

How to Package and Ship Cremated Remains

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When you need to ship cremated remains, the United States Postal Service® offers Priority Mail Express® and Priority Mail Express International® service along with free packaging to protect your special mailing.

Whether you are shipping the remains of a loved one or a pet to family members or to an artisan to create a work of art, it is necessary to follow our preparation and packaging requirements to protect your shipment during transit.

General Instructions

Domestic Shipping: You can mail cremated remains to any domestic address as long as you prepare the package according to the following instructions.

International Shipping: You can mail cremated remains to an international address as long as the destination country does not prohibit the contents and when Priority Mail Express International service is available to that country. Verify by checking the Individual Country Listing in the *Mailing Standards of the United States Postal Service*, International Mail Manual (IMM®) (see Postal Service References below).

Packaging Instructions

Inner Primary Container

- **Domestic Shipping:** The inner primary container **must** be strong, durable, and built to securely contain the contents inside. It **must** be properly sealed and sift-proof*.
- **International Shipping:** You **must** use a funeral urn as the inner primary container. The urn **must** be properly sealed and sift-proof*.

In the event the shipping label becomes detached from the outer container, the Postal Service™ recommends that you put the sift-proof* container in a sealed plastic bag, clearly write both the complete return and delivery address along with

the words “Cremated Remains” on a label and attach it to the sealed plastic bag.

Cushioning Material

Place sufficient cushioning all around the inner primary sift-proof container to prevent it shifting during transit and to prevent breakage.

Outer Shipping Package

To ship cremated remains you **must use** USPS Priority Mail Express Cremated Remains box. You can only order the Priority Mail Express Cremated Remains box online at The Postal Store® on USPS.com®. The boxes may also be available at select retail locations for immediate shipping needs.

Before sealing the USPS Priority Mail Express box, the Postal Service suggests placing an additional piece of paper inside that includes both the sender’s and recipient’s address and contact information. This precaution will help identify the sender and receiver if the shipping label becomes detached.



*** Note:** “Sift-proof” means loose powder can’t leak out. There are many options for storing cremated remains, from simple wooden boxes to decorative urns. USPS® recommends consulting with a licensed funeral director to help you select the best container.

Address Your Package

Domestic Shipping:

- You **must** use a complete return address and delivery address. The address format for a package is the same as for an envelope. Write or print address labels clearly. Use ink that does not smear and include the addresses and ZIP Codes™ for you and your recipient.
- Double check the mailing address, especially the ZIP Code™. You can use Look Up a ZIP Code™ on USPS.com.
- Mailers may generate Priority Mail Express labels through Click-N-Ship® or other USPS-approved methods.

International Shipping:

You **must** use a complete return address and delivery address. You **must** identify the contents (Cremated Remains) on the required customs declaration form. To determine the required customs form, see IMM Section 123.61: https://pe.usps.com/text/imm/immc1_009.htm.

Note: If available, the cremation certificate should be attached to the outer box or made easily accessible. The sender is responsible for adherence to any restrictions or observances noted by the designating country.

Postal Service References

To learn more about the Postal Service's requirements for shipping cremated remains:

- For domestic shipping, see:
 - Publication 52, *Hazardous, Restricted, and Perishable Mail*, Section 451.22: https://pe.usps.gov/text/pub52/pub52c4_017.htm and Appendix C, Packaging Instruction 10c: https://pe.usps.gov/text/pub52/pub52apxc_036.htm.
 - *Mailing Standards of the United States Postal Service*, Domestic Mail Manual (DMM®) 503: <https://pe.usps.gov/text/dmm300/503.htm>.

- For international shipping, see:
 - Publication 52, *Hazardous, Restricted, and Perishable Mail*, Section 451.22: https://pe.usps.gov/text/pub52/pub52c4_017.htm and Appendix C, Packaging Instruction 10c: https://pe.usps.gov/text/pub52/pub52apxc_036.htm.
 - *Mailing Standards of the United States Postal Service*, International Mail Manual (IMM) Section 139: https://pe.usps.gov/text/imm/immc1_018.htm and the Individual Country Listing for observations, prohibitions and restrictions: <https://pe.usps.gov/text/imm/immctry.htm>.
- Visit a Post Office to speak with a Retail Associate.
- Call 1-800-ASK-USPS (1-800-275-8777).
- Visit USPS.com FAQs: <https://faq.usps.com>.
- Watch “How to Package and Ship Cremated Remains” video at: <https://www.youtube.com/user/uspstv>.

For shipping supplies, visit the Postal Store on USPS.com: <https://store.usps.com>.