

Emergency Telephone Numbers

First Aid, Medical, or Health Unit

Ambulance (Emergency Rescue)
Service

Hospital

Police Department

Fire Department

Safety Office

Security Office

Hazardous Materials Spill or Leak
Control Team

Injury Compensation Control
Office or Control Point

Employee Assistance Program

(24-hour, toll-free numbers)

800-EAP-4-YOU

(800-327-4968)

TTY: 877-492-7341

Inspection Service

(24-hour, toll-free number)

877-USMAIL-5 or

877-876-2455

Use this handbook only during regular work hours and only on Postal Service premises.

Postal Employee's Guide to Safety

Handbook EL-814

April 2023
Transmittal Letter

- A. Explanation.** The Postal Service™ is committed to providing its employees and customers with a safe and healthy environment and complying with applicable safety laws and regulations. A safe and healthy workplace, free from safety hazards, is important to help the Postal Service achieve that goal. This guide provides Postal Service employees with policies, procedures, and guidelines pertaining to safe work practices.
- B. Online Availability.** This handbook is available in electronic format on the Postal Service PolicyNet Web site.
1. Go to <https://blue.usps.gov>.
 2. Click “Essential Links” in the left-hand column. Then click “PolicyNet.”
 3. Under “Published Forms and Directives” in the right-hand side column, click “Handbooks.”

(The direct URL for the Postal Service PolicyNet Web site is <https://blue.usps.gov/cpim>.)

- C. Comments and Questions.** Address any comments and questions on the content of this handbook to:

OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY & HEALTH
US POSTAL SERVICE
475 L'ENFANT PLZ SW RM 9801
WASHINGTON DC 20260-4261

- D. Restriction.** This material is to be used only during authorized work hours and on Postal Service premises.
- E. Effective Date.** This handbook is effective immediately.



Linda DeCarlo
Senior Director
Occupational Safety & Health

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Introduction

This booklet provides simple easy-to-locate safety rules and procedures so that you can familiarize yourself with those rules that apply to your job. The booklet is intended for reference only.

This booklet must not be removed from Postal Service™ premises and must be used only during regular work hours. The booklet is not intended to be all-inclusive, as it cannot cover all the conditions that may arise on your job. Your local office may have more specific rules to supplement these requirements.

Although the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) does not cite employees for violating their responsibilities, each employee must comply with all occupational safety and health standards and all rules, regulations, and orders *issued under the Act* that are applicable. Occupational Safety and Health programs are generally the same as for workers in states covered by OSHA. See OSHA 3021, 1997 (Revised).

The omission of any safety information from this booklet does not reduce your personal responsibility to remain alert and use good judgment when performing your duties. If any rule or procedure is not perfectly clear to you, ask your supervisor for clarification. Learn and use all the safety rules and procedures that apply to your job. The Postal Service welcomes any suggestions you may have that might improve the safety of operations.

Submit your suggestions to your supervisor. Submit a suggestion or idea using the eIDEAS program on the Postal Service Blue page, or use PS Form 1270, *Idea Proposal*.

If you observe an unsafe condition or an unsafe act, report it to your supervisor immediately. Use PS Form 1767, *Report of Hazard, Unsafe Condition, or Practice*, to document the condition. If you wish to remain anonymous, file PS Form 1767 directly with your installation's safety personnel. Without revealing your name, they will immediately give the report to your supervisor for necessary action. (In such cases, safety personnel must not disclose the name of the individual submitting the report.)

Section I: General Safety Rules

A. General Rules

Safety rules are for your benefit; observing safe working practices and Postal Service safety rules is a primary responsibility of all Postal Service employees. General safety rules include, but are not limited to the following:

- Never work under the influence of intoxicants.
- Never sell, possess, or use illegal drugs on Postal Service premises. If you are required to take physician-prescribed drugs that could impair your mental or physical abilities, you must notify your supervisor; never drive or work around moving equipment while under the influence of drugs.
- Never keep contraband material, such as firearms, dangerous weapons, fireworks, intoxicants, or illegal drugs, on Postal Service premises. Never engage in horseplay, playing practical jokes, scuffling, or fighting on Postal Service premises. Do not run in Postal Service facilities. Hold the handrail when walking up or down stairs.
- Do not toss or throw packages or bundles, unless required by the operation (e.g., culling belt, etc.).
- Observe all warning signs and notices installed for your protection. Comply with all safety and health regulations, procedures, and practices, including using approved personal protective equipment (PPE).
- Keep your work area in a safe and healthful condition by properly maintaining property and equipment. Immediately report safety hazards and unsafe working conditions to your supervisor.

- Keep physically and mentally fit to meet the job requirements.
- Drive defensively and professionally; extend courtesy in all situations; and obey all state, local, and Postal Service regulations (including wearing a seatbelt when driving a vehicle owned, leased, or contracted by the Postal Service).
- Observe the control of hazardous energy lockout procedures.
- Other safety rules may apply to your job. Perform your duties in the safest possible manner at all times. If you have questions about how to do your job safely, ask your supervisor.

B. Environmental Protection

- Comply with environmental-protection regulations, procedures, and practices.
- Participate in pollution prevention by recycling, reusing materials, and reducing waste.
- Conform to Clean Air Act requirements by carpooling or using public transportation.

C. Office Safety

- Keep unattended drawers and doors closed in desks, file cabinets, etc., to eliminate tripping hazards and sources of cuts or abrasions.
- Open the top drawer of a file cabinet slowly, standing to one side of the file cabinet. When you finish with one file drawer, close it before opening another.
- Fill the lowest drawer in a file cabinet first to reduce the chance of the cabinet tipping over. Place heavy objects in the bottom drawers.

- Keep the tops of file cabinets, bookcases, etc., free of files, papers, books, and any other materials.
- When seated, keep your chair firmly on the floor. Tipping it backward on its rear legs invites an accident and possible injury.
- Handle cleaning fluids with care, as some are toxic and/or flammable. See Section [IV](#), [B](#). for specific guidelines on handling toxic, corrosive, irritating, or flammable items.
- Keep desktop paper cutters in a closed, locked position when you are not using them.
- Adjust video display monitors, chairs, and other equipment for comfort and proper body alignment. For information on proper body positioning, see Section [XII](#), [A-E](#).
- Adjust video display terminals, chairs, and other equipment for maximum comfort.
- Guard office equipment with shields covering moving parts to prevent clothing, hair, and fingers from getting caught.
- Pick up all debris from the floor, especially rubber bands, straps, and paper clips. Keep cubicles and workstations clean, neat, and organized.

1. Obstructions

- Keep all aisles clear of tripping hazards, such as wastebaskets, electrical cords, protruding utility outlets, trash, etc.
- Keep your floor area dry. If you spill water or some other liquid on the floor, wipe the floor dry immediately to eliminate possible slipping hazards. Call your supervisor for help when cleaning large spills.

2. Climbing

When you must climb, use a step stool, ladder, or other equipment designed for that purpose. Do not climb onto chairs or other office furniture.

3. Lifting

Lift with your legs instead of your back. Ask for help when the object is too heavy, is awkwardly shaped, or blocks your view when you carry it. See Section [VII](#), [A](#). for more guidelines on lifting heavy objects.

D. Elevators

- Load capacities are posted in elevators, both by pounds and by number of persons. Never exceed this limit for any reason.
- Repair an elevator only if you are qualified in elevator maintenance and repair.
- Do not use elevators during an emergency evacuation.
- Do not smoke in elevators.
- Be alert and watch your step when entering or leaving an elevator.
- Do not ride in freight elevators unless you have been authorized to do so.
- Do not use passenger elevators for freight.

E. Dock Safety

- Do not smoke anywhere on the docks or when you are loading or unloading trucks, trailers, vans, railroad cars, or any other vehicles.
- Never jump off the docks. Use approved steps or ladders.
- Close dump holes when you are not using them.

- Chock all trailers before loading or unloading them. Keep unused chocks out of walkways and stored against the dock.
- Store dock plates in an anchored, upright position.
- When using dock plates, secure them in position to keep them from slipping or sliding away.
- Always be aware of moving vehicles and equipment on the dock.

F. Rest Bars

- Rest bars are designed to support individuals in an upright backward-leaning position while the individuals work at some stationary activities. Do not use a rest bar as a stool for sitting with the cushion in the flat position. The seat can be raised or lowered in height and firmly seated at any point between 25 inches and 36 inches. Adjust the seat angle using only the slots provided in the seat support. Resting the seat support against the welded stop is not allowed.
- Keep at least one foot on the rest bar base when using the rest bar. If you put one foot on the bar rest, your foot must be *on* the bar rest rather than inside.
- After you finish using the rest bar, fold the seat down flat and place it in a safe location, possibly near the working case. Be sure that the seat support does not stick out.

G. Personal Portable Headsets

- Using headsets is permissible only for employees who perform duties while seated or stationary and only where headset use does not interfere with performing duties or constitutes a safety or health hazard. Do not wear or use headsets while:
 - Walking or driving;
 - Near moving machinery;
 - Involved in oral business communications; or
 - In contact with or in view of the public.
- In noise-hazard locations do not use personal portable headphones or headsets instead of approved personal protective equipment.

Section II: Occupational Injury or Illness

A. Reporting Injuries or Illness

If you are injured or become ill from work-related causes, you must report immediately to your supervisor, even if the problem seems minor.

1. Treatment

You must receive authorized medical evaluation and treatment or first aid in accordance with procedures in the *Employee and Labor Relations Manual* (ELM) Part 543. The lack of prompt attention to even slight injuries could lead to more serious complications.

2. Reporting

Your supervisor must contact the medical or health unit (if available) or the local emergency rescue or paramedic unit and report the type of injury and your location. Follow the procedures in ELM Part 544. All reports must comply with the requirements of the Postal Service, the Office of Workers' Compensation Programs, and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA).

3. Prevention

Your supervisor must investigate and evaluate each accident and take any necessary measures to prevent the incident's recurrence.

B. Treating Eye Injuries

- Do not permit a fellow employee to attempt to remove a foreign body from your eye. Have any eye injury treated immediately by professional medical personnel.
- If corrosive liquids, such as acids or other irritants, are splashed in your eyes, flush them thoroughly with clear, cold running water for 15 minutes. Call for assistance immediately (you may need help to hold your eyes open), and have the medical unit or emergency first aid facility contacted.

C. Using Emergency First Aid Telephone Numbers

- Become familiar with emergency first aid telephone numbers and the procedures for obtaining emergency first aid when needed. List on the “Emergency Telephone Numbers” page of this handbook your local emergency phone numbers.
- **Immediately** notify your supervisor of any emergency.

Section III: Fire Prevention and Protection

A. Reporting Fire Hazards

Report all suspected fire hazards to your supervisor immediately.

B. Emergency Evacuation

- Become familiar with your floor plan. In case of fire, know the location of and how to use all fire-alarm stations, and the location of all fire exits for your facility.
- Follow the directions of the assigned emergency-evacuation team members and supervisors in your area.
- Evacuate your area immediately; do not go to your locker to retrieve personal items.
- Do not use elevators during an emergency. Elevator use during an emergency evacuation is prohibited.
- Follow all fire-evacuation procedures during fire drills, as well as during an actual emergency.
- Your local office must provide a method or methods to get disabled or handicapped employees out safely.

C. Fire in Your Work Area

- Sound your local alarm first. Take any other required steps to alert fellow employees and the fire department to the fire.
- Do not engage in disruptive actions or unnecessary talking that might prevent others from hearing and understanding instructions and directions.
- Move quickly, but do not run, to the nearest exit.

- Attempt to put out first-stage fires only if you have received training on how to use fire extinguishers and if you believe you can do so safely. If you have any doubt about your ability to extinguish the fire, leave the area. Remember that your own safety comes first.

D. Fire-Fighting Equipment

- Fire hoses, hydrants, and sprinkler systems are for fire-fighting purposes and are to be used by municipal fire departments only.
- Promptly report to your supervisor any used or damaged fire extinguishers.
- Do not stack or store material within 18 inches of a sprinkler head. Report any deficiencies to your supervisor immediately.
- Do not attach or hang anything from any component of a sprinkler system other than materials required for the system.
- Do not lock (except with approved fire-exit locking mechanisms) or obstruct exits, passageways leading to fire exits, or fire-extinguishing equipment, such as fire extinguishers, alarm boxes, etc. This equipment must be kept accessible at all times.

E. Flammable Materials

- Store flammable liquids or solvents (up to 5 gallons) in approved storage safety containers.
- Dispose of oily rags, or other flammable waste subject to spontaneous combustion, in closed metal containers.
- Properly label all cans to indicate their contents and store them in designated areas. Do not use spark or heat-producing devices in the vicinity of flammable liquids, vapors, or gases.

- Follow the procedures in Management Instruction (MI) EL-810-2006-3, *Response to Hazardous Materials Releases*, and the guidance in the Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDSs) for handling spills and leaks of specific products and chemicals.

F. Smoking

Smoking is prohibited:

- In all Postal Service facilities.
- While collecting or delivering mail.
- Within 25 feet of gasoline pumps, gas and oil storage tanks, spray paint operations, or other operations involving flammable liquids or gases.

Section IV: Personal Safety and Protective Equipment

A. Personal Safety

1. Clothing

- Wear sensible, properly fitting clothing to work.
- The following is not acceptable apparel for the workroom floor and may be hazardous if you work with machinery, vehicles, or moving equipment:
 - Oversized clothing;
 - Wide-flared pants;
 - Full dresses or skirts;
 - Full or flared sleeves on shirts or blouses;
 - Scarves;
 - Loose aprons; and
 - Similar clothing.
- Do not wear neckties while on the workroom floor, especially around moving machinery or automated equipment. If you must wear a tie, wear a clip-on.
- Dress appropriately for weather conditions.

2. Jewelry

Do not wear jewelry such as necklaces, neck chains, pins, dangling earrings, bracelets, watches, watch chains, rings, etc., around moving machinery or exposed electrical circuits.

3. Hair

If your hairstyle restricts your forward or peripheral vision, or if your hair can become entangled in moving machinery or equipment, tie your hair back or otherwise confine it.

4. Shoes

- Wear appropriate work shoes, whether you walk many miles on a route or handle mail in the workroom. Wear shoes that are fully enclosed at the heels, toes, and sides, and made of leather or a substantial synthetic material. (Canvas or nylon is not acceptable.) The approved footwear for uniform-program employees must have the SR/USA label. See ELM Part 939 for exceptions.
- To eliminate slips, trips, and falls, do not wear the following types of shoes on the workroom floor:
 - Heels more than 1 1/2 inches and soles more than 1/2 inch in height.
 - Spiked heels, regardless of height.
 - Open shoes (including open sides, toes, or heels) such as thongs, sandals, mules, house slippers, clogs, wedgies, etc.
 - Heels with steel taps.
 - Shoes with cloth, nylon, or mesh-woven tops, such as tennis shoes, athletic or jogging shoes (except those with leather or leatherlike uppers), moccasins, etc.
 - Shoes no longer adequate because of disrepair.

B. Personal Protective Equipment

- Your supervisor may conduct a hazard assessment and equipment selection in your workplace in accordance with the requirements of OSHA 1910.132 – 139 and Appendix B.
- Wear all personal protective equipment (PPE) that the Postal Service or your supervisor requires for the jobs or tasks that you perform. If you have questions about PPE when handling chemicals, consult with your supervisor.

1. Eye and Face Protection

- Wear eye and face protection that meets American National Standards Institute (ANSI) standards when working in areas where hazards exist that could cause eye injuries. You must wear side shields with your safety glasses.
- Safety goggles and face shields for the following types of work are **mandatory**:
 - Handling or pouring acid or other corrosive chemicals.
 - Using an emery wheel or grinding, riveting, chipping, or sandblasting equipment.
 - Using compressed air for cleaning. (See Section [V](#), Paragraph [E](#) for restrictions on using compressed air.)
 - Working in areas designated as rewrap operations, where eye hazards exist.
- Never wear contact lenses in the presence of corrosive or irritating materials, especially in battery-charging rooms.
- Wear proper eye protection of the correct shade when observing or performing welding operations. Use appropriate shielding to protect other employees' eyes from arc flashes. **Never** look at or in the direction of a welding arc without appropriate eye protection, as it can cause painful damage to your eyes.
- Make sure that the lenses of all eye protection devices are free from cracks, chips, or obscurities; immediately replace or repair lenses with such defects.

2. Hand Protection

Your supervisor will select and require employees to use appropriate hand protection when employees' hands are exposed to hazards, such as those from skin absorption of

harmful substances; severe cuts or lacerations; severe abrasions; punctures; chemical burns; thermal burns; and harmful temperature extremes.

Your supervisor will base the selection of the appropriate hand protection on an evaluation of the performance characteristics of the hand protection relative to the tasks to be performed, conditions present, duration of use, and the hazards and potential hazards identified. Adhere to the following:

- You are prohibited from using gauntlet-type gloves.
- You may use gloves for materials handling activities that do not involve potential contact with powered machine parts.
- You may use protective or barrier creams on your hands and arms if they are exposed to oils and greases, chemicals, or corrosive or irritating cleaning compounds. However, these creams are not a substitute for appropriate PPE.

For additional information, see Management Instruction EL-810-2009-4, *Personal Protective Equipment and Respiratory Protection Programs*.

3. Head Protection

- Wear appropriate head protection when:
 - Your work exposes you to falling objects.
 - A risk of striking your head against low stationary objects exists.
 - You are in an area designated for hard-hat protection (especially above floor level).
 - Indicated by PPE assessments.
- Where employees are not exposed to possible head injuries, OSHA standards do not require head protection.

- Regulation hats, caps, or pith helmets are recommended for protection from the sun or cold for employees working outdoors.

4. Hearing Protection

- You may be required to wear hearing protection if noise levels cannot be controlled to below OSHA limits. Safety and health personnel will provide a selection of approved hearing-protection devices and assist you with their fit *and* care. Hearing protection will be made available if noise levels on your job exceed 85 decibels.
- Radio headsets are not a substitute for approved hearing protectors. Do not wear them in areas where hearing protection is required.

5. Respiratory Protection

- There may be situations where you are required to wear a respirator to protect you from exposure to toxic vapors, dusts, etc. Your supervisor or safety officer will provide approved respirators and instruct you, on the clock and on Postal Service premises, in the proper fit and use of your respirator.
- Keep your respirator clean, inspect it frequently as instructed, and store it in a clean place.
- If your job requires using a respirator, a medical officer will evaluate you to ensure that you can wear one safely.
- You may use a Filtering Facepiece type respirator for comfort. It may be your own or one the Postal Service provides.
- If your job does not require using a respirator, but you wear one voluntarily, your supervisor will give you a copy of Appendix D to OSHA 1910.134, *Information for Employees Using Respirators When Not Required Under the Standard*.

Section V: Housekeeping and Sanitation

Keeping your immediate work area clean is your personal responsibility. A neat and orderly workplace is a safer place to work.

A. Personal Items

- Where a locker and changing room are provided, keep your locker clean, neat, and free from debris. Do not store items on top of your locker.
- Eat and store food and beverages only in authorized areas; do not store or consume them in restrooms.
- Discard food waste, etc., only in waste receptacles. You are responsible for disposing of your own food waste, wrappers, cans, etc.

B. Obstacles

- Keep aisles, passageways, stairways, exits, and all other walking areas free from obstructions at all times. Make sure that electrical panels, switches, fire-fighting equipment, exit doors, fire-alarm stations, and postal-inspector breakout doors are kept clear.
- Do not enter roped-off or marked areas where maintenance work is being done or hazardous or slippery conditions exist.

C. Spills and Leaks of Hazardous Materials

- If a spill or leak occurs, notify your supervisor immediately. Alert others nearby and clear the immediate area. If the spilled substance is flammable, take every precaution to avoid possible ignition of the substance.
- Follow the Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) for cleaning up spills and leaks of hazardous materials. Refer to Handbook EL-812, *Hazardous Materials and Spill Response*, and to Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDSs) for information on chemical spills or leaks.

D. Tools and Other Portable Equipment

- Keep all tools and portable equipment in their assigned places when not using them.
- Use safety glasses when operating power tools. Safety glasses must meet ANSI criteria.

E. Cleaning

- Never mix cleaning compounds. The chemicals used in them, such as chlorine and ammonia, when combined, can take on irritating or otherwise hazardous properties.
- Vacuuming is preferred to blowing down with compressed air. If blowing down is necessary, whenever possible, remove dust on or inside processing equipment and other surfaces by vacuuming an area before blowing it down.
- Rope off wet floor areas with high visibility safety marking rope and post “Wet Floor” signs until the floors are dry.
- Follow all vendors’ instructions regarding equipment, materials, and supplies.

F. Using Compressed Air

- Use a vacuum rather than compressed air to remove dust, dirt, or other debris from your clothing or body. Using compressed air to blow dust, dirt, or debris off yourself is extremely hazardous and prohibited.
- Do not use compressed air to clean machinery or parts in mail-processing areas. Use vacuum cleaners for this purpose. The most current maintenance policies and procedures must be followed. When compressed air is permitted for use, the air must be compressed to 30 PSI or less, or use a hose that is equipped with a nozzle that will deadhead at 30 PSI or less.

Section VI: Machinery and Electrical Equipment

A. General Rules

- Treat all electrical circuits as *live* circuitry.
- Turn off all electrical equipment when you are not using it.
- Never overload an electrical circuit.
- Use Postal Service machinery and equipment only if you are trained and authorized to do so.
- Check equipment before use for good working order. Never operate defective machinery or equipment. Report all such machinery or equipment to your supervisor immediately. Complete and attach PS Form 4707, *Out of Order*, to all such equipment. Do not operate any equipment that has been orange/red tagged with this form.

B. Machine Guarding

Never operate machinery that is not properly guarded.

- Make sure that guards are in place on all drives, pinch points, and points-of-operation; keep all guards in place while the machine is in motion.
- Before starting machinery, make sure that everyone is in a safe place and that guards and safety devices are in working condition and are properly adjusted.
- Keep all guards in place, securely fastened, and maintained in a functional condition.
- Do not remove, replace, or adjust a guard on moving machinery or equipment.

- Do not use the *stop* button to try to lock out equipment; it is not effective as a lockout device.

C. Emergency Stop Buttons, Switches, and Cords

- You must be trained, on the clock and on Postal Service premises, in the use of emergency stop buttons, switches, and cords, etc., before you are assigned to a machine area.
- Keep all emergency stopping devices accessible, in plain view, and in operating condition. Report any defects to your supervisor immediately.

D. Conveyors, Sorters, and Other Mechanized Equipment

- Do not climb under or onto or cross over a conveyor, sorter, or other mechanized equipment for any reason, unless the system is effectively locked out.
- Do not ride the equipment.
- Stop the equipment when freeing jams. Only trained maintenance personnel may clear a jam by going up on the equipment. Before clearing jams or working on this equipment, first lock out at the source of power. If two or more people are working on the equipment, they must all attach their own personal locks.
- Stop the equipment when you must search for or pick up an item underneath it. Make certain the equipment cannot be started unexpectedly, thus exposing you to danger.
- Do not attempt to retrieve fallen, misthrown, or caught mail from moving equipment.

- If a conveyor stops, call a mechanic; do not try to restart it by pulling the belt or by using any method other than the designated start button.
- Do not overload conveyors, sorters, or other mechanized equipment.

E. Cords

- Never splice or patch electrical cords; replace them. Shorten a cord only if you are qualified to do so.
- When you disconnect electrical equipment, pull the plug rather than the cord.
- As much as possible, keep extension cords off the floor. If it is absolutely necessary to put such cords on the floor, use Underwriters Laboratories (UL)-approved or other certified testing laboratory-approved temporary floor covers to prevent tripping on or damaging the cord.
- Remove and replace frayed or damaged electrical cords.
- Do not use extension cords as substitutes for permanent wiring.

F. Grounding

- If portable electrical tools are not double insulated and labeled as such, make sure they are equipped with a 3-wire plug. Never cut off the ground connection.
- If the ground prong has been removed, do not use the equipment or tool until the plug has been replaced.

G. Tools

In areas containing a potentially hazardous or flammable atmosphere, such as battery-charging rooms or spray-painting booths, use only approved nonsparking tools and explosion-proof equipment.

H. Lockout Procedures

Before working on power-driven equipment or electrical circuitry, follow lockout procedures and ensure effective lockout at the energy sources.

I. Defective Equipment

Remove all defective equipment from service immediately; tag it with PS Form 4707, *Out of Order*, and take it to be repaired or to be stored in the designated area for defective equipment. **DO NOT USE** tagged equipment until it has been properly repaired.

Section VII: Lifting, Material Handling and Other Equipment

A. Lifting Guidelines

Lifting is so much a part of Postal Service everyday activity that most employees do not think about it, but it's often done incorrectly. The results can include strains, pulled muscles, disc lesions, or painful hernias.

Before lifting anything, check the immediate area and route of travel to be sure that no obstruction or hazard can cause a slip, trip, or fall, or a *striking-against* accident.

The technique for proper lifting is simple:

- Assess the load. If it appears to be too heavy or bulky to lift comfortably, get help.
- Place one foot alongside the object being lifted and one behind. This method gives you greater stability and your rear foot gives you better upward thrust. Use the *sit-down* position and keep your back in a straight line (though not necessarily perpendicular to the floor). A straight back keeps your spine, back muscles, and organs in correct alignment and minimizes organ compression, which can cause a hernia.
- Tuck in your chin so your neck and head are in a straight line with your back. That helps keep your spine straight and firm. It is not necessary, however, to force your chin against your chest.
- A palm grip is one of the most important elements of correct lifting. Keep your fingers and hands extended around the object you are going to lift, using your full palm. Fingers alone have little power; you need the strength of your entire hand.

- Keep the load you are lifting drawn close against your body; tuck your arms and elbows against your side.
- When your arms are held away from your body, they lose much of their strength and power. Keeping your arms tucked in also helps center your body weight.
- Position your body so that your weight is centered over your feet. This provides a more powerful line of thrust and also ensures better balance. Start the lift with a thrust of your rear foot.
- Avoid twisting during lifting; twisting is one of the most common causes of back injury. Simply turning your forward foot out and pointing it in the direction you are moving will avoid the greatest danger of injury.
- Do not fight to recover a dropping object or *lost load*. Get out of its way and let it fall.
- Suddenly lifting or releasing loads can stress the spine and back muscles. Always lift, move, and lower with smooth motions.

B. Material-Handling Equipment

- Inspect ropes, chains, cables, slips, jacks, skids, and other hoisting and rigging apparatus before using them.
- Report to your supervisor damaged or defective ropes, chains, cables, slings, straps, or other material-handling equipment or components.
- Never lift a load and leave it suspended or unattended. Do not exceed the lifting capacity of hoisting devices for any reason.

C. Portable Utility Platforms

Use portable utility platforms only if you are authorized to do so.

D. Hand Trucks, Hampers, and Containers

1. General Rules

- Do not ride, climb onto, or cross over any manually propelled rolling equipment.
- Push, rather than pull, all hand trucks, containers, hampers, and other such equipment. Your hands must not protrude beyond the sides of the container you are pushing. Do not manually tow containers.
- Never overload equipment or load it so high that it is top-heavy.
- Place orange tags on defective equipment. Use PS Form 4707, *Out of Order*, to report all defective equipment. Report defective equipment to your supervisor, and remove it to a designated storage area.

2. Hampers

- Keep clear of hamper dumpers in use. Avoid placing in hampers heavy objects, sacks of mail, or mail in trays. Place heavy packages on flatbed trucks rather than in hampers. If you must remove a heavy package from a hamper, tip the hamper onto its side and lift the package from the floor to avoid excessive strain on your back. Use proper lifting techniques.
- Use a coupler or similar device when towing hampers.
- Tow no more than three hampers, whether loaded or empty.
- Never attempt to tow hampers by holding them with one hand while you drive the tractor.
- Never stack hampers more than three high for storage or transportation. To unstack hampers, always get help from another person. Turn the nested hampers onto their sides before unstacking them.

3. Containers

- The term *containers* refers to general-purpose mail containers (GPMC), Eastern Region mail containers (ERMC), BMC over-the-road containers (BMC-OTR), etc.
- When manually loading or unloading a container, set the brake, if one is provided. If the container does not have brakes, place mail or equipment into the container rather than throw it, because the container may move if jostled. Use at least two wheel chocks (front and back) to prevent movement when positioning a container on an uneven surface.
- Load the bottom shelf of a GPMC first. Unload it last. Use the restraining bar to hold the top shelf while it is in the raised position. When the container is not in use, store the shelves in the *down* position.
- Secure all containers that you load onto vehicles with shoring bars to prevent the load from shifting and rolling free. Place OTR-container tow pins in the floor sockets of trucks or vans.
- If a load has toppled against the mesh doors of an ERMC, get help when removing the restraining bar. When pressure is placed against the mesh door, the restraining bar can be *extremely dangerous* because it acts like a spring when released.
- Always hold restraining bars, doors, and shelves with one hand to prevent them from falling when released, and stand to one side.
- When moving an ERMC or GPMC, make sure that the center shelf is in the *down* position. Check the gate latch and shelf latch before loading or moving a container.
- Push containers from the swivel-wheel end. Watch constantly for obstructions on both sides of the container.

E. Other Equipment

1226 F Tray Carts

- Before delivery bar code sorter (DBCS) set up:
 - Inspect for damage to the wheel brakes and individual slide-out drawer.
 - Inspect for non-functional mechanical parts.
 - Visually check for loose and missing hardware, and jagged or sharp edges.
 - Verify cams and tray plates are in the home position and that springs are not broken, missing, or loose.
 - Verify the steering control lock and wheels on the tray cart function properly.
 - Verify all warning labels are readable and properly located.
 - Verify slide assemblies extend and retract properly.
- Report defective equipment to your supervisor and move it to a designated storage area.
- When a cart is on an uneven surface, its brakes must always be in the locked position.
- Proper alignment of the tray shelves to the DBCS stacker levels will minimize excessive stretching, bending, and turning during sweeping.

Section VIII: Powered Industrial Vehicles

Powered Industrial Vehicles (PIVs) include powered industrial trucks (PITs) and automated guided vehicles (AGVs).

PITs consist of any mobile power-propelled truck used to carry, push, pull, lift, stack or tier materials. PITs are ridden or controlled by a walking operator.

AGVs are self-driven powered industrial vehicles dispatched and operated by a central management system that include tuggers and forklifts. A series of cameras and laser is used to automatically guide the vehicles around the workroom floor.

A. Powered Industrial Trucks (PITs)

1. General

PITs include tow motors, fork trucks, tractors, platform lift trucks, motorized hand trucks, and other specialized industrial trucks powered by electric motors. The following applies:

- Fuel-powered industrial trucks are prohibited for use indoors.
- PITs must only be operated in facilities with aisles a minimum of 8 feet wide.
- Operators must be trained and authorized to operate PITs as described in 29 CFR 1910.178.
- PIT operators are responsible for ensuring vehicle safety and following all safety requirements. Consult the manufacturer's safe-operating manual or your local safety professional if you have any questions.
- Supervisors are responsible to investigate and report (on PS Form 1769/301, *Accident Report*) all PIT-related accidents and near misses, including property damage.

2. Operating Powered Industrial Trucks

Never allow reckless operation of PITs. Operators must follow the safety procedures listed below when using PITs:

- Only certified and trained operators are allowed to operate PIT equipment.
- Always conduct PIT's Pre-Tour Safety and Health Inspection checklist before using PITs.
- Any time the PIT is moving always wear the seat belts provided.
- Never operate a PIT while wearing headphones, and avoid any other possible distractions.
- Do not exceed the maximum speed limit of 5 miles per hour (about the speed of a fast walk).
- Never disengage or modify the vehicle to exceed maximum speed.
- Use only the designated vehicle traffic lanes and keep the PIT to the right whenever possible. **Observe the traffic patterns.**
- Do not use the reverse control to brake.
- When towing containers, the PIT operator must use the brake levers to prevent jackknifing or loss of containers in the train.
- Passengers may ride on a PIT only if:
 - Transporting passengers has been approved;
 - Securely attached seating is provided; and
 - The seating capacity of the unit is not exceeded.
- Never disengage, cover up, or bypass any audible or visual warning device.
- Never ride with any part of your body protruding from the truck.

- Always determine whether there is adequate clearance before driving under any overhead obstruction. If there is not, do not attempt it.
- Make sure the area around the PIT is clear before moving a forklift or lifting a load.
- Never obstruct aisles, passageways, fire-fighting equipment, electrical panels, or exits with parked, in-plant PITs.
- Always check for a clear path to the rear before backing up.
- Stay at least three vehicle lengths behind other trucks when traveling. Look in the direction of travel and do not pass PIT traveling in the same direction.
- Yield to pedestrians at all times and be mindful of employees maneuvering in and out of your workspace and act accordingly.
- Before driving across them, inspect bridge and dock plates to ensure they are able to handle the load and that the load is properly seated on the truck bed for stability.
- Always approach tow conveyor crossings and all intersecting aisles slowly and cautiously; sound a horn to warn pedestrians of your approach.
- Fully lower the load-engaging mechanism, with controls in neutral and the brakes set, when the driver has dismounted and is within 25 feet of the vehicle and the vehicle is still in view.
- When a vehicle is left unattended, lower the load-engaging mechanism, put all controls in neutral, shut off the power, set the brakes, and remove the ignition key. A vehicle is considered unattended if the driver is more than 25 feet away from the vehicle, or if the vehicle is not in the driver's view.

- Return the PIT equipment when not in use to its proper storage location.

3. Lifting and Towing with Powered Industrial Trucks

Make sure that lift and tow operators follow the safety procedures listed below:

- Lift, lower, and carry loads on a lifting or towing truck with the lifting mechanism in a vertical position or tilted back never forward.
- Check weight and dimension limitations for loads. Do not attempt to lift loads that exceed the limits.
- Face in the direction the truck is moving and be careful of rear-end swing when turning corners. Use a spotter if you don't have a clear view.
- When approaching or leaving a building where the ramp is inclined or declined, turn the lift truck so the load is on the upgrade side and cannot slip off the forks.
- Keep forks on a moving lift truck low (just high enough to clear any floor obstructions and low enough to clear overhead obstructions). Under normal conditions, 3 to 6 inches above floor level is sufficient.
- Do not raise or lower forks while the forklift is moving. When a lift truck is parked and unattended, fully lower the forks, place controls in neutral, shut off power, set the brake, and remove the key.
- Before entering a truck or trailer with a PIT, inspect the floor for damage or decay that may cause the lift to break through the floor.
- Ensure the truck floor is able to handle the load and that the trailer is prevented from rolling. Use wheel chocks or positive-lock parking devices.
- Do not use industrial lift trucks for raising personnel to elevated locations.

4. Warning Devices and Personal Protective Equipment for Powered Industrial Trucks

Use warning signs and devices as required to ensure the safety of all employees while vehicles are in operation. Do the following:

- Equip all PITs with a horn and a flashing warning beacon that is in working order.
- Do not allow industrial lift trucks to be operated with the overhead guard or load backrest removed.
- PIT drivers must wear provided seatbelts at all times when they are operating the equipment.
- PIT drivers must wear personal protective equipment (PPE) as specified by the local PPE assessment.
- PIT drivers must wear hard hats when working in designated hard-hat areas.

5. Maintenance

Do the following to maintain PITS:

- Repair PITs only if you are authorized to do so.
- Install only authorized modifications in powered industrial vehicles. Prior approval from the vendor is required.
- Never get under a lift truck unless it is properly held up by jack stands.
- Before placing a PIT in service, inspect the vehicle. If the PIT has any defects that could affect safety, red tag it using PS Form 4707, *Out of Order* (readily available on eBuy2), remove the PIT from service, and report defects to your supervisor.

B. Automated Guided Vehicles (AGV)

1. General

AGVs include tow motors, fork trucks, tractors, and other specialized industrial trucks powered by electric motors. The following applies:

- Bargaining unit employees assigned to maintain AGVs are designated as AGV operators. These individuals are responsible for tasks such as selecting routes for the AGVs to travel and initiating and deactivating units, as well as hooking and unhooking containers. AGV operators are also responsible for:
 - Inspecting the vehicle before start up;
 - Ensuring vehicle safety; and
 - Following all safety requirements.
- Verify that operators are trained and authorized to initialize and monitor AGVs' activities while in service.
- AGVs must only be operated in facilities with one-way aisles that are a minimum of 8 feet wide, and two-way aisles that are a minimum of 12 feet wide.
- Supervisors are responsible to investigate and report (on PS Form 1769/301, *Accident Report*) all AGV-related accidents and near misses, including property damage.

If you have any questions, consult the manufacturer's safe-operating manual or your local safety professional.

2. Operating Automated Guided Vehicles

Train operators and other user personnel likely to be exposed to the AGV system in operation. Only trained personnel may manually operate an automated guided vehicle. Operators must be qualified to safely operate the equipment and follow the safety procedures as follows when using AGVs:

- Always conduct an AGV's Pre-Tour Safety Inspection checklist before using an AGV.

- Before using an AGV, exercise caution with changed environments. Adjust for changes in surface conditions, loads, or operation accordingly.
- The user must make sure sensors are in perfect working condition; adjust sensors, if needed, in the direction of travel to cover the maximum moving width and length.
- Vehicle safety devices must not be manually overridden in automatic or semiautomatic modes of operation.
- Maintain the surfaces over which the vehicle system operates to ensure that the traction required for travel, steering, and braking performance can be met under the environmental conditions expected on that surface.
- Program routes to maintain a safe distance from the edge of ramps, platforms, and other objects. Programmed-routes vehicles must be kept clear of the fire aisles, doors, access to stairways, and fire equipment.

3. Lifting and Towing with Automated Guided Vehicles

Make sure that lifting and towing operators execute the safe procedures as follows:

- Lift, lower, and carry loads on a lift truck or tow truck with the lifting mechanism in a vertical position or tilted back, never forward.
- Keep forks on a moving lift truck low (just high enough to clear any floor obstructions and low enough to clear overhead obstructions). Under normal conditions, 3 to 6 inches above floor level is sufficient.

4. Warning Devices for Automated Guided Vehicles

Use warning signs and devices as required to ensure the safety of all employees while vehicles are in operation. Do the following:

- Before moving or remotely reactivating a vehicle from a sleep or inactive condition, activate a warning device (on or off the vehicle) to be audible, visual, or both, indicating the imminent movement of the vehicle under automatic control.
- The warning light(s), such as strobe or flashing, must be readily visible. Vehicles in motion must provide a warning indication distinctive from the warning indication before travel in reversing, traversing, or a pivoting direction, or of vehicle malfunction.
- Use suitable signs, or preferably floor markings, to designate hazard zones; restricted areas that cannot be protected by an object-detection device(s); and areas of inadequate clearance in which vehicles operate.
- The vehicle must remain in good condition at all times.

5. Maintenance

Do the following to maintain AGVs:

- Install only authorized modifications in powered industrial vehicles. Prior approval from the vendor is required.
- Never get under a lifted vehicle unless it is properly held up by an approved lifting device.
- Before placing an AGV in service, inspect the vehicle. If the AGV has any defect that could affect safety, tag it using PS Form 4707, *Out of Order* (readily available on eBuy2), remove the AGV from service, and report defects to your supervisor.

C. Towing Wheeled Equipment

1. Authorized MTE Wheeled Containers

Only the following authorized Mail Transport Equipment (MTE) wheeled containers (as indicated in Handbook PO-502, *Mail Transport Equipment*) are allowed to be towed:

- General-purpose mail container (GPMC).
- Eastern Region mail container (ERMC).
- All-purpose mail container (APC).
- Universal mail container (UMC).
- Rigid wire container. (It must include tow pockets.)
- Bulk-mail-center or over-the-road container (BMC/OTR).
- Plastic (Orange) hamper.

2. Towing Wheeled Equipment

Make sure that operators towing wheeled containers adhere to the following safe procedures:

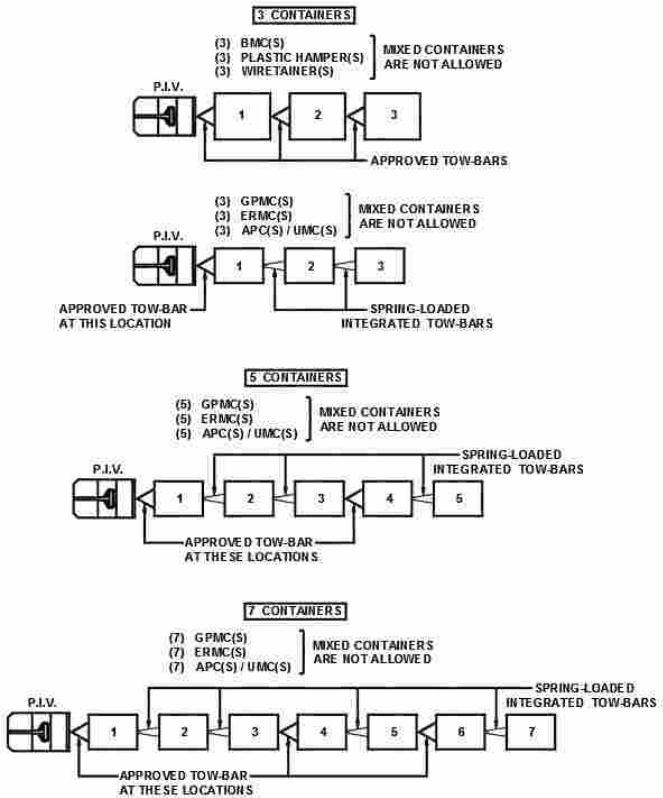
- Tow only rolling stock that is equipped with tow sockets. Never tow from the lip or edge of the equipment.
- Attach the heaviest container first so that it is closest to the PIV.
- Never tow a mixture of container types.
- For all facilities, see [Exhibit 1](#) for the maximum allowable MTE containers to be towed (whether loaded or empty) at one time.
- Use only approved tow bars, coupling devices or snap-on tow pockets to tow wheeled containers. (See D: “Tow-Bars/Snap-on Tow Pockets.”)
- When towing more than three GPMC, ERMC, APC or UMC containers at one time, the PIT operator must place an approved folding tow bar between the third and fourth container. When towing more than five containers, the PIT operator must use two approved

folding tow bars. The PIT operator must place one between the third and fourth container and the other between the fifth and sixth container. See [Exhibit 2](#) for tow-bar placement configurations.

Exhibit 1
Maximum Containers to Be Towed

TYPE OF EQUIPMENT	QUANTITY
GPMC/ERMC/APC/UPC	7
BMC/OTR	3
RIGID WIRE CONTAINER	3
PLASTIC HAMPER	3

Exhibit 2
Tow Bar Placement When Towing Wheeled Containers

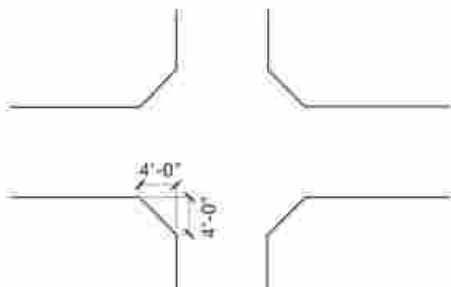


3. Aisle-Width Requirement for Towing Wheeled Equipment

The criteria for aisle width to tow wheeled equipment are as follows:

- Facility aisles that are a minimum of 8 feet wide support one-way traffic only. Passing of other container trains is prohibited.
- Facility aisles that are a minimum of 12 feet wide support two-way traffic. Passing of other container trains is allowed.
- PIT and AGV equipment are prohibited from being operated in an aisle less than 8 feet wide.
- All aisles must be clearly marked.
- All 90-degree intersections are chamfered by 4 feet at a minimum. See [Exhibit 3](#).

Exhibit 3 Chamfered Intersection



D. Tow Bars/Snap-on Tow Pockets

1. Tow Bars

Use only approved tow bars, coupling devices or snap-on tow pockets (see Exhibits 4 through 8) while towing wheeled equipment. Operators are prohibited from using their hands to hold equipment while it is being towed.

Exhibit 4

Folding Tow Bar

The folding tow bar is used to connect a PIT to wheeled equipment or from wheeled equipment to wheeled equipment for towing. It is designed to fit all towable containers and has movable arms to adjust to different distances between the tow pockets. The folding tow bar is available from the Material Distribution Center in Topeka, Kansas (NSN-3920-17-000-1199).



Exhibit 5

Three-Pronged Coupler

The three-pronged coupler is for general use to connect a PIT to wheeled equipment or to connect wheeled equipment to wheeled equipment for towing. The three-pronged coupler does not fit the BMC-OTR container because of the fixed distance between the prongs.



Exhibit 6

Integrated Tow Bar

The spring-loaded integral tow bar is installed on some USPS rolling stock (GPMC, ERM, UMC). Use the spring-loaded integral tow bar when connecting the second and third containers in a train.



Exhibit 7

Swivel Tow Bar

The swivel tow bar is for general use to connect a PIV to wheeled equipment, or to connect wheeled equipment to wheeled equipment for towing. The swivel tow bar has longer prongs than the folding tow bar.



2. Snap-on Tow Pocket

Use only an approved snap-on tow pocket (see [Exhibit 8](#)) installed on USPS rolling stock Rigid Wire Containers Type 1 and 2 while towing. Type 1, USPS drawing number 264689 (NSN: 8115-05-000-4983) has three indentations in the wire-mesh panels. These indentations are used as aids to correctly position snap-on tow pockets. Rigid Wire Container Type 2, USPS drawing number USPS2011762, has no indentations, but has completely flat wire-mesh panels.

Exhibit 8

Snap-on Tow Pocket – Rigid Wire Container



E. Tow Bars Review Process – New Units

Towing equipment throughout Post Office facilities has many challenges. Currently, to tow equipment in Postal Service facilities, all personnel must use the approved tow bars. These devices have been evaluated for their efficacy, and ability to tow safely with respect to postal work. If a need arises that may warrant implementing a new tow bar, the tow bar must first be tested and approved by Engineering Network Operations and Headquarters (HQ) Safety. Contact the HQ program manager of Technology Acquisition, or the HQ manager of Safety Research and Development for more information.

Section IX: Mail Delivery

A. Fingering Mail

Never finger mail while driving, walking up and down steps or curbs, crossing streets, or at any other time the practice could create a safety hazard to you or the public.

B. Hazardous Conditions

- Pay close attention when you are walking in order to avoid lawn depressions, stones, bits of wood, children's toys, and other tripping hazards.
- You are not required to risk personal injury from icy steps, broken or rotten steps or porches, protruding nails or sharp edges on mailboxes, or similar hazardous conditions. Use PS Form 1767, *Report of Hazard, Unsafe Condition, or Practice*, to report any of these problems to your supervisor.
- Alert replacement carriers to any hazardous conditions by completing PS Form 1766, *Hazard Warning Card*.

C. Mail Collection

- When collecting mail from a street box or a mail chute receiving box, or when delivering mail to apartment house boxes or neighborhood delivery and collection box units (NDCBUs) that are equipped with an arrow lock, remove the key from the lock to avoid personal injury or damage to your clothing or keys.

- Keep the chain for your mailbox keys securely fastened to your belt loop and place the keys and chain in your pocket when you are not using them. Dangling, swinging keys and chains can be dangerous.
- Use PS Form 1767 to report defective, dented, or unanchored collection or relay boxes to your supervisor so that corrective action may be taken. Do not try to force entry to dented or otherwise defective collection or relay boxes.
- Always check the contents of mailboxes for broken glass, bottles, insects, or animals before placing your hands inside.
- Never stand in the street when loading or emptying mailboxes. Do not place mail in or collect mail from any boxes that require you to stand in the street. Use PS Form 1767 to report such boxes to your supervisor so that corrective action may be taken.

D. Animals and Insects

1. General Rules

- You are not required to deliver mail when an animal threatens you. Use extra care in making deliveries when dogs or other animals are loose on your route.
- Prepare PS Form 1778, *Dog/Animal Warning Card*, and place it in the letter case whenever you observe an animal that may interfere with delivering mail. Place the card in front of the address where you observed the hazard. If the dog poses a threat throughout a segment of the route, case the card at an address most appropriate to provide advanced warning.
- In addition, report any such interference to your supervisor so that the customer may be notified that the animal must be restrained.

- Never antagonize a dog. Never attempt to pet or feed a dog. If a dog rushes toward you or takes you by surprise, do not run. Retreat very slowly, facing the dog. Keep your mail satchel between you and the dog as a first line of defense. Be careful not to stumble over objects as you retreat.
- Use dog-repellent spray only if you are attacked. Spray it directly at the dog's eyes, nose, and mouth. Do not use dog repellent indiscriminately or when there is danger of spraying children or adults.
- When delivering mail through a door slot, keep your fingers out of the slot; an animal may be on the other side.
- When delivering mail to a customer's door, keep your foot on the door so that a dog cannot unexpectedly rush out at you.
- If rabies has been officially reported in the community where you are delivering mail, be especially observant of any dogs, cats, or wild animals.

2. Medical Treatment of Animal Bites or Insect Stings

- If you are bitten, get medical treatment immediately, regardless of the severity of the injury. Even small bites or contact with animal saliva may transmit rabies. Wash the area with soap and water as soon as possible.
- If you have severe or allergic reactions to insect stings, you must inform your supervisor and, if available, the medical or health unit. Use caution removing mail from mail receptacles to avoid stings from any insects inside.

Section X: Motor Vehicles

Vehicle accidents are a major source of serious personal injury for Postal Service employees. Defensive driving is the best way to prevent vehicle accidents because it involves both the desire and the ability of a driver to control accident-provoking situations. You are expected to drive all Postal Service vehicles in a dependable, efficient, safe, and courteous manner.

A. Licenses

- Only authorized personnel may operate Postal Service vehicles. You must have in your possession a valid state driver's license when operating a Postal Service vehicle or any vehicle when on Postal Service business. State driver's licenses are not required for operating PITs on Postal Service premises.
- You must inform your supervisor immediately if your state driver's license is revoked or suspended.
- Department of Transportation (DOT) regulations mandate alcohol- and drug-testing of employees with commercial driver's licenses (CDLs). The Postal Service has implemented this requirement in Management Instruction PO-720-2010-1, *Alcohol and Drug Testing of Employees With a Commercial Driver's License (CDL)*.

B. Civil Laws

You must obey all state and local traffic laws when driving any Postal Service vehicle. You will receive no special privileges or rights as a Postal Service driver. Police citations for traffic violations are your personal responsibility. Promptly report them to your supervisor while on duty.

C. Reporting Accidents

If you are involved in an accident:

- Stop at the scene.
- Aid or assist any injured person.
- Have someone call for an ambulance or the police, if necessary.
- Safeguard the scene against any further accidents.
- Safeguard the mail.
- Try to identify several witnesses.
- Promptly notify your supervisor.
- Follow the instructions in your Item 087-H, *Accident Report Kit*, and any local accident-reporting instructions.

D. Vehicle Regulations

1. Vehicle Safety Inspections

- Inspect daily your assigned vehicle as outlined in Notice 76, *Expanded Vehicle Safety Check*, before leaving the Post Office parking lot or garage. Inspect leased trailers for damage, inappropriate placards, or unsafe items, including flammable or hazardous waste, etc.
- Check to ensure that a sealed *Accident Report Kit* (Item 087-H) is provided inside your assigned vehicle.
- Use PS Form 4565, *Vehicle Repair Tag*, to report all mechanical defects, failures, and vehicle damage to your supervisor.
- Handbook PO-701, *Fleet Management*, Section 243.1 requires that vehicles of 1 ton or larger that are regularly scheduled for intercity or airport runs, or vehicles regularly scheduled for use as wreckers, must carry fire extinguishers and emergency warning device kits.

2. Safety Belts

- You must wear safety belts at all times the vehicle is moving. When driving a long-life vehicle (LLV) or the carrier route vehicle (CRV), you must wear the lap belt and shoulder belt whenever the vehicle is moving.

Exception: *When shoulder belts prevent you from reaching to deliver or collect from curbside mailboxes, you may unfasten the shoulder belt, but never the lap belt.*

- You may carry only authorized passengers. All passengers must remain seated and wear a lap belt and shoulder harness whenever the vehicle is moving.
- Rural carriers must follow the policy outlined in Handbook PO-603, *Rural Carrier Duties and Responsibilities*, Section 171.5.
- Some administrative Postal Service vehicles are equipped with airbags that may deploy upon frontal impact.

3. Doors

- When you are traveling to and from your route, when you are moving between park and relay points, and when you are entering or crossing intersecting roadways, you must be sure that all vehicle doors are closed.
- All vehicle doors must be secured when the vehicle is left unattended and out of the driver's immediate sight.

Exceptions: *The Postal Service fleet includes a number of 1-ton, 2-ton, and 2.5-ton step-van style vehicles that have left-hand drive cab compartments with sliding doors, and closed cargo areas. When driving these vehicles, keep the rear door closed, and close the left door when the vehicle is moving. You may leave the right door open, however, if there is no passenger, mail, or*

loose equipment in the cab area and the cargo partition is closed.

- When you are operating a vehicle on delivery routes and traveling in intervals of 500 feet (1/10 mile) or less at speeds no greater than 15 miles per hour between delivery stops, you may leave the door on the driver's side open. You must still close the door when traveling through intersections.

4. Fueling

- Shut off the motor before fueling a vehicle.
- Do not smoke within 25 feet of gasoline pumps, fuel, CNG, or oil storage tanks.
- Be sure the nozzle of the pump hose touches the edge of the tank to avoid static sparking.
- When filling a portable container, make sure it is on the ground and the nozzle touches the edge of the container.
- Know where the emergency shut-off switch for the fuel pump is located.
- Be sure that a fire extinguisher is located nearby.

5. Engine Exhaust

- The gas called carbon monoxide that internal combustion engines release is odorless, tasteless, colorless, and deadly. Therefore, hook up an exhaust hose to any vehicle before running its engine inside a building, or make sure there is adequate ventilation.
- Check exhaust hoses periodically for splits, cracks, or other deterioration.

6. Tire Safety Cages

- To inflate or deflate tires mounted on split rims, place them in an approved tire safety cage. Mount or

dismount split-rim wheels only if you have been trained to do so.

- When inflating a tire in the safety cage, use a clip-on air chuck with a remote valve so that you can stand clear.

E. Driving Regulations

1. General Rules

- Never finger mail or hold it in your hands while you drive.
- Move your vehicle only when you are absolutely certain that it is safe to do so, especially if children may be nearby. If necessary, get out, circle your vehicle, and check underneath it to make sure.
- Yield the right of way and make any other concessions necessary to avoid an accident.
- Always maintain a safe stopping distance, being especially careful during adverse weather.
- When following another vehicle in clear weather, you can judge the necessary distance between it and your vehicle by using the 4-second rule. Choose a landmark. When the vehicle ahead of you passes it, begin to count, *one thousand and one, one thousand and two, one thousand and three, one thousand and four*. If you pass the landmark before you reach *one thousand and four*, you are following too closely. During adverse weather, stay farther behind the vehicle in front of you. If you are following larger trucks (1-ton or more), increase the time lapse to 6 seconds.
- Use your turn signal before turning, changing lanes, or pulling to or away from the curb or shoulder of the road.
- Enter all unregulated or unprotected intersections slowly and cautiously. Slow down and do not enter the cross street until you are sure you can do so safely.

- Before entering any intersection, slow down and look left, then right, then left again. Remember that danger is always closer from the left when the roadway is two directional.
- Never wear headphones or headsets or any other device that can diminish your hearing while you are operating a motor vehicle.

2. Speed

Always drive at a safe speed. Never exceed the speed limit, but keep in mind that under certain conditions the posted speed limit may not be the safe one.

3. Backing Up

- Avoid backing up whenever possible. If you can, park where you will not have to back up to pull away from a parking place. If you must back up, first walk around your vehicle to make sure there are no pedestrians, children, obstructions, etc., in your way.
- When backing a large vehicle, have someone guide you whenever possible. The guide should stand to the side and rear of the vehicle and use hand signals, not oral directions. Never allow the guide to get out of your vision, especially behind your vehicle; you might unknowingly crush the guide against some object. Even when you use a guide, it is your responsibility to back up safely. Use both rear-view mirrors and have them properly adjusted.
- Drivers who are required to turn a vehicle around in one continuous operation (such as rural carriers making turnarounds) must use extreme caution when backing up.
- Look, listen, and live at all railroad crossings.
- Obey all highway rail-crossing warnings.

4. Parking

Whenever the driver leaves the vehicle, the vehicle must be parked. To park the vehicle:

- Apply the foot brake and place automatic transmissions in the park position. Place manual transmissions in gear. For PVS vehicles 7 tons or more, place the transmission in neutral.
- Turn the vehicle's front wheels toward the curb if you are on a flat surface or the vehicle is facing downhill. If the vehicle is parked facing uphill, turn the front wheels away from the curb.
- Set the hand-parking/emergency brake. For PVS vehicles 7 tons or more, the parking air brakes must be applied.
- Turn off the engine and remove the key.
- Lock any sliding door(s) between the truck body and cab.
- Lock the doors if you will be out of direct sight of the vehicle.

5. Passengers

- Ride in Postal Service-owned, GSA-owned, rental, or contract vehicles (including employees' privately owned vehicles when used in Postal Service operations) only if you are authorized to do so. All passengers must use safety belts.
- If conventional passenger seats are not provided, use an approved auxiliary seat that faces forward and is equipped with a backrest and safety belts. Never stand in a moving vehicle.

6. Loading

- Make sure that any mail you load into a vehicle will pose no hazard to the operator when the vehicle is started,

stopped, turned, or otherwise operated on a mail delivery route. Do not place large parcels, bulky items, or bundles of mail on the tray or ledge to the extent that they can obscure your vision or break the windshield during a sudden stop.

- Always use proper lifting techniques when loading mail into a vehicle.

7. Parking Lots

- Park in designated parking spaces only.
- Use designated traffic lanes only.
- Observe posted speed limits. Unless posted otherwise, the maximum speed is 10 miles per hour.
- Follow one-way directional signs in traffic lanes.
- Observe traffic signals when entering and leaving Postal Service premises.
- Do not throw litter in parking lots. Use receptacles that are provided.
- Obey all posted signs in the parking and access road areas.
- Do not park in or block fire lanes.

Section XI: Air Mail Facilities/Centers

The complex nature of airport operations can pose special dangers to Postal Service employees. Learn to recognize and be aware of hazards that may arise from aircraft, intense noises, and fueling operations. These hazards can be overcome by proper training and constant awareness.

A. General Rules

- Only ramp employees who are trained and certified with aircraft operation area access can be authorized to operate Postal Service vehicles on airport property.
- Postal Service employees are responsible for complying with all local Federal Aviation Administration aircraft operations area and ramp-safety regulations.
- Smoking is not permitted in Postal Service facilities including air mail facilities. Do not smoke on airport service ramps or in the vicinity of pouch racks. Smoke only in designated areas.

B. Operator and Vehicle Regulation

- Before leaving your Post Office facility, make sure that your vehicle contains at least one-half tank of gas, a fully charged fire extinguisher, and any required emergency equipment.
- You must yield to all emergency vehicles responding to an alert. This includes crash and rescue vehicles, fire trucks, and security or police cars, etc.
- Use only the exact travel route that the local airport authority designated and your supervisor provides to reach the point of entry to an airport service ramp.

- Approach an aircraft only after all engines and propellers have been completely stopped. Your vehicle must not be closer than 5 feet (or greater distance as the local airport authority dictates) to any part of the aircraft.
- Never drive across passenger-loading lanes while an aircraft is at a gate position.
- Always wear ear-protection devices in the presence of operating aircraft.
- The tail end of an aircraft can be as hazardous as the front. Running engines blast dirt, debris, and other solid objects with a force strong enough to break windshields and to cause eye injury or bone fracture. Take immediate shelter if you are about to be caught by a blast from the engines of an arriving or departing aircraft.

Section XII: Seated Keying Activities

The following guidelines concern the adjustment of workstations for seated keying activities conducted over an extended period.

A. Workstation Chairs

Adjust a workstation chair within its limits. Sit with:

- Body and head erect.
- Upper arms vertical.
- Lower arms comfortably horizontal.
- Wrists on an even line with the forearms.
- Thighs comfortably horizontal.
- Lower legs vertical.

B. Keyboards

- If the keyboard height can be adjusted, position the home-row keys at about elbow height so that keying can be performed with the wrist on an even line with the forearm. The elbow should be at an approximate 90-degree angle.
- If the keyboard height cannot be adjusted, the chair height should be set so that the elbow is about the same height as the keyboard home row and the wrist is on an even line with the forearm.

C. Monitors

- When using a monitor screen, adjust it a suitable distance (typically about 18 to 24 inches) from your eyes, with the top of the screen at, or slightly below, eye level. Specific monitor placement may depend on your visual acuity and corrective eyewear.
- Adjust image color, brightness, and contrast. When possible, select a white or light background screen color and a dark color for text. This helps reduce undesirable screen glare and reflections from overhead lights and light-colored clothing.
- Position the screen face to avoid glare and keep your field of vision free from glare sources.
- Clean the screen periodically to eliminate smudges and dust.

D. Footrests

Where a footrest is provided, adjust it to support thighs and lower legs. Keep feet flat and thighs horizontal for additional support for feet and legs.

E. Work Practices

- Rest your eyes periodically; blink, look away from the screen, stand up, and stretch.
- If you handle papers, the computer mouse, or other objects frequently in your work, position them as close to you as practical to minimize excessive reaching.

F. Rotation

Follow established rotation and/or break schedules.