~
- ~~▪ Business Reply Mail and Postage Due accounts.~~

~~b. Precanceled stamps.~~

~~c. Money orders (principal amount).~~

~~d. Payment for periodicals or mailings.~~

~~e. Collect on Delivery (COD) funds.~~

~~f. Money by wire (principal amount).~~

~~g. Payment for an employee debt.-~~

~~h. Passport application fees payable to the U.S. Department of State.-~~

~~i. Gift cards.-~~

~~:~~

Note: Customers may order stamps and make purchases with American Express, Discover, MasterCard, and Visa credit cards by calling 800-STAMP-24 (800-782-6724) or when purchasing products at www.usps.com

Acceptance Procedures

Fallback Procedures:

If an EMV chip card cannot be read by terminal three (3)(3) separate times, the terminal will automatically fall back to a Mag-Stripe transaction.

The procedure for accepting credit cards is as follows:

~~—The customer inserts [chip card] /swipes [magstripe] the card into the terminal and follows the prompts. If the chip cannot be read three times then, the customer is prompted to swipe the chip card through the magnetic card reader and follow the prompts. If the credit card is approved, a receipt will print. [Note: In FWS, the customer has an option to select 1. Print receipt 2. Email Receipt 3. Print and Email Receipt.]~~

~~—credit cards is as follows:-~~

~~a. The SSA swipes the credit card through the magnetic card reader and follows the prompts. If the credit card is approved, a receipt will print.-~~

~~a. **Note:** After a credit card is swiped three times, the terminal will prompt for a manual entry of the embossed credit card number.-~~

~~b. For transactions of more than \$25.00, the customer signs the system-generated receipt. **Note:** Due to Covid-19, this feature has been disabled and could be brought back at any time.-~~

~~c. Cash Management~~

~~b. For transactions of more than \$25.00, the customer signs the system-generated receipt. Cash Management~~

Handbook F-101, *Draft 12*

For these credit cards...	The signature on the receipt must match...
American Express, Carte Blanche, China Union Pay , Diners Club, Discover Card, and MasterCard.	the signature on the back of the credit card and the name embossed on the front of the credit card.
Visa and JCB.	the signature on the back of the credit card.

*****Note only Magstripe transactions need to be verified.*****

~~**Note:** The POS system and Verifone Tranz 380 print credit card receipts for transactions of \$25.00 or less without a signature line.~~

c. SSAs may not accept unsigned credit cards, if a customer presents an unsigned credit card, the SSA may accept the credit card for payment as follows: **(Note: only for Magstripe transactions only)**

- (1) The customer must sign the back of the credit card.
- (2) The customer must provide two forms of identification — one must be a photo ID.
- (3) The signature must match identification.
Note: Credit cards with the words “See ID” or containing two signatures on the signature panel may not be accepted (applies to both personal and business credit cards).

In addition, SSAs may accept business credit cards in accordance with the following requirements:

- ~~• The card must be signed, and the signature must be that of the authorized user.~~
- The card may or may not have an individual name embossed on front along with a business name.
- ~~• Each authorized user within a business or company must have his or her own credit card.~~

~~Letters of authorization from businesses allowing multiple users for one credit card are not allowed.~~

d. The SSA records credit card transactions in AIC 762, *Credit Cards Remitted*, on PS Form 1412.

Note: Credit card receipts must be kept in a separate and secure location. They should be kept secure enough that only those with an official “need to know” have access to them.

11-11.2

PIN-based Debit Cards

SSAs may accept the following PIN-based debit cards for payment for all postal products and services:

- ACCEL.
- Armed Forces Financial Network.
- ATH.
- Culiance (CU24)
- China Union Pay
- Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) cards.
- Interlink/PAVD.
- Maestro.
- NYCE.
- Pulse
- Shazam.
- STAR
- ~~Armed Forces Financial Network.~~
- ~~NYCE.~~
- ~~Interlink.~~
- ~~Pulse PAY.~~
- ~~Cash Union 24.~~
- ~~Maestro.~~
- ~~Quest.~~
- ~~Alaska Option.~~

- ~~ATH.~~
- ~~Jeanie.~~
- ~~STAR SYSTEMS.~~
- ~~ACCEL.~~
- ~~Shazam.~~
- ~~Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) cards.~~

Any changes to the list of accepted PIN-based debit cards will be announced in the *Postal Bulletin*.

If the customer presents a debit card that is not authorized, the terminal will not approve the transaction.

The procedure for SSAs ~~accepting~~accepting PIN-based debit cards is as follows:-

In FWS units [Large Post Offices], the RA selects the payment options on the POS screen, the customer will insert, swipe, or tap the debit card on the CDU (Customer Display Unit) [Note: tap will be available with new FWS terminals]. In non-POS units [Small Post Offices], the customer will insert, swipe, or tap the card the debit card on the CDU. In non-POS units, press the six (6) key on the Tranz 380. In PO units, select debit card when prompted on the POS screen.

A. _____

a. The customer is prompted to enter their personal identification number (PIN) on the CDU. Swipe the debit card through the magnetic card reader and follow the prompts.

B. _____

a. _____

c. Key in the amount of the purchase transaction.

C. When the system prompts "Cash back," ask the customer if he or she would like cash back. [Note: The CDU displays the cashback amount (set amounts) to be selected by the customer]

a. Cash back is only offered if cash is available in draw.

b. Cash back can only be given to customers making a purchase.

c. Cash retained limits must not be increased.

d. When the system prompts "Cash back," ask the customer if he or she would like cash back.

- Cash back is only offered if cash is available.

- Cash back can only be given to customers making a purchase.

- Cash retained limits must not be increased.

The customer selects the amount of cash back requested, if applicable. Cash back amounts must be in increments of \$10.00 up to a maximum of \$50.00. Key in the amount of cash back requested, if applicable. Cash back amounts must be in increments of \$10.00 up to a maximum of \$50.00.

f. Ask the customer to enter their personal identification number (PIN) using the PIN pad.

gD. If approved, the magnetic card reader will print a Post Office and a customer receipt will be printed. Receipts will show the amount purchased, the cash back amount, and the grand total. [Note: In FWS, the customer has an option to select 1. Print receipt 2. Email Receipt 3. Print and Email Receipt.] and then print a customer receipt. Receipts will show the amount purchased, the cash back amount, and the grand total.

hE. Give the customer receipt to the customer.

iF. Record PIN-based debit card transactions in AIC 772, *Debit Cards Remitted*, on PS Form 1412.

Note: PIN-based debit card receipts must be kept in a separate and secure location. They should be kept secure enough that only those with an official "need to know" have access to them.

11-12 Checks

11-12.1 Check Acceptance

Employees may accept personal checks, bank checks, government agency checks, business checks, traveler's checks, and American Express (AMEX) gift checks for customer transactions when presented with a valid photo-bearing ID as follows:

a. a. Checks are accepted for all postal products, except money order and Sure Money transactions.

Note: U.S. Treasury checks, traveler's checks, and AMEX gift checks are acceptable for the purchase of postal money orders.

- b. Customer checks must be made payable to "U.S. Postal Service" or "Postmaster."
- c. Traveler's checks and AMEX gift checks are accepted only when at least 50 percent of the face value is used to purchase Postal Service products or services.
- d. Checks may be accepted for payment of a Collect on Delivery (COD) item provided the check is made payable to the sender.
- e. Checks that have been mailed in for payments must be endorsed "by mail" on the face.

11-12.2

11-12.2 Checks Prohibited for Cashing

Do not cash the following types of checks:

- a. Checks that appear altered.
- b. Checks from a third party.
- c. Checks for anyone other than the payee(s) named on the face.
- d. Checks for which the signature on the ID does not match the signature on the check.
- e. Checks for more than the amount imprinted as a limit on the face of the document.
- f. Checks payable to a business, an organization, society, institution, government agency, corporation (LLC or others), or partnership. These items must be deposited or negotiated at their bank or financial institution.
- g. Checks issued by an employee.

Refer to Handbook F-101, subchapter 9-3, for detailed procedures for accepting and cashing checks.

Checks Prohibited for Cashing

~~Do not cash the following types of checks:~~

- ~~a. Checks that appear altered.~~
- ~~b. Checks from a third party.~~
- ~~c. Checks for anyone other than the payee(s) named on the face.~~

- ~~d. Checks for which the signature on the ID does not match the signature on the check.~~
 - ~~e. Checks for more than the amount imprinted as a limit on the face of the document.~~
 - ~~f. Checks payable to a business, an organization, society, institution, government agency, corporation (LLC or others), or partnership. These items must be deposited or negotiated at their bank or financial institution.~~
 - ~~g. Checks issued by an employee.~~
- ~~Refer to Handbook F-101, subchapter 9-3, for detailed procedures for accepting and cashing checks.~~

11-12.3 **Returned Customer Checks and Bad Check List**

Returned checks are customer checks returned from Postal Service bank accounts. Returned checks are debited to a service wide expense account and Accounting Services handles check collection and resolution.

Field unit employees must not accept payment from the customer for returned checks that have been placed for collection.

All funds received as a result of check collection attempts, for these checks, are credited to a service wide expense account.

Refer to Handbook F-101, part 9-3.5, for the handling of returned checks.

Accounting Services generates a national bad check list. The list is sorted by area and forwarded to each district finance manager (DFM) or designee for distribution within their district. (

For RSS PRUs, this information is uploaded into the RSS system).

Accounting Services removes customers from the bad check list once their debt is paid. However, local management may continue to keep a customer on the bad check list, at their discretion, by manually adding it to the list received from Accounting Services.

11-13 Domestic and International Money Orders

Postal money orders can only be purchased using the following payment methods:

- a. U.S. currency and coins.
- b. U.S. Treasury checks.
- c. Traveler's checks payable in U.S. dollars. *
- d. American Express gift checks payable in U.S. dollars. *
- e. Pin-based debit cards.

* **Note:** Traveler's checks and American Express gift checks are accepted only when at least 50 percent of the face value is used to purchase postal products and services.

The maximum amount of any single domestic money order is \$1,000.

~~Customers who wish to purchase postal money orders, Sure Money, or stored value cards that total \$3,000 or more during the same business day~~

~~_____ must complete a PS Form 8105-A, Funds Transaction Report (FTR). Financial Accountabilities~~

To comply with the Bank Secrecy Act, customers must complete a PS Form 8105-A and present valid identification as follows:

~~_____ a. _____ For all sales of money orders and Sure Money transactions totaling~~

a. For all sales of money orders, gift cards and Sure Money transactions totaling \$3,000 or more to the same customer in the same day. Fees charged for transactions do not count toward the \$3,000 limit. Separate transactions to one customer over the course of one day count toward the \$3,000 filing threshold.

~~b. _____ When cashing money orders that total more than \$10,000 per day, per customer,~~

~~use a PS Form 8105-B, Suspicious Transaction Report (STR) to report any potentially suspicious activity and complete the form as soon as possible after the suspicious transaction has ended.~~

To report any potentially suspicious activity involving the purchase or cashing of a postal financial instrument, use a PS Form 8105-B, Suspicious Transaction Report (STR) and complete the form as soon as possible after the suspicious transaction has ended.

Federal law prohibits notifying the customer that a suspicious report is being completed; therefore, RAs must complete the PS Form 8105-B after the customer leaves the counter line.

Submitting PS Forms 8105-A and PS Forms 8105-B

RSS and Post Offices and enhanced-e1412 Post Offices that are using the new money order NCR printers must submit PS Forms 8105-A and PS Forms 8105-B electronically. If the electronic form was submitted successfully, the Post Offices should not mail a paper copy of the PS Form 8105-A or PS Form-B to the BSA office.

There are two instances when an automated Post Office should mail a paper form.

- If the network is down and the form cannot be submitted electronically -or if the RA does not receive an electronic confirmation that the online form was successfully submitted. In these instances, a paper form must be mailed to address on the front of the form.
- When an RA wants to add comments to a PS Form 8105-B being submitted electronically, in order to provide additional information about a suspicious transaction. The additional information must be submitted on a paper form and mailed to the address on the front of the form.

Manual Post Offices that do not have the ability to submit PS Forms 8105-A and PS Forms 8105-B electronically must mail the forms to the address on the front of the form the same day the transaction occurs.

Use the most current edition of PS Forms 8105-A and 8105-B. Forms may be ordered from the Material Distribution Center.

If submitting a paper form, PRUs must log the PS Form(s) 8105-A before submitting. A sample tracking log is available on the Corporate Treasury's Web site. Go to: [http:// blue.usps.gov/corptreasury/](http://blue.usps.gov/corptreasury/). Click on *Bank Secrecy Act Compliance*, then click on *BSA Forms Links*.

Submit PS Forms 8105-A and 8105-B to the address on the front of the form the same day that the form is completed. Use the most current edition of PS Forms 8105-A and 8105-B. Forms may be ordered from the Material Distribution Center.

PRUs must log PS Form(s) 8105-A before submitting. A sample tracking log is available on the Corporate Treasury's Web site. Go to: [http:// blue.usps.gov/corptreasury/](http://blue.usps.gov/corptreasury/). Click on *Bank Secrecy Act Compliance*, then click on *BSA Forms Links*.

11-14 Cashing Domestic and International Money Orders

11-14.1 All Postal Money Orders

PRU employees must cash domestic and international money orders in accordance with the following procedures as well as in accordance with any additional specific instructions from the postmaster or district:

- a. Verify that the money order is not on the Missing, Lost, or Stolen list in the current *Postal Bulletin*.
- b. Cash the money order only in the exact amount imprinted at time of issue, up to the authorized maximum amount. Use of a title (e.g., Mr. and Ms.) is not required when endorsing a money order. A money order made payable to more than one person will be cashed for either person if the conjunction "or" is used. If no conjunction is used, all persons named on the face of the item must sign and provide ID as required.
- c. Verify that the money order is authentic (see Notice 299, *Security Features of U.S. Postal Service Money Orders*). Check money order security features for signs of alteration, counterfeit, or fraud before cashing.

If necessary, call the Money Order Verification System (866-459-7822) as an additional tool to validate issuance of a postal money order.

Refer to Handbook F-101, subchapter 10-2, for more information on requirements and procedures for cashing postal money orders.

11-14.2 Money Order Security Features

To determine if a money order is authentic, hold the money order up to the light and look for the following security features:

- a. — Ben Franklin images (watermarks) repeated on the left side (top to bottom).
- b. — Watermarks are in the paper and will appear when viewing from the front or back of the money order when held up to the light.
- c. — A dark security thread running (top to bottom) to the right of the Ben Franklin watermark with tiny letters “USPS” facing backward and forward.

If either of these security features is not present when the money order is held up to the light, the postal money order is fraudulent. Also, be aware of the following potential areas for fraud:

- a. — Denominations are indicated on two locations and must be identical.
- Look for alterations in one or both places.
- b. — Discoloration of the denomination amounts indicates erasure (fraudulent).
- c. — Maximum value for domestic postal money orders is \$1,000.

Note: RAs can call the Money Order Verification System as a tool to validate issuance of a postal money order. For more information, see Notice 299.

11-14.3 Money Order Verification System

The Money Order Verification System is an interactive voice response (IVR) system for deterring fraud. The IVR system can assist PRUs and financial institutions when validating postal money orders.

To inquire on the validity of a recently issued money order, do the following:

- a. 1. — Call the Money Order Verification System at 866-459-7822.
- a.
- b. 2. — Press 1 for Money Order Verification.
- b.
- c. 3. — Enter the following information when prompted:
 - ④ 11-digit money order serial number.
 - ④ Exact dollar amount of the money order.
 - ④ Issue ID number.

If the money order has been issued in the last 90 days and is at least 48 hours old, the IVR should reply that there has been a “match” if the money order is a valid issue.

There are instances where the issuing unit’s PS Form 1412, *Daily Financial Report*, data has not updated in the system in a timely manner. This will result in a nonmatch reply from the IVR system.

The IVR system is to serve only as an additional tool to help prevent fraud.

See the “Money Order Verification System Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)” at: <http://blue.usps.gov/accounting/pdf/MoneyOrderIVRFAQs.pdf>.

Refer to Handbook F-101, subchapter 10-3, for procedures for money order inquiries and replacements.

11-15 Accountable Paper

11-15.1 Accountable Paper Definitions

Accountable paper is defined as:

- a. — Postage stock.
- b. — Stamped papers.
- c. — Nonpostal stamps.
- d. — Philatelic products.
- e. — Money order stock.

Postage stock is defined as:

- a. — Postage stamps.
- b. — Semi postal stamps.

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Stamped envelopes and postal cards (includesinclude regular, special, commemorative, and penalty mail issues).

Nonpostal stamps are migratory bird hunting and conservation stamps sold for the Department of the Interior.

Philatelic products are defined as:

- a. — Mint sets.
- b. — Stamp collecting kits.
- c. — Gift packs.
- d. — Other products in the items 8000–9999 series.

11-15.2 Accountable Paper Terms

The following accountable paper terms will help Postal Service employees understand the accountable paper procedures in this handbook.

Unit reserve:

- a. Consists of all stamps, stamped paper, and philatelic products in a PRU that has not been consigned to other accountabilities within the unit.
- b. Are in all PPRUs.
- c. Has sufficient stock to meet customer demand; however, PRUs must maintain total unit accountability within established limits (see part 11 -3.4)

■

Stamp Fulfillment Services (SFS):

- ~~a.~~ Receives and disburses stamps, stamped paper, and philatelic products.
- ~~b.~~ Provides accountable paper for all PRUs, ~~SSPCs, SSKs, and CPUs~~ and ~~VPOs~~ within its service area.
- ~~c.~~ Typically consists of a supervisor and one or more bargaining-unit employees assigned to work in or near a secure vault.

~~Stamp Fulfillment Services (SFS):~~

- ~~a.~~ ~~Receives and disburses stamps, stamped paper, and philatelic products.~~
- ~~b.~~ ~~Provides accountable paper for all PRUs, SSKs, and CPUs within its service area.~~
- ~~d.~~ Is administered by Stamp ~~Acquisition~~ and ~~Distribution Services~~ at Headquarters and serves as a centralized stamp distribution operation.

11-15.3 Responsibilities

11-15.3.1 Postmaster or Unit Manager

The postmaster or unit manager is responsible for ensuring that controls are in place for maintaining an accurate inventory for all accountable paper within the PRU. This responsibility includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- a. Providing adequate security for all accountable items.
- b. Monitoring inventory levels.
- c. Establishing and controlling segments within the PRU.
- d. Ensuring proper entry of all financial transactions.
- e. Ensuring that all required counts are performed.

11-15.3.2 Employee

All field unit employees are accountable for the following:

- a. All accountable paper issued to them as a stamp credit.
- b. All funds received from accountable paper sales until deposited as postal funds.
- c. Accurate and timely recording of all financial transactions.

All employees assigned responsibility for accountable paper are liable for losses in their accountability.

11-15.3.3 Contractor

A contractor is accountable for all accountable paper assigned to the CPU_ [and VPOs](#).

11-16 Ordering Stock SFS

PRUs order accountable paper from SFS. The SFS provides a monthly schedule for ordering.

[Refer to Handbook F-101, subchapter 11-4, for detailed procedures for ordering from the SFS.](#)

Money Order Sources

The Supply Management Asset Planning organization requisitions money order stock from an appropriate money order supplier. Money orders are shipped from the printing vendor to the MDC. Refer to Handbook, F-101, section 12-2.

[The minimum quantity of each item of stamps and stamped paper to order is published annually in the *Postal Bulletin*.](#)

~~[Refer to Handbook F-101, subchapter 11-4, for detailed procedures for ordering from the SFS.](#)~~

11-17 Receiving Stock Shipments From SFS

11-17.1 **Examining and Verifying the Shipment**

Examine and verify stock shipments as follows:

- a. Examine each shipping carton to ascertain that the address is correct, the seal is unbroken, and the contents are not damaged.
 - b. Report tampering to the U.S. Postal Inspection Service and Office of Inspector General immediately.
 - c. Count stock and verify to the computer-generated PS Form 17, Stamp Requisition/Stamp Return, with a witness.
- ~~a. Examine each shipping carton to ascertain that the address is correct, the seal is unbroken, and the contents are not damaged.~~
- ~~b. Report tampering to the U.S. Postal Inspection Service and Office of Inspector General immediately.~~
- ~~c. Count stock and verify to the computer-generated PS Form 17, Stamp Requisition/Stamp Return, with a witness.~~
- d. Sign and date the PS Form 17.
 - e. Enter the total value of the PS Form 17 as stock received even if the physical quantity is not the same.

[Exhibit 11-17.1](#) provides specific verification procedures by item.

Exhibit 11-17.1

Verification Procedure by Item

For this item:	Verify the shipment as follows:
Panes in sealed packages	Follow the instructions on the package for verifying the contents before removing the sealed film wrapper on the individual packages.
Stamp booklets	Count the number of booklets in the denomination and type described on the unit package. Do this before breaking the package seal.
Coils	Count the stamp coils to verify the shipment contains the quantity of coils, type, and denomination of stock ordered. Do this before breaking the seal.
Stamped envelopes and postal cards	Count the number of boxes or packages and the denominations of the envelopes or cards against the carton labels, and <u>labels and</u> verify against PS Form
Philatelic products	Count the number of items in open cartons. The total must agree with the quantity printed on the outside of the carton.

11-18 Returning Stock to the SDO or



11-18.1 Saleable Stock

Saleable stock that may be returned to SFS includes stamps, stamped envelopes, postal cards, and philatelic products currently on sale.

SFS must authorize the return of saleable stock before the stamp stock custodian returns it.

11-18.2 Non-saleable Stock

Nonsaleable stamp stock items and products that may be returned to SFS for destruction includes the following:

- a. Obsolete stock that is removed from sale at all locations. If recalled for destruction, consider using philatelic products for promotional purposes or as gifts to employees. Obsolete editions of the *Postal Service Guide to U.S. Stamps* can be provided for philatelic, promotional, or educational purposes. (Stamp Services publishes an annual announcement in the *Postal Bulletin* about the disposition of obsolete editions.)
- b. Defective stock including any partial packages of stamps, stamped envelopes, postal cards, and damaged stock accepted from customers as described in the *Mailing Standards of the United States Postal Service, Domestic Mail Manual (DMM), 604.9.0*.

Send stock to be destroyed to SFS only if the minimum amount has accumulated since the last shipment; [Exhibit 11-18.2](#) lists minimal amount of stock per CAG.

Exhibit 11-18.2

Minimal Amount of Stock to Be Destroyed per CAG

For CAGs...	The minimum amount is...
A–G	\$100
H	\$50
K and L	\$25

The stamp stock custodian must check the *Postal Bulletin* to know when to withdraw specific stamps and stamped paper items from sale. The schedule of returning nonsaleable stock is provided by SFS.

Prepare stock to be returned as follows:

- a. Ensure that the value is clearly marked on each item.
- b. Sort loose stamps by denomination and paste them on a letter size paper.

Note: A list of off-sale items is available on the Enterprise Data Distribution Web site. Go to: <http://edd/pls/posweb/ProdItem.Intro>.

Refer to SFS Toolkit. Go to <https://blue.usps.gov/accounting/> and click on the SFS toolkit or Handbook F-101, subchapter 11-6, for detailed procedures on accounting for returning stock.

12 Stamp Stock and Cash Accountability

12-1 Stamp Stock Assignment

Stamp stock credits and cash credits are assigned as follows:

- a. ~~Employee stamp stock credits.~~ Retail Floor Stock
- b. ~~Employee cash credits.~~
- c. Unit reserve stock.
- d. Unit cash reserve.
- e. Retail floor stock.
- f. Rural carrier consignment.
- g. Contract postal unit (CPU) credits.
- ~~h. Self Service Kiosks (SSKs)~~
- ~~i. Mobile units.~~
- ~~j. Stamps by Mail.~~

12-2 Stamp Stock Responsibility

The postmaster, manager, or supervisor is responsible for management of all stamp stock credits and cash credits assigned and must ensure the timely performance of all credit counts.

All employees with consigned credits are accountable for the value of their assigned stamp stock, cash, and money orders.

Unit reserve stock custodians are accountable for the value of their assigned stamp stock and money orders.

CPUs are accountable for the value of their assigned stamp stock, cash, and money orders.

12-3 Stamp Credits

12-3.1 **Definition**

A stamp credit is the value of the stamp stock and money orders consigned to a retail associate (RA) from the unit reserve stock at a postal retail unit (PRU).

Hold stamp credits to a reasonable multiple of the RA's weekly sales amount. A 2-week multiple is recommended. The postmaster, supervisor, or manager may adjust the value of stamp credits to be consistent with customer demand.

To maintain individual accountability, RAs must not trade or purchase stamp stock from one another employee.

In an emergency, a supervisor may authorize an RA to ship or receive stock from another RA as follows:

- a. The supervisor or RA completes a PS Form 17, *Stamp Requisition/Stamp Return*, in duplicate. Enter the names of both RAs and the amount of stamp stock on PS Form 17.
- b. The supervisor must witness and sign PS Form 17 as authorizing this transaction.
- c. The RA keeps a copy of the PS Form 17 until the next stamp credit count.

12-3.2 **Unit Reserve Stock**

The unit reserve stock custodian is accountable for the value of all items in the unit reserve stock, is responsible for managing the stamp stock inventory, and must report unit reserve stock activities.

Sales from the unit reserve stock are not allowed.

The unit reserve may be assigned to the postmaster, unit manager, or supervisor. At a finance station without a domiciled supervisor, a lead sales and services associate (LSSA) may be assigned the unit reserve. The LSSA may also be assigned a separate stock credit from which direct sales to the public are conducted. (A finance station is a postal retail unit that has three or fewer full-time RAs.)

Refer to Handbook F-101, *Field Accounting Procedures*, subchapter 13-4, for detailed procedures for conducting unit reserve stamp stock counts.

12-3.3 **Total Postal Retail Unit Stamp Accountability**

Maintain the total PRU accountability on PS Form 1412, *Daily Financial Report*. AIC 853, Stamp Accountability Closing Balance, on the unit's PS Form 1412 is a combination of all stamp accountabilities within the same unit finance number (UFN) at the PRU. This combination includes the following:

- a. Unit reserve stock.
- b. Retail floor stock.

- c. Individual stamp credits (e.g., retail associates, vending, Stamps by Mail[®], and philatelic).
- d. Lobby Sales - mPOS

12-3.4 **Stamp Credit Record Files**

The postmaster, manager, or supervisor is responsible for establishing and maintaining a stamp credit file for each employee. The file must contain the following items:

- a. PS Form 3294-P, *Cash and Stamp Stock Count and Summary*, or PS Form 3294-C, *Cash Credit Count and Summary*.
- b. PS Form 3368-P, *Accountability Examination Record*.
- c. PS Form 3369, *Consigned Credit Receipt*.
- d. PS Form 571, *Discrepancy of \$100 or More in Financial Responsibility*, if applicable.
- e. Letters of demand (LOD) for payment, if applicable.

Maintain a drawer or similar container of file folders, one for each credit, arranged in alphabetical or numerical order.

The retention period established for stamp credit file forms is not to exceed 2 years except for PS Form 3369 which is 3 years.

12-4 Individual Stamp Credit Counts

12-4.1 **Counting Requirements**

Supervisors must randomly count stamp credits maintained by bargaining unit employees at least once every 4 months.

Stamp credits maintained by non-bargaining employees must be counted by the non-bargaining employee and another employee at least once every 12 months.

Refer to Handbook F-101, subchapter 13-3, for detailed procedures on conducting stamp credit counts.

12-5 Contract Postal Unit Stamp Credit Count

The postmaster, manager, or supervisor of the host Post Office has the following responsibilities:

- a. Ensuring that CPU stamp credit counts are conducted randomly at least once every 12 months.
- b. Maintaining a separate file for CPU financial activities.

Refer to Handbook F-101, subchapter 13-7, for detailed procedures on conducting a CPU count.

12-6 Cash Credits

12-7.1 Unit Cash Reserves

PRUs may establish a unit cash reserve to supplement the needs of the unit. Use PS Form 3369 to assign the unit cash reserve to an individual who is directly accountable. When circumstances warrant, the unit cash reserve custodian may reassign all or part of the unit cash reserve using PS Form 3369. Any reassigned funds must be kept separate from other accountable credits assigned to the employee.

Report the unit cash reserve in AIC 753 on the unit's PS Form 1412. The unit cash reserve has no tolerance.

Note: CPUs may not have a cash reserve. Refer to Handbook F-101, section 13-8.1.2, for making changes to unit cash reserves.

12-7.2 Cash Retained (RSS Units Only)

RAs that are only consigned a cash credit are authorized a cash retained amount of \$100.99 (maximum amount), for which they are individually accountable. The RA documents the maximum authorized cash retained on PS Form 3369.

Individual RA cash retained amounts must be equal to AIC 753 as reported on the individual's PS Form 1412 and cannot exceed the approved amount.

12-7.3 Contract Postal Units Cash Credit

CPUs may keep \$100 or 10 percent of their stamp credit, whichever is less.

12-8 Segmented Inventory Accountability

Each unit must maintain a unit reserve stock and may have a number of different segments.

Retail Associates (RAs) As who work at window services do not have a stamp stock inventory assigned and instead work from a shared retail floor stock.

RAs who work from the retail floor stock are assigned a \$100.00 cash retained credit, for which they are individually accountable.

Other segments may require stamp stock inventory assigned as individual accountability for which they are directly accountable.

12-8.1 Segment Definitions

The following segments enable the assignment of cash or stamp stock to various individuals or roles within a unit:

- a. **Mobile Unit Credits** — Stock for use by employees assigned to operate mobile units. This credit is directly accountable to an individual.
- b. **Retail Floor Stock** — A common inventory for use by retail employees who are not directly accountable for that inventory.
- c. **Stamps by Mail (SBM)** — An inventory for use in filling stamp orders

received from customers by mail that is assigned to an individual who is directly accountable for that inventory. SBM is used where volume prohibits filling requisitions from the retail floor stock.

- d. **Special Event Credits** — Temporary credits for special events can be assigned to one of the accountable segments with stock issued directly from the unit reserve. At the completion of the event a count is ~~conducted~~conducted, and the balance is either returned to the unit reserve, prepared for destruction, or moved to the retail floor stock.
- e. **Lobby Sales** – A common inventory for use by Lobby Assistant to sell stamps on Lobby Sales segment on either the mPOS or SSK.

12-8.2 Responsibilities

Postmasters, managers, and supervisors at PRUs must comply with the procedures defined in this section. In addition, postmasters, managers, and supervisors are responsible for the following:

- a. Establishing and controlling segments within the unit.
- b. Monitoring inventory levels.
- c. Ensuring proper entry of all financial transactions.
- d. Remitting all funds in excess of authorized reserves.
- e. Monitoring operations, including count procedures.

All PRU employees are responsible for the following:

- a. Ensuring financial integrity.
- b. Maintaining security of all postal stock, funds, equipment, and facilities.
- c. Reporting all retail transactions.
- d. Providing receipts to each customer.
- e. Using the RSS cash drawers for all daily transactions as they occur.

Employees are accountable for cash, stamp stock, and money orders directly assigned to them.

12-9 Retail Floor Stock

Under the retail floor stock segmented inventory accountability (SIA) concept, two modifications are made to traditional controls:

- a. Cash is separated from stamp stock in retail credits.
- b. A shared retail floor stock replaces individual stamp credits for RAs.

The unit reserve stock custodian issues stock directly to the retail floor stock. Although no individual RA is accountable for this stock, each RA making sales from this credit is responsible for ensuring accurate reporting of the sales from the retail floor stock. RAs are also responsible for adequate protection and security of retail floor stock.

Refer to Handbook F-101, subchapter 14-2, for detailed procedures on conducting retail floor stock counts.

12-10 Other SIA Segment Counts

Counts for stamp stock credits assigned to bargaining employees must occur at least once every 4 months.

Concurrent counts must be performed for employees assigned unit reserve stamp stock and other accountable credits. This begins a new cycle for the required "count frequencies" for all assigned credits.

Blank money order stock assigned to an accountable segment employee, must be verified each time the count for that segment is performed.

Refer to Handbook F-101, subchapter 13-3, for detailed procedures on conducting individual stamp credit counts.

12 -11 Single Drawer Accountability (SDA)

Single Drawer Accountability (SDA) is a single accountability comprised of stamp stock, cash, and money orders consigned specifically to RSS or e1412. 2, 4 and 6 hour offices which are overseen by an Administrative Post Office-APO.

Stamp counts are randomly mandated by Accounting Services based on financial risk and monitoring indicators. The APO is responsible for stamp stock management in accordance with this policy.

Refer to Handbook, F-101, ~~subchapter 24, for detailed procedures on conducting individual stamp credit counts and the Accounting Services website~~, click on e1412 Toolkit, select Single Drawer Accountability (SDA):- <https://blue.usps.gov/accounting/e1412/e1412menu.htm>. Under the SDA Inventory tab, select SDA Count.

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k and confirm number.

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17 Refunds, Exchanges, Claims, and Inquiries

17-1 Service Failure Refunds

17-1.1 Priority Mail Express Refunds

If a Priority Mail Express item was not delivered or made available for the customer as guaranteed under the applicable service purchased, a refund request must be made within 30 days after the date of mailing.

Refunds for Priority Mail Express postage may be made only to the mailer or the holder of the Express Mail Corporate Account used to pay for postage. The mailer may apply for a refund online at www.usps.com/help (preferred) or must complete Part I of PS Form 3533, *Application and Voucher for Refund of Postage, Fees, and Services*, in duplicate and submit the form along with the original customer copy of Label 11-B to any Post Office.

- 17-1.2 **Signature Confirmation** Fees can be refunded for Signature Confirmation, USPS Tracking (USPS Marketing Mail only), Certified Mail and Return Receipt (hardcopy and electronic). A PS form 3533 may be submitted locally for a refund if service is not rendered. Adult and Restricted Delivery cannot be refunded online and must be refunded at the Retail Unit. Determine appropriate amount and follow normal accounting procedures as outlined in the Handbook F-101, *Field Accounting Procedures*, Chapter 21, Refunds and Exchanges.

17-2 Postage and Fee(s) Refunds

17-2.1 Unused Dated Postage Meter Indicia

Unused, dated postage meter indicia are considered for refund only if complete, legible, and valid. Authorized users must submit the request within 60 days of the date(s) shown in the indicia. The refund request must be submitted with a properly completed PS Form 3533.

Charges for processing a refund request for unused, dated meter indicia are as specified in the *Mailing Standards of the United States Postal Service*, Domestic Mail Manual (DMM).

17-2.2 Metered Postage Items Ineligible for Refund

The following metered postage items are ineligible for refunds:

- a. Loose indicia printed on labels or tape that have been stapled together or attached to paper or other medium in any manner.
- b. Reply envelopes or cards paid at the proper postage rate.
- c. Indicia printed on labels or tape removed from wrappers or envelopes.
- d. Indicia lacking clearly readable identification of the licensing Post Office, meter serial number, postage amount, or other required information.
- e. Indicia printed on mail dispatched and returned to sender as undeliverable as addressed, including mail marked “no such post office” and mail addressed for local delivery and returned after directory service was given or delivery was attempted.

17-2.3 **Unused Dated PC Postage Indicia**

Unused, dated PC Postage indicia are considered for refund only if complete, legible, and valid. Only authorized PC Postage users may request a refund. The request is processed by the provider, not the Postal Service. The refund request must be submitted within 30 days of the date(s) shown in the indicia. Disbursements of refunds for online postage ~~are~~ not permitted at local units.

17-2.4 **Click-N-Ship PC Postage**

Refer Click-N-Ship customers to the Click-N-Ship site. Log on to: www.usps.com/clicknship and click on the *MyAccount* link.

17-3 Exchanges

17-3.1 **Stamp Exchanges**

17-3.1.1 **Postal Service Fault**

The Post Office may correct mistakes in selling damaged, defective, or otherwise unserviceable stamps by exchanging stamps at full postage value.

17-3.1.2 **Damaged in Customer’s Possession**

Stamps that are damaged or otherwise unusable for postage (because of humidity, moisture, or other causes) while in a customer’s possession may be exchanged only for an equal number of stamps of the same denomination.

Unusable stamps accepted from a customer under these conditions must be those on sale at Post Offices within 12 months before the transaction.

Quantities of the same denomination totaling over \$10 in value must be returned in the same configuration as when bought (e.g., sheets, coils, and booklets).

Each such transaction is limited to \$100 worth of postage from each customer.

17-3.2 **Exchange of Spoiled and Unused Postal Matter**

Unusable and spoiled stamped envelopes; stamped cards, if uncanceled; and unused, precanceled stamps, and stamped cards are exchanged for other postage-stamped paper.

Only the buyer may exchange stamped envelopes with a printed return address and stamped cards with any printed matter of the buyer. If there is no purchaser's printing, any responsible person may exchange them.

17-3.3 **Stamps Converted to Other Postage Forms**

A customer may submit postage stamps for conversion to an advance deposit for permit imprint mailings, subject to the conditions set forth in the DMM.

17-3.4 **Items Not Exchangeable**

The following postage items are not exchangeable:

- a. Adhesive stamps, unless mistakes were made in buying, stamps were defective, or stamps were affixed to commercial envelopes and postcards.
- b. Stamps cut from stamped cards, or stamped envelopes.
- c. Parts and pieces of stamped cards.
- d. Stamped cards, stamped envelopes received for reply. Mutilated and defaced stamps.
- e. PC Postage cannot be exchanged at Post Offices. Customers must go online to the vendor's Web site to request exchange/refund for this service.

17-4 **Inquiries and Claims**

17-4.1 **Domestic Claims**

Accounting Service adjudicates all claims regardless of the amount of the claim.

Customers may file domestic insurance claims for loss or damage as follows:

- a. Online at www.usps.com/help (the preferred filing method is online)
- b. By mail (customers may mail the claim to Accounting Services).
- c. At any Post Office (customers may submit a completed claim form to any Post Office).

Customers will be requested to retain any damaged items and the mailing container (including any wrapping, packaging, and any other contents). In some situations, a customer may receive a request to present damaged item(s) to a Post Office for inspection, retention, and disposition in accordance with the [claimsclaim's](#) decision.

If a customer presents a damaged item at your office, follow the instructions on the PS Form 2856, *Damage Report of Insured Parcel and Contents*.

For damaged item(s) left at a Post Office, once the claim is resolved, if the claim was not paid the customer may pick up their damaged item(s). If the claim was paid, the items should be sent to the Mail Recovery Center. See <http://blue.usps.gov/accounting/claims.htm> for more information.

17-4.1.1 **Customer Claims Filed Online**

To file a claim online, customers should go to: <http://www.usps.com/insuranceclaims/online.htm>. A PS Form 1000 is not required for online claims because the form is built into the online system. Customers may upload JPG or PDF files to provide evidence of insurance, evidence of value, and, if applicable, proof of damage or missing contents.

17-4.1.2 **Customer Claims Filed by Mail**

If a customer is not able to file a claim online, they must call 1-800-ASK-USPS (1-800-275-8777).

The information on the claim form is self-explanatory. With the completed claim form include all information that applies to their claim, including evidence of insurance, evidence of value, and, if applicable, proof of damage or missing contents. Customers may send the completed claim form and attachments to the following address, which is published on PS Form 1000:

USPS DOMESTIC
CLAIMS PO BOX 80143
ST LOUIS MO 63180-0143

17-4.1.3 **Customer Claims Submitted at a Post Office**

If a customer brings the completed PS Form 1000 and required documentation to the Post Office, send the form and documentation immediately to the address on the claim form.

17-4.1.4 **Appeals Process for Denied Claims**

For domestic insurance claims that were denied, the procedure for customers is described here.

For a denied claim, customers may appeal a decision focusing on the basis of the claim denial within 30 days of the date of the original decision. If the original claim was filed online, the customer may file an appeal online or mail to the following address:

DOMESTIC CLAIM APPEALS ACCOUNTING SERVICES
PO BOX 80141
ST LOUIS MO 63180-0141

17-4.2 **International Claims**

To file an International Claim, customers must file an International Inquiry:

To initiate an **International Inquiry Online** at <https://www.usps.com/help/international-claims.htm>, the customer must be the U.S. sender and a registered *usps.com* account holder — U.S. senders without a registered *usps.com* account must create an account at the beginning of the online inquiry process.

A. International Inquiries online includes, Priority Mail Express International with Guaranteed Delivery Date (PMEI-GDD), Priority Mail Express International (PMEI), Priority Mail International (PMI), and Registered First-Class Mail International.

- a. Global Express Guaranteed (GXG) cannot be filed online.
- b. First Class Parcel International Services (FCPIS) and ~~First-ClassFirst-Class~~ Mail International (FCMI) are not eligible for Inquiries.

B. Customers can call the Customer Care Center at 800-222-1811 if they are unable to file online.

Customer will be asked to provide the following information:

A. Create an International **Online Inquiry** within the time limits **(Recommended for faster processing)**

The Customer will need to provide information regarding the mailing, including but not limited to the following:

1. The USPS Tracking number that appears on the receipt.
2. The sender's name, mailing address, email address, and telephone number.
3. The addressee's name and mailing address.
4. The addressee's email address and telephone number, if available.
5. The date of the mailing, weight, postage paid, and additional fees (if applicable).
6. A description of the contents.
7. Evidence of Mailing
8. Evidence of Value

Create an International **Inquiry by phone** within the time limits. Call 800-222-1811, and provide information regarding the mailing, including but not limited to the following:

1. The USPS Tracking number that appears on the receipt.
2. The sender's name, mailing address, email address, and telephone number.
3. The addressee's name and mailing address.
4. The addressee's email address and telephone number, if available.
5. The date of the mailing, weight, postage paid, and additional fees (if applicable).
6. A description of the contents and its value.

Evidence of Mailing: Original mailing receipt issued at the time of mailing. Evidence of Value (at least one of the examples listed below is required). Customers filing online claims must upload their both document types when the Inquiry is started as a jpg or pdf file. If the inquiry was filed by phone, the documents are requested by mail if the inquiry becomes a claim.

Evidence of Mailing
• Mailing Label
• Custom Forms
• Printouts of the online transactions
• Post Office shipping receipts
• Invoice or bill of sales
Evidence of Value
• Sales Receipt
• Copy of canceled check or money order
• Credit card billing statement
• Statement of value from a reputable dealer
• Estimates of repair costs from a reputable dealer
• Printouts of the online transaction

17-4.2.1 International Inquiries

Inquiry Submitted Online (preferred method)

After an Inquiry is submitted online it is immediately sent to the eCRS (International Inquiries Claims System).

The International Research Group (IRG) receives the inquiry (via eCRS Reporting), they will begin the inquiry process of communicating with the destination post on the sender's behalf.

Based upon the investigation results, if the item is found to be ineligible, correspondence is sent by the IRG informing the customer. If the IRG determines an inquiry is eligible for a claim, the Sender will receive an email that the inquiry has been "Claim Sent for Review".

STL Accounting Services is notified via eCRS Reporting that the Inquiry is now a claim. They will proceed with processing the claim.

Inquiry by Phone

Inquiry Submitted through Customer Care Center

If a customer calls the Customer Care Center (800-222-1811), the case is entered into eCRS during the call. (by a track & confirm agent)

Once the International Research Group (IRG) receives the inquiry (via eCRS Reporting), they will begin the inquiry process of communicating with the destination post.

- a) Based upon the investigation results, if the item is found to be ineligible, correspondence is sent by the IRG informing the customer.
- b) If IRG determines an inquiry is eligible for a claim, a claim packet is sent to the customer with instructions for completing the PS Form 2855 (International Claim for Indemnity), and sending it, along with supporting documentation to:

St. Louis Accounting Services
International Accounting Services
PO Box 80146
St. Louis MO 63180-0146

- c) The claim is not processed until it is received by STL Accounting Services.

17-4.2.2 Customer Claims for Damaged, Rifled, or Missing

International Articles

If a damaged article is in a foreign country, the customer can initiate an International Inquiry Online at <https://www.usps.com/help/international-claims.htm>, the customer must be the U.S. sender and a registered usps.com account holder — U.S. senders without a registered usps.com account must create an account at the beginning of the online inquiry process. Customers can call the Customer Care Center at 800-222-1811 if they are unable to file online.

Customers who receive a damaged article or one that has missing contents from a foreign country, except from Canada, or items mailed from the United States, and has been returned to sender damaged, must take the item to any Post Office immediately for inspection. The local post office is obligated to inspect the package for damage and fill out PS Form 2856, Damage Report of Insured Article and Contents (For USPS Internal Use Only). The local post office must follow the instructions at the bottom of PS Form 2856, and submit the completed form either by fax or by mail, as noted below

Fax or Mail the [PS Form 2856, Damage Report of Insured Parcel and Contents](#) to :

Fax: 651-306-6165

INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH GROUP
UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE
PO BOX 512318
LOS ANGELES CA 90051-0318

The inquiry will be created by an IRG agent once the damage report is received.

Customers who receive a damaged article or one that has missing contents originating from Canada must contact the Canadian sender and instruct them to file a claim with Canada Post.

In some European countries, damaged claims are payable to the sender only

(a waiver of rights is not allowed) and Priority Mail Express claims do not require a Refunds, Exchanges, Claims, and Inquiries PS Form 2856). All other damaged claims are payable to the addressee (unless they waive rights to payment).

For more information, go to <https://www.usps.com/help/claims.htm>

For detailed instructions on assisting customers who are filing an international claim for damage, rifling, or missing international articles, refer to Handbook F-101, *Field Accounting Procedures*, section 20-2.3.

17-4.2.3 International Claims Adjudication Process

If the IRG determines that the customer inquiry qualifies as a claim, the customer will be sent a claim packet, which includes PS Form 2855, along with instructions. The customer must complete the form and attach evidence of mailing, evidence of value, and any other documentation requested to support the claim and send it to the following address:

USPS INTERNATIONAL CLAIMS
ACCOUNTING SERVICES
PO BOX 80146
ST LOUIS MO 63180-0146

All claims for International articles are adjudicated by Accounting Services regardless of the amount of the claim.

Supporting documentation for an international claim includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- a. **Evidence of mailing.** If the article was mailed from the United States, the original mailing receipt is evidence of mailing. If the article was mailed in another country, the original mailing receipt, customs label, wrapper (if appropriate), or any other markings on the mailing container that indicate how it was sent is also evidence of mailing.
- b. **Evidence of value.** The dated sales receipt, dated invoice, or statement of value from a reputable dealer is evidence of value. (A statement of value from the customer is also accepted but indemnity is limited to \$100.) Paid repair bills (if the claim is for partial damage), estimates of repair costs, or appraisals from a reputable dealer are also evidence of value. Repair costs may not exceed the original purchase price.
- c. **Return to Sender articles that do not include a reason for return or were returned in error.** The original wrapper, if reasonable, may be required. (An envelope, a cardboard box top, or piece of cloth is reasonable.) However, if a customer mails the article in a wooden box, it is not reasonable to return the box as the wrapper. In this situation, the customer should submit a copy of the wrapper and retain the wooden box until the claim has been resolved.

If an inquiry does not qualify to become a claim, the IRG sends a letter to the customer with the results of the inquiry investigation.

17-5 Notice 4314-C, We Want to Know

Notice 4314-C, *We Want **To** Know*, replaces PS Form 4314-C, *Consumer Service Card*, and promotes the following different immediate methods for customers to contact the Postal Service:

- a. Speaking to our postmaster/management staff.
- b. Calling 800-ASK-USPS (800-275-8777).
- c. Visiting www.usps.com.

Ensure that Notice 4314-C is stocked in all Post Offices and make the notice available to customers upon request. Resolve all person-to-person and telephone contacts within 14 calendar days.

17-6 Call Center Program

The Postal Service's toll-free customer service telephone number is 800-ASK-USPS (800-275-8777).

Complaints, service issues, redelivery, and vacation hold mail requests are electronically referred to local Post Offices through the MyPostOffice (MyPO). This is an electronic transfer of information through the Internet to the Post Office from the call center agent. The local Post Office must download the MyPO information by 9 a.m. each morning and again in the afternoon so that customer requests for these services are handled in a timely manner.

17-7 Mail Fraud

If customers are having trouble with a mail order company or suspect that they have been the victim of fraud, instruct them to contact the Postal Inspection Service or complete PS Form 8165, *Mail Fraud Report*, available at all Post Offices. The customer should return the completed form to the local Post Office or send to the following address:

ATTN: MAIL FRAUD
CRIMINAL INVESTIGATIONS SERVICE CENTER
433 W HARRISON STREET, RM 3255
CHICAGO IL 60699-3255

17-8 Unwanted Mail

Certain unsolicited or undesirable mail is prohibited from the mailstream, including obscene materials, violence-inciting materials, and some types of mail relating to lotteries.

17-8.1 **Sexually Oriented Mail**

Section 3010 of Title 39 U.S.C. gives people a way to protect themselves and their minor children from receiving unsolicited sexually oriented advertisements through the mail. Customers may invoke the protection as follows:

- a. Completing PS Form 1500, *Application for Listing and/or Prohibitory Order*.
- b. Filing the form with any postmaster or designated Postal Service representative.

Customers may file for themselves or for their children under 19 who live with them or who are under their care, custody, or supervision. An authorized officer, agent, fiduciary, surviving spouse, or other representative may file on behalf of a corporation, firm, association, estate, or deceased or incompetent addressee.

After a customer is on the list for 30 days, any mailer who sends them unsolicited sexually oriented advertisements is subject to criminal sanctions under 39 U.S.C. 3011 and 18 U.S.C. 1735-371.

This prohibitory order remains in effect for 5 years unless the customer asks to have it removed. At the end of 5 years, customers must file again to have the names reinstated.

17-8.2 **Unsolicited Mail**

Federal law prohibits the shipment of unordered merchandise. Such a practice may constitute an unfair trade practice. Merchandise mailed in violation of the U.S. Code may be treated as a gift by the recipient without any obligation to the sender. The laws governing this practice are enforced by the Federal Trade Commission.

17-8.3 **Direct Marketing (Remove Name)**

Some consumers would like to receive less advertising mail at home. Mail Preference Service, a service of the Direct Marketing Association, helps decrease the amount of national nonprofit or commercial mail customers receive. To register with the name removal file, customers should write to the following:

MAIL PREFERENCE SERVICE
DIRECT MARKETING ASSOCIATION
PO BOX 9008
FARMINGDALE NY 11735-9008

17-9 Mail Recovery Centers

The Mail Recovery Center (MRC) is located in Atlanta, Georgia. MRC is responsible for the final disposition of undeliverable First-Class Mail items, packages, and accountable mail items; and for protecting the privacy of the mail.

For more information on the MRC, visit: _

http://blue.usps.gov/supplymanagement/am_mrc_welcome.htm;
http://blue.usps.gov/supplymanagement/am_mrc_welcome.htm.

17-9.1 **First-Class Mail**

Send all First-Class Mail items (except postcards and postal cards), single-piece-rate Standard Mail items, and Package Services mail that cannot be forwarded or returned, to the MRC for disposition. Send dead letters daily and dead parcels weekly.

17-9.2 **Priority Mail Express**

Send Priority Mail Express articles that cannot be forwarded or returned during the specified holding period to the area MRC in a Priority Mail Express pouch.

17-9.3 **Postcards and Postal Cards**

Dispose of postcards and postal cards without a return address if the Post Office can shred or destroy them completely. If not, forward them to the area MRC.

