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## POSTAL NEWS

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### **USPS, Inspection Service Continue Nationwide Effort to Crack Down on Postal Crime and Crimes Against Postal Employees** *Monetary Rewards Increased for Information that Leads to the Arrest and Conviction of a Perpetrator of Postal Crime*

WASHINGTON, DC — The U.S. Postal Service (USPS) and U.S. Postal Inspection Service (Inspection Service) today provided an update on their [Project Safe Delivery](#) campaign to crack down on postal crimes, including attacks against postal employees. Announced in May 2023, Project Safe Delivery is a USPS initiative to combat the recent rise in threats and attacks on letter carriers and mail theft incidents by protecting Postal employees and the security of the nation's mail and packages. Multiple departments within USPS, including the Inspection Service, the Office of the Chief Information Officer, and the Office of the Chief Retail and Delivery Officer are working together to support the ongoing campaign. To help strengthen this effort, the Inspection Service has also significantly increased monetary rewards for information leading to the arrest or conviction of a perpetrator of postal crimes.

"As our nation continues to address a sustained crime wave, our targeted focus to crack down on postal crime is progressing," said Postmaster General and Chief Executive Officer Louis DeJoy. "The safety of our letter carriers — and all postal employees — is our top priority. We will continue to work steadfastly with our law enforcement partners to increase the safety of our employees and protect the sanctity of the nation's mail."

"We have effectively focused our efforts with USPS on hardening both physical and digital targets to combat threats to postal employees and secure the mail. We continue to turn up the pressure and put potential perpetrators on notice; If you attack Postal employees, steal the mail, or commit other postal crimes, Postal Inspectors will bring you to justice," said Chief Postal Inspector Gary Barksdale. "We ask that the public assist us with our mission. Our rewards for information have increased substantially, highlighting the importance of the safety and security of our employees and the mail. If you see something, say something, and help us bring to justice those that cause harm to postal employees, steal mail, or commit other postal crimes."

#### **Project Safe Delivery Progress To Date**

Since the launch of Project Safe Delivery in May 2023, the Postal Service and Inspection Service have taken the following actions to address postal crime nationwide:

- **Law Enforcement Surges Completed In Chicago, San Francisco, Ohio; More than 600 Individuals Arrested for Postal Crimes.** Postal inspectors completed a series of targeted law enforcement surges in Chicago, San Francisco, and cities across Ohio, major metropolitan regions facing significant threats from organized postal crime. Each operation used wide-ranging law enforcement partnerships including with the Department of Justice, Postal Service Office of the Inspector General, other federal agencies, and local law enforcement. Postal Inspectors conducted more than 700 investigative actions, including the execution of arrests and other court authorized law enforcement activities and more than 375 prevention activities, including presentations to postal employees on employee safety and mail theft prevention.

Since May, the Inspection Service has made 109 arrests for robberies and more than 530 arrests for mail theft. The Inspection Service will continue to collaborate with local, state, and federal law enforcement and conduct targeted surge operations focusing on those high postal crime areas.

- **10,000 High-Security Blue Collection Boxes Installed Nationwide.** The Postal Service is installing high-security blue collection boxes making access to their contents more difficult for criminals. Since May, over 10,000 high-security blue boxes have been deployed in high-security risk areas.

The Postal Service will continue to evaluate replacing additional existing blue collection boxes with these enhanced boxes and anticipates installing several thousand more boxes in the near future. In specific locations where a blue box is a repeated crime target and/or mail density is very low, collection boxes may have to be removed entirely when access is not meaningfully diminished due to nearby access points.

- **Ongoing Replacement of Antiquated Arrow Locks with 49,000 Electronic Locks.** There has been an increase in letter carrier robberies nationwide where criminals are targeting letter carriers for their Arrow and Modified Arrow Lock (MAL) Keys. Criminals use Arrow and MAL keys to steal mail from secure mail receptacles to commit financial crimes, including altering checks to commit check fraud. To make Arrow Keys less valuable for criminals, the Postal Service has replaced more than 6,500 antiquated arrow locks with electronic locks in select cities. In coming months, the Postal Service plans to deploy an additional 42,500 electronic locks nationwide. The Postal Service and the Postal Inspection Service are also increasing Arrow Key accountability reviews in select high Postal crime areas.
- **99.3% Reduction In Fraudulent Change of Address Submissions After Implementation of Electronic- and In-Person Authentication Procedures.** The Postal Service processed more than 29 million change of address (COA) transactions in Fiscal Year 2023. Across the globe identity theft is on the rise driven by a financial motive. The Postal Service is not the intended target, however implicated due to the fraudster intercepting financially oriented mail such as credit cards or checks. To combat the rise in fraudulent submissions, the Postal Service has strengthened authentication processes for all methods of COA submissions, electronic and hardcopy submitted in person or through the mail stream.

Since expanding enhanced in-person change of address protocols and implementing additional identity verification services for online change of addresses, fraudulent submissions have decreased by more than 99.3% compared to the same period last year.

- **50% Reduction in Counterfeit Package Postage In Postal Network Due to Increased Controls and Enforcement.** The Postal Service is committed to protecting the integrity and security of the mail system and ensuring that customers receive the service they pay for. Customers are urged to use only authorized and legitimate labels for their packages, and to report any suspicious or fraudulent labels to the USPS or the Inspection Service. Customers who use counterfeit or hijacked labels may face legal consequences and lose their mailing privileges.

The USPS has developed a sophisticated system to identify, intercept and retain counterfeit or hijacked labels on packages, using artificial intelligence, machine learning, and data analysis. Since the start of the interception program, counterfeit package postage in the postal network has significantly reduced by more than 50%.

In May, analysis conducted by the Inspection Service led to the arrest of a Chinese-national in Los Angeles for running an alleged counterfeit postage scheme and shipping more than 9 million pieces of mail with \$60 million in counterfeit postage.

The Inspection Service continues to expand actions to crack down on fraudulent postage including:

- Interdictions of packages with counterfeit labels affixed
- Reviews of shipments on Postal Service docks and during warehouse outreach visits
- Shut down of websites and closure of eCommerce accounts selling counterfeit postage
- Engagement and partnership with eCommerce companies to disrupt activity
- Customs and Border Protection (CBP) collaboration

### **Increased Monetary Rewards**

The Inspection Service is authorized to issue monetary rewards for certain types of offenses against the United States Postal Service. The agency along with its partners has enacted regulatory changes to reflect increased monetary reward amounts for information that leads to the arrest and conviction of a perpetrator of

mail crime. Relevant criminal behavior includes homicide, assault, mail fraud, mail theft, counterfeiting and forgery, and destroying, obstructing, or limiting the passage of mail.

In August, the Inspection Service increased monetary rewards for information that leads to the arrest and conviction of a perpetrator of mail crime:

<b>USPIS MONETARY REWARDS FOR INFORMATION LEADING TO ARREST AND CONVICTION OF A PERPETRATOR OF MAIL CRIME* (Effective August 21, 2023)</b>		
<b>Offenses Against USPS Employees/Contractors</b>		
<b><i>Murder or Manslaughter of a Postal Service Employee or Contractor</i></b>	<b>\$250,000</b>	The unlawful killing of any officer, employee, or contractor of the Postal Service while engaged in or on account of the performance of his or her official duties.
<b><i>Assault on Postal Employees</i></b>	<b>\$150,000</b>	Forcibly assaulting any officer or employee of the Postal Service while engaged in or on account of the performance of his or her official duties.
<b><i>Robbery</i></b>	<b>\$150,000</b>	Robbery or attempted robbery of any custodian of any mail, money, or other property of the United States under the control and jurisdiction of the Postal Service.
<b>Offenses Involving Theft of Mail or USPS Property</b>		
<b><i>Burglary Of Post Office</i></b>	<b>\$100,000</b>	Breaking into, or attempting to break into, a Post Office, station, branch, a building used wholly or partly as a Post Office, or any building or area in a building where the business of the Postal Service is conducted, with intent to commit a larceny or other depredation therein.
<b><i>Theft Of Mail Or Postal Service Property</i></b>	<b>\$100,000</b>	Theft or attempted theft of any mail, or the contents thereof, or the theft of money or any other property of USPS under the custody and control of the Postal Service from any custodian, postal vehicle, railroad depot, airport, or other transfer point, Post Office, or station, receptacle, or depository established, approved, or designated by the Postmaster General for the receipt of mail; possession of any item above which was stolen from Postal Service custody; or destroying, obstructing, or retarding the passage of mail, or any carrier or conveyance carrying the mail.
<b><i>Postage Or Meter Tampering</i></b>	<b>\$100,000</b>	The unlawful use, reuse, or forgery of postage stamps, postage meter stamps, permit imprints, or other postage; or the use, sale, or possession with intent to use or sell any used, forged, or counterfeited postage stamp or other postage.
* Reflects select rewards. Read the full list of increased monetary rewards <a href="#">here</a> .		

### **Action the American Public Can Take To Help Prevent Mail Theft**

Customers can take several steps to protect their mail and their letter carriers, including:

- Don't let incoming or outgoing mail sit in your mailbox. You can significantly reduce the chance of being victimized by simply removing your mail from your mailbox every day.
- Deposit outgoing mail through a number of secure manners including inside your local Post Office or at your place of business or by handing it to a letter carrier.
- Sign up for [Informed Delivery](#) and get daily digest emails that preview your mail and packages scheduled to arrive soon.
- Become involved and engaged in your neighborhood via neighborhood watches and local social media groups to spread awareness and share information.
- Keep an eye out for your letter carrier. If you see something that looks suspicious, or you see someone following your carrier, call 911.

Customers are encouraged to report stolen mail as soon as possible by submitting an online complaint to the Postal Inspection Service at [www.uspis.gov/report](http://www.uspis.gov/report) or calling 877-876-2455. Additionally, individuals are encouraged to report allegations of Postal Service employee misconduct, including attempts to corrupt a Postal Service employee, to the USPS OIG at 1-888-877-7644 or [www.uspsig.gov](http://www.uspsig.gov).

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**Please Note:** The United States Postal Service is an independent federal establishment, mandated to be self-financing and to serve every American community through the affordable, reliable and secure delivery of mail and packages to nearly 165 million addresses six and often seven days a week. Overseen by a bipartisan Board of Governors, the Postal Service is implementing a 10-year transformation plan, [Delivering for America](#), to modernize the postal network, restore long-term financial sustainability, dramatically improve service across all mail and shipping categories, and maintain the organization as one of America's most valued and trusted brands.

The Postal Service generally receives no tax dollars for operating expenses and relies on the sale of postage, products and services to fund its operations.

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