

[Who we are](#)[What we do](#)[Newsroom](#)[Resources](#)[Careers](#)

Statements

USPS Statement on Coronavirus

March 22, 2020

The United States Postal Service has a dedicated COVID-19 Command Response leadership team that is focusing on employee, operational, business, and customer continuity during this unprecedented epidemic. We continue to follow the strategies and measures recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and public health departments. The CDC has information available on its website at <https://www.coronavirus.gov> that provides the latest information about COVID-19.

On the employee front, we are sharing the latest information throughout our organization via video, e-mail, internal newsletters, employee conversations and through our Operations and HR functions – and we will continue to do so. We are encouraging healthy behaviors and protocols including frequent hand washing, use of sanitizers, and additional cleaning of work spaces, and are encouraging any employee who feels they are sick to stay home. We are offering liberal leave and have worked with our postal unions to temporarily expand leave options for our employees.

To reduce health risks, we also are temporarily modifying customer signature capture procedures. While maintaining a safe, appropriate distance, employees will request the customer's first initial and last name so that the employee can enter the information on the electronic screen or hard copy items such as return receipts, PS Forms 3811 and 3829. For increased safety, employees will politely ask the customer to step back a safe distance or close the screen door/door so that they may leave the item in the mail receptacle or appropriate location by the customer door.

We are proud of the work our employees play in processing, transporting and delivering mail and packages for the American public, which is a vital public service that is a part of this nation's critical infrastructure. The Postal Service delivers much needed medications and Social Security checks, and we are the leading delivery service for online purchases. The Postal Service is an essential service for purposes of compliance with state or municipality shelter-in-place orders or other social distancing restrictions. The statute that created the Postal Service begins with the following sentence. "The United States Postal Service shall be operated as a basic and fundamental service provided to the people by the Government of the United States, authorized by the Constitution, created by an Act of Congress, and supported by the people." 39 U.S.C. §101(a).

Importantly, the CDC (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/faq.html>), the World Health Organization (<https://www.who.int/news-room/q-a-detail/q-a-coronaviruses>), as well as the Surgeon General have indicated that there is **currently no evidence that COVID-19 is being spread through the mail.**

Specifically, according to the World Health Organization, "the likelihood of an infected person contaminating commercial goods is low and the risk of catching the virus that causes COVID-19 from a package that has been moved, travelled, and been exposed to different conditions and temperature is also low." And according to the CDC, "in general, because of poor survivability of these coronaviruses on surfaces, there is likely very low risk of spread from products or packaging that are shipped over a period of days or weeks at ambient temperatures. Coronaviruses are generally thought to be spread most often by respiratory droplets. Currently there is no evidence to support transmission of COVID-19 associated with imported goods and there have not been any cases of COVID-19 in the United States associated with imported goods."



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