

**Forest Service Handbook
National Headquarters - Washington Office
Washington, DC**

**Forest Service Handbook 6209.14 – Mail Management Handbook
Chapter 20 - Incoming Mail Operations**

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Approved by: Jack Ward Thomas, Chief

Date approved:

Responsible Staff:

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Digest: Following is an explanation of the changes throughout the directive by section.

24.2: Revises direction for using abbreviations and acronyms for routing mail to be consistent with direction change in FSH 6209.11, section 23.

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21 - Official Mail

21.1 - Guidelines for Determining Official Mail

Unit Mail Handlers may inspect what appears to be personal mail to determine if it is official or not. The following are basic guidelines for determining whether or not questionable documents of this nature are permissible items for official mail.

21.11 - Permissible Items

1. Retirement announcements and notices of births, deaths, and funeral arrangements. These may be sent in the internal mail or by electronic mail only.
2. Combined Federal Campaign and other fund-raising campaigns which have official sanction; blood bank, health unit services, and preventive medical programs (such as immunization services) that have official approval; and official agency newsletters to retirees.
3. The following materials for an individual transferring to a new official duty station: training material purchased by the Government; notes, studies, reports, and other job-related non-record material; and awards for contributions to charitable campaigns and/or performance awards.
4. Material and newsletters from employee welfare organizations, credit unions, professional societies with members in the Department, and other sanctioned Forest Service employee activities (sec. 24.4). These materials may be routed through the internal mail system (which includes Forest pouch mail and messenger service). No postage may be applied to individual pieces. The penalty indicia and other Forest Service paid mail systems may not be used.

21.12 - Nonpermissible Items

1. Personal mail received at the employee's work station. If personal mail continues to be received for the same individuals, return this mail and notify the individual in writing through official channels (sec. 03).
2. Newsletters regarding employee labor union activity and non-professional groups or societies.
3. Commercial solicitations, training announcements, and advertisements sent to individual employees rather than to Government offices.

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4. Materials which directly or indirectly attack or adversely reflect on the integrity or character of Members of Congress, the judiciary, the President, members of the President's Cabinet, or any other Government official in a similarly responsible position.

5. Materials containing expressions of a derogatory or abusive character concerning any employee of the Department.

6. Materials which directly or indirectly condemn or criticize the policies of any Government Department or Agency.

22 - Delivery Provisions

1. Post Office Boxes. Units that require more than the basic free delivery service should consider arranging for post office boxes from the U.S. Postal Service. Units pay their box rent during the first quarter of the fiscal year rather than in advance (U.S. Postal Service Domestic Mail Manual, sec. 951.272b).

When another agency sorts mail for Forest Service units, analyze the potential cost savings derived from box rental.

Commercial carriers do not deliver to postal boxes. Use dual addresses with separate lines identifying streets and the post office box numbers, as necessary. The U.S. Postal Service delivers mail to the line immediately above the city, state and Zoning Improvement Plan (ZIP) code.

2. Caller Service. Units that receive too much mail for the largest box available in the postal facility can arrange caller service. Pay fees in advance for no less than 6 months and no more than 12 consecutive months. Renewals are made during the last month of the current period.

23 - Messenger Service

Interoffice messenger service includes the routing of mail generated from external and internal sources. Tailor messenger routes, stops, and schedules to meet the unique structure of the unit, working relationships of the staffs, and the physical design of the building(s).

23.04 - Responsibility

23.04a - Unit Mail Manager

It is the responsibility of the Unit Mail Manager to consider the number and timing of pickups and deliveries provided by the Postal Service in order to determine the number of trips and the timing of the routing schedule.

23.04b - Unit Mail Handlers

Unit Mail Handlers are responsible for:

1. Handling any misaddressed mail, unofficial mail, mail that should be purged from mailing lists, and other related problems after deliveries have been completed.
2. Opening all mail addressed to the head of the organization by title only and determining the appropriate recipient. (Sec. 24.2 has direction on routing mail.)

23.1 - Restricted Mail

This mail receives limited handling and distribution within the agency. It is delivered directly to the addressee (FSH 6209.12, Correspondence Handbook, sec. 21).

24 - Incoming Mail

Mailroom personnel should route, without opening, as much mail as possible. Some examples are as follows:

1. Mail marked for a staff unit, project, or special activity.
2. Restricted mail marked "For Official Use Only," or mail with a security classification marking.
3. Official mail marked for personal attention of an individual.
4. Mail addressed to the fiscal agent, contracting officer, purchasing agent, or other position titles. An important exception to this rule is mail addressed to the head of the organization by title only, such as "Regional Forester." This mail should be opened in the mailroom to determine the appropriate recipient.

24.1 - Sorting

The purpose of the sorting operation in large offices is to separate volumes of mail into categories that require different amounts of processing. The bulk of incoming mail can be processed with two sorts.

1. First Sort. The first sort removes a large number of pieces that can be routed unopened. All other mail is set aside for second sort.
2. Second Sort. Mail in this category may require several processing steps, including opening, removing the contents, and determining the routing code (sec. 24.2), which requires reading a portion or scanning the entire document. Put aside advertisements and personal mail until time is available to purge and resolve.

24.2 - Routing

The file code on Forest Service correspondence serves as a routing guide on most internal correspondence. Route mail by the primary, secondary, or tertiary file code when the code is sufficient to ensure the document is routed to the intended staff.

However, when the file code alone is not sufficient to route the mail to the intended staff, use the routing code (ex. 01). The routing code for electronic mail should also be placed in parenthesis on the subject line of the electronic message transmitting the correspondence.

Units may use staff abbreviations or acronyms for routing mail within the respective units only.

Exhibit 01 is the routing code guide for the Washington Office and lists the routing codes and the respective responsible staffs or offices.

Exhibit 02 list the organizational units, abbreviations, and electronic mail addresses for the Washington Office.

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24.2 - Exhibit 01

Washington Office Staff Routing Code Guide

<u>Routing Code</u>	<u>Staff</u>	<u>Routing Code</u>	<u>Staff</u>
1000	Chief	2000	NFS
1010	IST	2060	Rge
1020	*	2070	WF&RP
1100	IST	2100	*
1200	PM	2150	FPM
1300 & 1310	*	2200	Rge
1320	S&PF	2300	RH&WR
1330	EM	2400	TM
1340		2500	WS&A
1350	PAO	2600	WL&F
1360	*	2700 (except 2720)	L
1370 & 1380	IST	2720	*
1390	IST	2800	M&GM
1400 (except 1450-70)	FAS	3100	F&AM
1450	*	3200 & 3300	CF
1460	S&PF	3400	FPM
1470	R	3500 & 3600	CF
1500	P&L	3700	S&PF
1510	LA	3900	S&PF
1520	RH&WR	4000	R
1530	*	4100	FMR
1540	*	4200 & 4300	FER
1550	IF	4400	FFASR
1560	*	4500	FIDR
1570 & 1580	*	4700	FPHR
1590	F&AM	4800	FIERR
1600 & 1610	PAO	4900	FER
1620 (except Woodsy, Env Ed. & Env. Programs).....	PAO	5100	F&AM
1620 (Woodsy, Env. Ed., & Env. Programs only).....	S&PF	5300	LEI
1630 - 1650	PAO	5400 & 5500	L
1670	IST	5700	F&AM
1680 & 1690	PAO	6000	ADMIN
1700	CR	6100	PM
1800	HRP	6200	IST
		6300	P&P
		6400	P&P

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24.2 - Exhibit 01 Continued

<u>Routing Code</u>	<u>Staff</u>	<u>Routing Code</u>	<u>Staff</u>
1900	LMP	6500 (except 6520)	FAS
1910	RPA	6520	PD&B
1920	LMP	6600	IST
1930	PD&B	6700	PM
1950	EC	7100, 7300-7700	E
1960 & 1970	PA	8000	IF
1990	*		

* When using this code for the subject of correspondence (file code), another code from this list must be used to indicate proper staff routing.

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24.2 - Exhibit 02

**Washington Office Organizational Units, Established
Abbreviations, and Electronic Mail Addresses.**

<u>Staff</u>	<u>Office Abbreviation</u>	<u>DG Address</u>
<u>Chief's Office</u>		
Chief	C	Chief:W01C
Law Enforcement and Investigations	LEI	LEI:W01B
Public Affairs Office	PAO	PAO:W01B
<u>Administration</u>		
Deputy Chief, Administration	ADM	ADM:W01C
Civil Rights	CR	CR:W01B
Excellence in Financial Management	EFM	EFM:W01B
Fiscal & Accounting Services	F&AS	FAS:W01B
Human Resource Programs	HRP	HRP:W01B
Information Systems & Technology	IS&T	IS&T:W01B
Personnel Management	PM	PM:W01B
Procurement & Property	P&P	PP:W01B
<u>International Forestry</u>		
Deputy Chief, International Forestry	IF	IF:W01C
International Forestry Operations	IFO	IFO:W01C
International Forestry Policy & Planning	IFPP	IFPP:W01C
<u>National Forest System</u>		
Deputy Chief, National Forest System	NFS	NFS:W01C
Engineering	E	ENG:W01A
Land Management Planning	LMP	LMP:W01C
Lands	L	LANDS:W01A
Minerals & Geology Management	M&GM	MG:W01C
Range Management	Rge	RGE:W01C
Recreation, Heritage & Wilderness Resources	RH&WR	RN:W01C
Timber Management	TM	TM:W01C
Watershed & Air Management	WS&A	WSA:W01A
Wildlife, Fish & Rare Plants	WF&RP	WLF:W01A

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24.2 - Exhibit 02--Continued

<u>Staff</u>	<u>Office Abbreviation</u>	<u>DG Address</u>
<u>Programs and Legislation</u>		
Deputy Chief	P&L	PL:W01C
Environmental Coordination	EC	EC:W01C
Legislative Affairs	LA	LA:W01C
Policy Analysis	PA	PA:W01C
Program Development & Budget	PD&B	PDB:W01C
Resources Program & Assessment	RPA	RPA:W01C
<u>Research</u>		
Deputy Chief, Research	R	RES:W01C
Forest Environment Research	FER	FER:W01C
Forest Fire & Atmospheric Sciences Research	FFASR	FFASR:W01C
Forest Insect & Disease Research	FIDR	FIDR:W01C
Forest Inventory, Economics, & Recreation Research	FIERR	FIERR:W01C
Forest Management Research	FMR	FMR:W01C
Forest Products & Harvesting Research	FPHR	FPHR:W01C
<u>State & Private Forestry</u>		
Deputy Chief, State & Private Forestry	S&PF	SPF:W01C
Cooperative Forestry	CF	CF:W01C
Fire & Aviation Management	F&AM	FIRE:W01C
Forest Pest Management	FPM	FPM:W01C

24.3 - Commercial Solicitation

Do not deliver training brochures, sales catalogs, and other commercial solicitations to individuals. Send one copy of the training brochure to the training branch of the unit's personal office for distribution if needed. Send one copy of sales catalogs to the procurement unit. Some examples are commercial firms' advertisements mailed to any number of individuals; solicitations from insurance companies; or training brochures to all office employees. If commercial solicitation of this nature becomes a problem due to the disclosure of employee business addresses, forewarn senders that the material will not be delivered because it violates General Services Administration building regulations (Federal Property Management Regulations, FSH 6409.31 - FPMR 101-20.308 and 101-20.309).

24.4 - Routing of Employee Association Mail

Organizations, such as Department of Agriculture credit unions, professional societies, employees' social organizations, retiree associations, and other officially sanctioned activities may use the internal mail system or electronic transmission to route information to employees. Include flyers as a part of the pouch mail system but do not place postage on individual pieces.

24.5 - Misaddressed Mail

Set aside mail delivered by the Postal Service with incorrect addresses until slow periods. Attach Postal Service Form 3547, Notice to Mailer of Correction, to each mail piece prior to routing. The receiving staff unit fills out the card and mails it to the originator.

25 - Forwarding Mail

Do not forward official mail addressed to an individual who has transferred to a new duty station unless it is clearly official mail marked "personal" (that is, to be opened only by the addressee). Most official mail is usually intended for the person in the position, not the individual.