



September 1, 2020

Mr. Brian J. Wagner  
President  
National Association of Postal  
of America  
1727 King Street, Suite 400  
Alexandria, VA 22314-2753

Dear Mr. Wagner:

As a matter of general interest, the Postal Service has quickly embraced the collaborative benefits and ease of communications with the ZOOM meeting technology. ZOOM is a collaborative communication tool that allows interaction between parties and groups of individuals at a level similar to in-person communications.

ZOOM technology has assisted the Postal Service with maintaining efficiency while providing quality service to our customers. It has also allowed us to continue our workplace relationships during the COVID-19 crisis. Video participation is a key point in achieving that level of communication. Facial expressions, hand gestures, and body language communicate almost as much as the spoken word and are an indicator of a person's engagement in the meeting when using ZOOM.

As ZOOM meetings take place in the course of official business, managers and supervisors may instruct their employees to utilize the video feature (turn on their cameras) if they feel it is important for the success of the meeting. However, no employee can be instructed to use the video feature if the meeting is going to be recorded. Involuntary recording of an employee during a video conference is a violation of Postal Service Privacy regulations.

One aspect of ZOOM is that it allows for the voluntary use of individual photographs and virtual backgrounds. However, any photographs displayed on ZOOM should be professional and meet requirements outlined in the enclosed April 3, 2019, *Policy for Employees' Use of Photographic Images on Postal Service Platforms* distributed by Simon Storey, VP Employee Resource Management.

I have also enclosed for your reference the *Video Use, Images, and Virtual Backgrounds on Zoom* policy letter from the Chief Human Resources Officer Isaac Cronkhite.

Please contact Bruce Nicholson at extension 7773 if you have questions concerning this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "David E. Mills".

David E. Mills  
Manager  
Labor Relations Policies and Programs



April 3, 2019

OFFICERS

SUBJECT: Policy for Employees' Use of Photographic Images on Postal Service Platforms

This memorandum outlines requirements for employee use of photographic images representing themselves on U.S. Postal Service electronic platforms (e.g., Outlook and HERO profiles).

As each employee represents the organization at large, it is imperative that images portray employees in a professional manner. Images that may be considered unprofessional, distracting, or otherwise inappropriate should be avoided and removed immediately.

The following requirements apply when employees use photographic images on Postal Service electronic platforms:

- Images should include only the individual employee being represented.
- The employee must be wearing either formal, casual, business attire, or Postal Service sanctioned uniforms.
- Images should be recent.
- Images should be portrait style and of sufficient quality (focus, lighting, background, etc.).

This photo policy is intended to enhance the overall image presented by our employees internally and create unity in how we represent the U.S. Postal Service brand.

Management reserves the right to remove any image inconsistent with this policy, other Postal Service policy, or applicable law.

If you have questions in regard to this memo, please contact Joseph R. Bruce, Director, National Human Resources at [joseph.r.bruce@usps.gov](mailto:joseph.r.bruce@usps.gov).

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Simon M. Storey".

Simon M. Storey



September 1, 2020

## OFFICERS

SUBJECT: Video Use, Images, and Virtual Backgrounds on Zoom

The Postal Service has quickly embraced the collaborative benefits and ease of communications with the Zoom meeting technology. This technology has assisted us to continue working efficiently and provide service to our customers. It has also allowed us to maintain our workplace relationships during the COVID-19 crisis.

Zoom is first a collaborative communication tool. It allows communications between parties and groups of individuals at a level similar to in-person communications. Video participation is a key point in achieving that level of communication. Facial expressions, hand gestures, and body language communicate almost as much as the spoken word and are an indicator of a person's engagement in the meeting when using Zoom. As Zoom meetings take place in the course of official business, managers and supervisors may instruct their employees to utilize the video feature (turn on their cameras) if they feel it is important for the success of the meeting. However, no employee can be instructed to use the video feature if the meeting is going to be recorded. Involuntary recording of an employee during a video conference is a violation of Postal Service Privacy regulations.

One of the aspects of Zoom is that it allows for the voluntary use of individual photographs and virtual backgrounds. This personalization can certainly allow for some personal expression and a little bit of fun. It is important to remember the importance of maintaining a professional environment and atmosphere when working in Zoom. Please remember that when participating in Zoom meetings any photographs of yourself should be professional and meet the requirement of the attached Policy for Employees Use of Photographic Images on Postal Service Platforms dated April 3, 2019.

When working with a virtual background be sure the background sets the appropriate tone for the meeting you are attending. Backgrounds considered unprofessional, distracting, or otherwise inappropriate should not be used. You should avoid backgrounds that are moving and flashing, as they could create distractions away from the focus of meetings. Virtual backgrounds should not be used if they would lead to a violation of the Hatch Act by promoting a political candidate. Remember meeting someone for the first time on a Zoom call is close to meeting them in person for the first time. You want to present a positive, professional first impression.

If you have any question regarding this policy, please contact Joseph R. Bruce, Director, National Human Resources, at [joseph.r.bruce@usps.gov](mailto:joseph.r.bruce@usps.gov).

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Isaac S. Cronkhite".

Isaac S. Cronkhite

## Attachment