

January 31, 2024

OFFICERS, PCES, PAY BAND MANAGERS, and EAS EMPLOYEES

SUBJECT: Preparing for the 2024 Election Season

The 2024 Primary Election Season is upon us, the General Election is only 9 months away, and we are excited to provide election officials and voters who choose to use the mail with a secure, efficient, and effective means of enabling citizens to participate in the electoral process.

The Postal Service has a very clear and defined role in the election process, and that is to collect, process, transport, and deliver the nation's Election Mail, including ballots.

As a reminder, Election Mail is any item mailed to or from authorized election officials that enables citizens to participate in the voting process, including ballots, voter registration forms, ballot applications, polling place notifications, and similar materials. This specific mail qualifies as Election Mail both when it is sent to voters from election officials at the state and local levels and when it is returned by voters to those officials. Election Mail is distinct from "political mail", which is mail sent by political candidates, political action committees, and similar organizations to advocate for candidates or issues, and most Election Mail procedures and policies do not apply to political mail.

This memorandum provides an overview of two key topics: the groups that will again lead our efforts in the 2024 Primary and General Election season; and the robust practices and procedures that we employ every election cycle to facilitate the timely and secure delivery of the nation's Election Mail. As always, we will work tirelessly to ensure our operational preparedness for the election season and will be reinforcing key messages with our front-line employees throughout the year.

Election Mail Leadership

The Election and Government Mail Services (EGMS) team, led by Adrienne Marshall, will continue to formalize and centralize all activities related to election and government mail. EGMS, which is within the Chief Customer and Marketing Officer organization, leads a cross-functional effort to establish the strategy, policies, and services in support of Election Mail. This includes preparing communications among our employees to deepen their understanding of how the Postal Service processes ballots and other Election Mail, and conducting outreach to election officials, their mail service providers, and other stakeholders to help ensure strong coordination and collaboration with our customers.

The EGMS team and Managers of Customer Relations continue to engage with local and state election officials to provide them with the tools necessary to use the mail as a secure, efficient, and effective way to facilitate the election process. EGMS published the 2024 Election Mail Program Kit (KIT 600) and will soon be distributing it to election officials nationwide. KIT 600 provides election officials with the tools necessary to successfully use the U.S. Mail as part of their election process and includes, among other topics, information about mail preparation, ballot tracking, and ways to improve visibility during processing.

EGMS reports to the Executive Leadership Team Advisory Committee for Election Mail. The Advisory Committee for Election Mail will guide Election Mail policy, strategy, and execution to maintain the impressive performance and reliability that election officials and the public have come to expect.

The bipartisan Board of Governors is also supporting and monitoring postal management and advising on Election Mail matters, primarily through its Election Mail Committee which is chaired by Governor McReynolds. Among other things, the Election Mail Committee will review the Postal Service's operational and service performance, and will make recommendations to the Board concerning policies, plans, and services that will serve the needs of state and local officials charged with administering elections and citizens who wish to use the mail to participate in the electoral process.

There continues to be a commitment at the highest levels of the organization and throughout our workforce to ensure that the Postal Service continues our dedication to prioritize and monitor the timely delivery of Election Mail.

Key Resources and Practices

Year after year, the Postal Service has demonstrated an unwavering commitment to the proper handling and timely delivery of Election Mail, and this year is no exception. We will again rely on our longstanding policies and procedures, which have proven successful in facilitating the timely delivery of Election Mail and will reinforce key messages with our front-line employees leading up to Election Day. Some of our key practices for the proper handling of Election Mail, all of which you should be utilizing now unless otherwise indicated are reiterated below:

- ***All Clears and Daily Logs.*** As of January 16, 2024, you should be using daily "all clears" to ensure that all Election Mail is accounted for in the system and that mail scheduled or "committed" to go out is processed accordingly. Please also continue to use the Election Mail and Political Mail Audit Checklist, BMEU Election Mail and Political Mail Log, Plant Election Mail and Political Mail Log, and the Delivery Unit Election Mail and Political Mail Log, to track Election Mail through processing and delivery.

These resources are available on Blue at this link: <https://blue.usps.gov/marketing/product-solutions/electionmail/welcome.htm>.

The Political / Election Mail All Clear Certification link for Delivery Units is available on the Political / Election Mail Blue Share page at this link: <https://blue.usps.gov/marketing/product-solutions/electionmail/standard-work-instructions.htm>

- ***Advancing Election Mail.*** We should continue to prioritize Election Mail—identified by the Official Election Mail logo or other Postal Service visibility tools—regardless of the paid class, pursuant to our long-standing practice. Specifically, Election Mail entered as USPS Marketing Mail should be advanced ahead of all other USPS Marketing Mail and processed expeditiously to the extent feasible so that it is generally delivered in line with First-Class Mail delivery standards.
- ***Postmarking.*** The Postal Service tries to ensure that every return ballot mailed by voters receives a postmark, in recognition of the importance that the election laws in some states place on postmarks for mail-in ballots. *A detailed memorandum on the Postal Service's postmarking policy for return ballots will be issued before the General Election.*

- **Delivery/Collections.** Extra delivery and collection trips are authorized and instructed to be used if necessary to ensure that Election Mail stays current and moving through the Postal Service's network.
- **Overtime.** Management will continue to monitor the use of work hours and overtime so that we can identify and address problems that may be the cause of work not being performed within expected work hours or managed inefficiently. Consistent with past practice, the Postal Service will use justified and approved overtime hours where needed to deliver the mail on time, and overtime will continue to be utilized as necessary to support our Election Mail policies and procedures.
- **Transportation.** The Postal Service will continue to align our transportation and processing schedules to ensure timely, reliable mail delivery and we will take reasonably necessary steps to complete timely Election Mail delivery, including late or extra trips. Extra transportation resources will be used as necessary to promptly connect Election Mail to its intended destination or the next stage in Postal Service processing. Managers are authorized to use their best business judgment to meet our service commitments.

Providing consistent guidance across the organization is critical to our success. Please refer to the 2024 Election Mail and Political Mail Guidebook available on Blue, to find up to date policies and procedures related to Election Mail and Political Mail.

Upon receipt of this memorandum, please take time to fully explain to your direct reports the policies and practices discussed above. A copy of this memorandum will be posted on the Postal Service Intranet at blue.usps.gov and usps.com/electionmail. Headquarters will distribute a Mandatory Stand-Up Talk to all employees discussing this memorandum.

Finally, please be on the lookout for further guidance from EGMS as the primary season progresses and again in the fall as we prepare for the General Election. This will include the use of "extraordinary measures" beyond our normal course of operations when appropriate to accelerate ballots in the days immediately leading up to and following the general election.

Presidential primaries are currently scheduled to take place between January and June. Congressional primaries are currently scheduled to take place between March and September and the general election is on November 5, 2024. The further guidance will cover our longstanding policies and practices and will largely be consistent with our efforts from 2020 and 2022.

Thank you for your hard work and dedication in delivering America's Election Mail.

Dr. Joshua D. Colin
Chief Retail & Delivery
Officer and Executive V.P.

Isaac Cronkhite, Chief
Processing & Distribution
Officer and Executive V.P.

Kelly Abney
Chief Logistics Officer and
Executive V.P.