

**Docket No. N2009-1**

**USPS Library Reference N2009-1/5**

**Discontinuance of Classified Stations and Branches  
Training Slides**

This Category 3 Library Reference contains PowerPoint slides used in Webinar and teleconference training by Headquarters of field personnel responsible for preparing discontinuance proposals for the Station and Branch Optimization and Consolidation Initiative.



# Discontinuance of Classified Stations and Branches

JuLy 2009



- **Pre-Screening Activity**
- **Authorization to Study**
- **Review and Investigation**
- **Community Input**
  - ◆ **Community Meeting**
  - ◆ **Questionnaires**
- **Proposal (no Posting)**
- **Headquarters Review & Final Determination**
- **Office Closeout**



# Background

- Focus on Stations and Branches in EAS 24 and above Post Office (3,200)

## Post Office (9 months, With No Appeals):

Task Name	Duration <sup>1</sup>
Authorization to Study	10 days
Review & Investigation Study (data gathering)	25 days
Community Input	25 days
Proposal* Posting & District Manager Review and Approval	100 days
Headquarters Review & Final Determination	30 days
Final Determination Posting and Customer Appeal Period*	30 days
If appealed, 120 days are added to timeline for PRC Review	
Office Closeout (60 days after posting of final determination)*	60 days

## Classified Station/Branch (4 Months):

Task Name	Duration <sup>1</sup>
Authorization to Study	5 days
Review & Investigation Study (data gathering)	15 days
Community Input	20 days
Proposal (No Posting)	10 days
Headquarters Review & Final Determination	10 days
Union Notification and Office Closeout (60 days after HQ Decision)	60 days

\*Time Frame Driven by Requirements in Title 39, U.S.C. 101(b) & 404(d)

<sup>1</sup>Project Duration based on 5-Day Work Week



## Implementation Strategy

- Prescreening Activity (complete by June 30)
  - ◆ Streamlined approach to identify realistic opportunities for full study
  - ◆ District Manager Authorization on candidates for full study (July 1)
  
- Study Activity
  - ◆ Establish District Review Team
  - ◆ Consider Impact on Customers, Community, Employees
  
- Consolidate and/or Close Unit(s)



## Prescreening Activity

- Focus on high level decision factors
  - ◆ Unit Considerations
    - Proximity of facilities within 5 miles, or 5-10 mi radius
    - Proximity of alternate access with 1 mi radius
    - Current Facility Requirements & Capacity
      - ▲ Carrier Route space
      - ▲ Capacity at > 80% (Eliminate)
      - ▲ Parking Lot Needs
      - ▲ Retail Requirements
    - Combined Facility Requirements & Capacity
    - Structural Condition & Lease Terms
  - ◆ Retail Considerations
    - Combined window capacity requirements
    - Wait time in line not greater than 5 minutes
    - Retail revenue transaction thresholds (% SPLY)
    - Retail visits thresholds (% SPLY)



- Post Office Discontinuance and Emergency Suspension Tracking System
- Accessed through Facilities Database
- Classified Stations and Branches only (July 2009).
- Existing Data in FDB will pre-populate in Standard Language (less manual work)
- Post Offices (Phase II) scheduled for FY 2010.



# Authorization to Study



# Triggers for Study

- Emergency Suspension
- Operational Efficiencies
- Declining Office Workload
  - ✓ Mail Volume
  - ✓ Retail Transactions
  - ✓ Customer Visits
- Proximity of Other Facilities
- Economic Savings Offered through Alternative Services



## Authorization to Study

- **Request for a discontinuance study to District Manager (available in FDB)**
- **Coordinate initial union notification to local unions.**
  - ◆ **District Human Resources/Labor Relations Representative**



# Authorization to Study



<date>

<NAME>  
DISTRICT MANAGER  
CUSTOMER SERVICE AND SALES

SUBJECT: AUTHORITY TO CONDUCT INVESTIGATION

I request your authorization to investigate a possible change in postal services for the following office in the <name> Congressional District.

Name of Unit: \_\_\_\_\_

ZIP+4 Code: \_\_\_\_\_

EAS Level: \_\_\_\_\_

Finance Number: \_\_\_\_\_

County: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Customers:

Post Office Box \_\_\_\_\_

General Delivery \_\_\_\_\_

Rural Route (RR) \_\_\_\_\_

Highway Contract Route (HCR) \_\_\_\_\_

Intermediate RR \_\_\_\_\_

Intermediate HCR \_\_\_\_\_

City Delivery \_\_\_\_\_

Total Customers \_\_\_\_\_

The above office <became/will become> vacant when the postmaster <retired, resigned, was promoted> on <date>. [for post offices] <List other circumstances of significance, such as eviction with no suitable alternate quarters or proximity of other retail locations>.

Please indicate your approval of this study by signing below and returning the original form to this office.

<name>  
Manager, Post Office Operations

Approval to Study for Discontinuance:

\_\_\_\_\_  
District Manager, Customer Service and Sales

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date



# **Review and Investigation (data gathering)**



# Review and Investigation

- Consider the following in each review:
  - ◆ Customer access to retail services
  - ◆ Customer wait time in line, including impact on gaining office(s)
  - ◆ Competitor locations (would we force customers to consider use of competitors?)
  - ◆ Ensure Collective Bargaining Agreements and local memoranda of understanding, are followed
  - ◆ Costs Savings



# Review & Investigation

- **Map of Area Identifying Units in close Proximity (ROAM, FMS)**
- **Review and Document Workload**
  - ◆ **Staffing**
  - ◆ **Retail Transactions & Customer Visits to SPLY**
  - ◆ **Delivery Customers**
  - ◆ **Revenue Trends**
  - ◆ **Socio-Economic (elderly, culture)**
- **Speak to local town officials or political leaders (involve HQ Gov't Relations)**



# Review & Investigation

- **Analyze Service Alternatives**
  - ◆ **Non-Personnel Unit (not Staffed)**
    - ✓ APC and/or
    - ✓ Post Office Boxes
  - ◆ **Cluster Box Unit**
  - ◆ **Carrier Delivery**
  - ◆ **Alternate Access to Retail Services**
    - Stamps by Mail
    - Consignments
    - [www.usps.com](http://www.usps.com)
    - Neighboring Retail Units
  - ◆ **Work with FSO on any building modifications related to service alternatives or movement of carriers**



## ■ Example Alternate Service Analysis

DOCKET NO 68120  
ITEM NO 3  
PAGE 5

### RURAL ROUTE CARRIER ESTIMATED COST FOR ALTERNATE SERVICE

1. Number of Additional Boxes to be Added to Route:	111
Multiply by Box Factor	X 2.50
	<u>278</u>
	Minutes
2. Number of Additional Miles to be Added to Route:	5
Multiply	X 12
	<u>60</u>
	Minutes
Box Allowance:	
Total Centralized Boxes	X 1.00 Minutes =
Total Regular Boxes (Non L)	<u>111</u> X 2.00 Minutes = <u>222</u>
Total Box Allowance =	<u>222</u>
	Minutes
Total Minutes =	<u>560</u>
	X 52 Weeks = <u>29120</u>
	Divided by 60 = <u>485</u>
	Multiply Hours by \$25.00 = <u>12,125.00</u>
Minus Lock Pouch Allowance if Applicable (\$494.00)	-
Total Annual Cost for Alternate Service	= <u>\$12,125.00</u>



# Review & Investigation

- Address & ZIP Code Changes
  - ◆ Zip Code Retention (current policy) unless operational issues
  - ◆ Elimination of ZIP Codes must be approved by Area VP and sent to AMS
  - ◆ Consult with local AMS
  
- After data gathering and analysis of service alternatives
  - ◆ Consult with MPOO, determine impact and make recommendation to proceed with study



# Community Input Options



## Options for Community Input

- Community Input Field Guidelines sent to Area SBOC
- Questionnaires (minimum of 10 Business Days)
  - ◆ Mailed to Delivery Customers (Post Office Box and Route Customers)
  - ◆ Self Addressed, Postage Paid Envelope
  - ◆ Notice Posted in Lobby (Walk-in Customers)
  - ◆ Questionnaires available to customers upon request



- Public Notice in Local Newspaper (5 business days)
  - ◆ Standardized Template
  - ◆ Areas with large carrier delivery customers can publish notice in local newspaper.
  - ◆ Not intended for Post Office Box Customers
  - ◆ Public Notice Must Include:
    - Description of Proposed Changes directed at those delivery customers
    - Date for Completed Questionnaires to be returned
    - Addresses where comments should be received
    - Location where Questionnaires can be Obtained



- Community Meeting (10 Business Days)
  - ◆ Mailed to Delivery Customers (Post Office Box and Carrier Delivery Customers)
  - ◆ Notice Posted in Lobby
  - ◆ Areas with large carrier delivery customers can publish public notice in local newspaper. Must Include:
    - Date and Time of meeting
    - Location of Meeting



# Conducting Community Meetings

- Before the Meeting, Select a Neutral meeting location



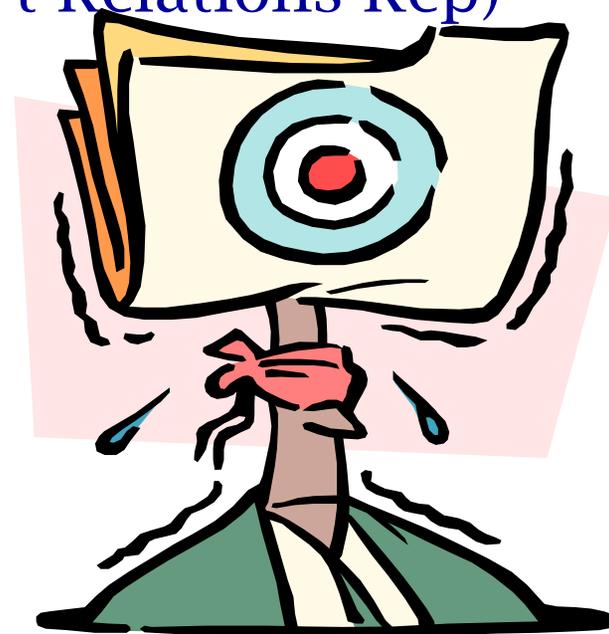
- Analyze & Know Service Alternatives
  - ◆ Post Office Box (neighboring unit)
  - ◆ Cluster Box Unit
  - ◆ Carrier Delivery
  - ◆ Non-Personnel Unit



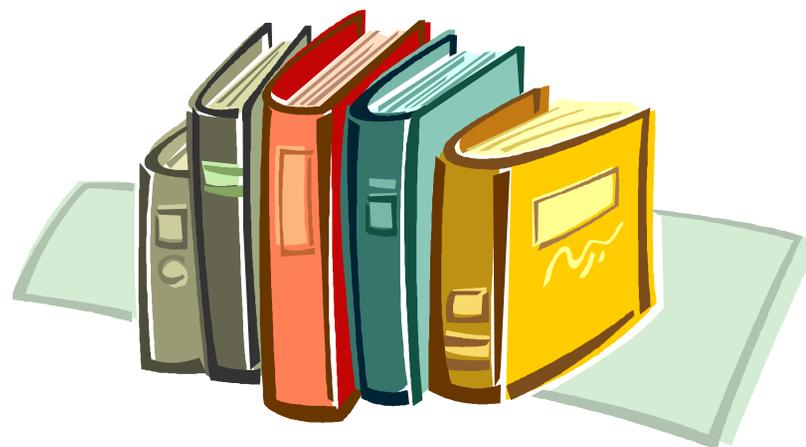
- Community Meeting
  - ◆ Set time convenient to greatest number of customers!
  - ◆ Notify Customers
  - ◆ Customer Roster (Sign-In)



- Head Table
  - ◆ Investigator taking notes
  - ◆ DM/POOM and/or Communications Representative
  - ◆ Political Leaders (involve Gov't Relations Rep)



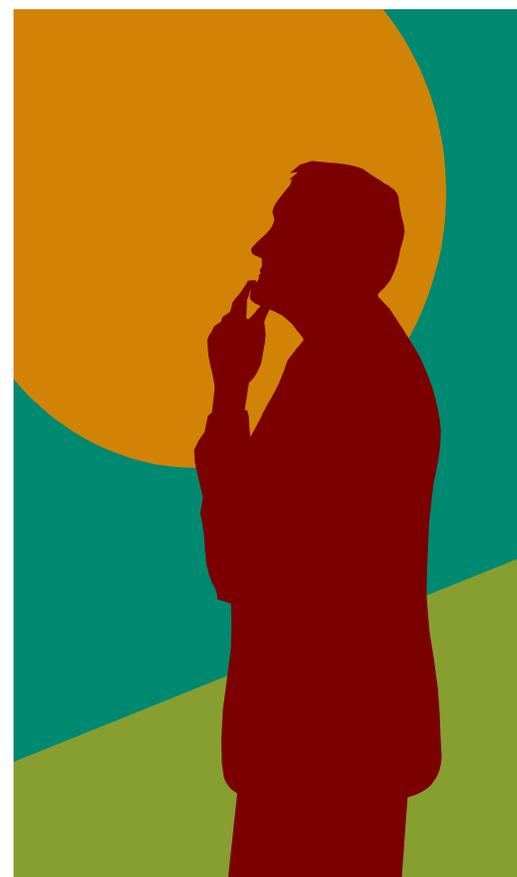
- Overview of Closing Process for Stations/Branches
  - ◆ Analyze Customer Concerns
  - ◆ Higher level Consideration (VP, Delivery and Post Office Operations)
  - ◆ Final Determination



- Monologue to Dialogue
  - ◆ Invite questions
  - ◆ Respond
  - ◆ Listen
  - ◆ Acknowledge
  - ◆ Explain
  - ◆ Direct
  - ◆ Apologize



- Ending the Meeting
  - ◆ Restate concerns
  - ◆ Clarify
  - ◆ Explain next steps





- Analyze and Document Customer Concerns and Responses
  - ◆ Postal Concerns
  - ◆ Non-postal Concerns
  
- Use Standard Language for common Customer Concerns and Responses (FDB).



## ■ Sample Community Meeting Analysis



### Community Meeting Analysis

#### Postal Concerns

- Concern:** Customers were concerned about obtaining accountable mail and large parcels.

**Response:** If customers choose to obtain a post office box at the new Cornhusker State Classified Branch, they will be able to pick up their accountable mail and parcels at that location. Cornhusker State offers expanded window service hours. Parcel lockers are also available in the lobby which is open 24 hours daily. If customers choose city or rural delivery, the carrier will attempt delivery of accountable items and large parcels to the customer's residence. Large parcels will be left outside the mailbox or at a location designated by the customer (if authorized by the customer), or a notice will be left in the mailbox. Attempted delivery items will be taken back to the Cornhusker State Classified Branch. Customers may pick up the item at the branch, request redelivery on another day or authorize delivery to another party.
- Concern:** Customers expressed concern about collection of outgoing mail.

**Response:** The collection box will be retained and its mail will continue to be picked up Monday through Saturday. In addition, customers may place outgoing mail in their mailboxes to be collected and dispatched by the carrier.
- Concern:** Customers were concerned about later delivery of mail.

**Response:** The top priority of the Postal Service is to provide mail service in the most efficient manner possible because all of our costs are reflected in postage rates customers must pay. Delivery costs are one of our biggest expenses, so you can be assured that careful thought is given to the structure of each route.

A customer's location on a carrier's line of travel determines the time of day mail is delivered. This, of course, precludes providing early delivery of mail to every customer because, no matter how we structure a route, somebody must be last. We do, however, carefully consider the volume of mail for each route so that we can deliver the greatest amount of mail at the earliest possible hour. With the largest fleet of delivery vehicles in the world, to minimize vehicle and fuel expenses we must also pay special attention to energy conservation measures. When the price of gasoline goes up one cent per gallon our total gasoline cost rises more than \$1 million. Therefore, when structuring a route, we must balance our goal to deliver as much mail as possible as early as possible with the need to minimize the travel distance a route must cover.

We do regret the inconvenience to customers who would like, but cannot receive, early mail delivery. For those customers we offer alternative delivery services, such as post office box service or window caller service, that provide access to their mail earlier and throughout the day.

#### Nonpostal Concerns

No nonpostal concerns were expressed.

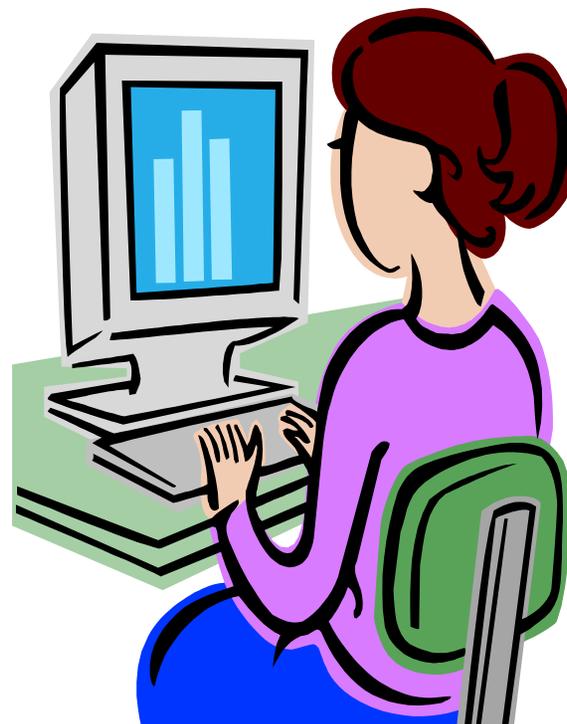


# Customer Questionnaires



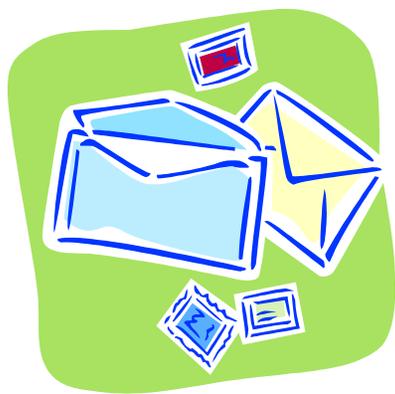
- Standard Questionnaire Available in FDB
  - ◆ Carrier Delivery
  - ◆ Post Office Box Delivery another office
- Do questions apply to alternative service?  
Modify as necessary.
- What type of service is most appropriate to serve the needs of the community?

- **Adapt Cover Letter**
  - ◆ **Address situation**
  - ◆ **Customer's opinion**
  - ◆ **Full disclosure**





- Preparation and Distribution
  - ◆ Cover letter
  - ◆ Attachments
  - ◆ Questionnaire
  - ◆ Self-addressed envelope enclosed





- Sample Letter and Questionnaire
  - ◆ Delivery Customers
  - ◆ Make available to Retail Customers

UNITED STATES  
POSTAL SERVICE

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<DATE>

Dear Postal Customer:

As the postal manager responsible for all post offices in your area, I would like your opinion concerning a possible change in the way your postal service is provided. The recommended change is tentative and will not lead to a formal change unless we conclude that it will provide a maximum degree of regular and effective service.

A review of the business activities of the post office revealed that the office workload had declined, and the office qualifies for service only four hours per day. Accordingly, the service hours were changed effective <date>, to <hours>, Monday through Saturday. Our office review revealed an average <number> daily retail window transactions. This reduced workload suggests that the maintenance of an office at <name of city>, may not be warranted.

Briefly, we would like to provide pickup and delivery of your mail, as well as the sale of stamps and all other customary postal services, to <a cluster box unit/roadside mailbox/nonpersonnel unit>. This service would be performed by a <rural route/highway contract route carrier> and would involve closing our operation at the <name> Post Office.

We estimate that <rural route/highway contract route> carrier service would cost the Postal Service substantially less than maintaining the Post Office in your community and still provide regular and effective service. Enclosed is information about some of the services available from the carrier. Retail services are also available at the <name> Post Office, located <distance> miles away. Hours of service at this office are <hours>, Monday through Friday, and <hours> on Saturday. Post Office box service is available at this location at <the same fees you now pay/increased fees>. Post Office box access hours are <hours>.

If a change to carrier service is implemented, customers will continue to use the name <community name and ZIP Code> in their mailing address.. If you would like to provide input into a decision to permanently change to (rural route/highway contract route) service, please return the enclosed questionnaire by <month/day/year>, using the pre-addressed envelope provided.

If you would like to discuss this form of service with us, a postal representative will be at <location> on <month/day/year> from <time> to <time> to answer questions and provide information about our service. You may wish to discuss and submit your questionnaire at that time or later. .

-2-

If you have any questions, you may call <name of postal representative> at <telephone number>.

Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

<name>  
Manager, Post Office Operations  
(Street Address)  
(City, State, ZIP+4)

Enclosures: Questionnaire and return envelope  
Carrier delivery information  
CBU information sheet (when appropriate)



## Sample Questionnaire (available in FDB)

**UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE**

**Postal Customer Questionnaire**

1. Please check the appropriate box to indicate whether you use the \_\_\_\_\_ Post Office for each of the following:

Postal Services	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Never
a. Buying stamps	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Mailing letters	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Mailing parcels	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Picking up Post Office box mail	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Picking up general delivery mail	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. Buying money orders	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g. Obtaining special services, including Certified mail, Registered mail, Insured mail, Delivery Confirmation, or Signature Confirmation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h. Sending Express Mail	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
i. Buying stamp-collecting material	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Other postal services:**

a. Entering permit mailings	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
b. Resetting/using postage meter	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>

**Nonpostal Services**

a. Picking up government forms (such as tax forms)	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
b. Using for school bus stop	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
c. Assisting senior citizens, persons with disabilities, etc.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>

If yes, please explain: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

d. Using public bulletin board	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
e. Other	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>

If yes, please explain: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Do you pass another Post Office during business hours while traveling to or from work, or shopping, or for personal needs? Yes  No

If yes, which offices: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

3. If you now receive carrier delivery, there will be no change to your delivery service - proceed to question 4. If you currently receive Post Office box service or general delivery service, complete this section.

a. How do you think carrier route delivery service to cluster box units with individually locked mail compartments and parcel lockers would compare with present service?  
 Better  Just as Good  No Opinion  Worse

Please explain: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

b. How do you think carrier route delivery service to a rural mailbox near your home would compare with your present service?  
 Better  Just as Good  No Opinion  Worse

Please explain: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

4. For which of the following do you leave your community? (Check all that apply.) Where do you go to obtain these services?

Shopping  \_\_\_\_\_  
 Personal needs  \_\_\_\_\_  
 Banking  \_\_\_\_\_  
 Employment  \_\_\_\_\_  
 Social needs  \_\_\_\_\_

5. Do you currently use local businesses in the community?  
 Yes  No

If yes, would you continue to use them if the Post Office is discontinued?  
 Yes  No

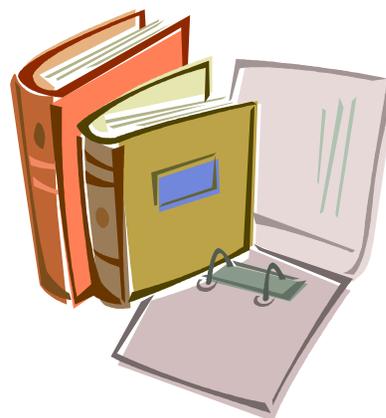
Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 (please print your name)

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone number: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Please add any additional comments on a separate piece of paper and attach it to this form.  
 Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire.

- Response to Questionnaires
  - ◆ Address each concern and/or comment
  - ◆ Use only core language
  - ◆ Unsure of a response, ask HQ for advice
  - ◆ MPOO/PM signature





- Analysis of Questionnaires
  - ◆ Questionnaires distributed
  - ◆ Favorable responses
  - ◆ Unfavorable responses
  - ◆ Expressing no opinion
  - ◆ Total received
  - ◆ Concerns/Responses

## ■ Questionnaire Analysis

Postal Customer Questionnaire Analysis	
Questionnaires were distributed to all delivery customers of the Big Red Park Classified Branch on October 26, 2001. Additionally, questionnaires were available at the Big Red Park Classified Branch during the survey period to walk-in retail customers.	
<b>A. Number of Questionnaires</b>	
Total questionnaires distributed	111
Favorable to proposal	11
Unfavorable to proposal	7
Expressing no opinion	16
Total questionnaires received	34
<b>B. Postal Concerns</b>	
The following postal concerns were expressed:	
1. <b>Concern:</b> Customers were concerned about the location of the new classified branch that is to be built.	
<b>Response:</b> The new Cornhusker State Classified Branch will be located approximately two miles away from the present Big Red Park Classified Branch.	
2. <b>Concern:</b> Customers were concerned about having to travel to another post office for service.	
<b>Response:</b> Services provided at the Big Red Classified Branch will be available from the new Cornhusker State Classified Branch. Customers will have to travel the short distance to the new branch. Customers also have the option of carrier delivery which provides the same services as a post office. Most transactions do not require meeting the carrier at the mailbox. Stamps by Mail and Money Order Application forms are available for customer convenience.	
3. <b>Concern:</b> Customers were concerned about senior citizens.	
<b>Response:</b> Carrier service is beneficial to many senior citizens and those who face special challenges because the carrier can provide delivery and retail services to roadside mailboxes. Customers do not have to make a special trip to the post office for service. Special provisions are made for hardship cases or special customer needs.	
4. <b>Concern:</b> Customers were concerned about a change of address.	
<b>Response:</b> Customers will experience an address change. Mail will be forwarded in accordance with postal regulations, and change of address forms are available from the Postal Service to assist customers in notifying correspondents of the change. An example of the change is shown below.	

### C. Nonpostal Concerns

The following nonpostal concerns were expressed:

1. **Concern:** Customers were concerned about the loss of a gathering place and an information center.

**Response:** The new Cornhusker State Classified Branch will maintain a facility in the area and will continue to serve as a convenient gathering place and an information center.



## ■ Complete Classified Station and Branch Checklist (available in FDB)



### Classified Station/Branch or Community Post Office Discontinuance Checklist

District: \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_  
 District Contact: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Office Name, State: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP Code: \_\_\_\_\_  
 County: \_\_\_\_\_ Congressional District: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Date office established: \_\_\_\_\_ EAS Postmaster Level: \_\_\_\_\_

Reason for Discontinuance (i.e., Operational Efficiencies, Reduced Workload, Proximity of Neighboring Retail Units): \_\_\_\_\_

Is facility owned (Yes or No) \_\_\_\_\_ If no, when does the lease or contract expire? \_\_\_\_\_

Is there a termination clause? Yes or No. If no, What are lease termination plans? \_\_\_\_\_

How many customers are affected:

Post office box customers: \_\_\_\_\_  
 General Delivery: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Rural Route: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Highway Contract Route (HCR): \_\_\_\_\_  
 City Route: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Intermediate Rural: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Intermediate HCR: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Total number of customers: \_\_\_\_\_

Window Service Hours: M-F \_\_\_\_\_ Sat \_\_\_\_\_

Lobby Hours: M-F \_\_\_\_\_ Sat \_\_\_\_\_

What is the Post Office Box Fee Group for this location? \_\_\_\_\_

How many Post Office Boxes are at this location? \_\_\_\_\_

How many Post Office Boxes are rented at this location? \_\_\_\_\_

What are the plans for the post office box customers? \_\_\_\_\_



Does the office have a Bulk Mail Acceptance Unit? \_\_\_\_\_

Does the office have a DDU drop? \_\_\_\_\_

Total Window Staffing (Earned Actual Staffing Graph October/March of current FY): (attach documentation)

Average WTIL (12-month data) \_\_\_\_\_ # of WTIL over 5 minutes (attach documentation)

Attach Map that illustrates the number of retail units within 10 miles, including alternate access sites. Use Retail Optimization Access Management (ROAM) system. Must include the following: USPS locations with labels, CPU, APC and SOC locations and competitor locations.

Does the office have an APC (yes or no)? If yes, what are the plans for APC? \_\_\_\_\_

# of schools, religious institutions, organizations and businesses in service area: \_\_\_\_\_

Indicate the number of permit customers and what provisions will be made for them.

How many career employees will be affected and what accommodations will be made for them?

*Type response here*

Are there handicapped customers that require special provisions? If yes, what accommodations will be made for them if the office is consolidated?

*Type response here*

WIR for the last three fiscal years were:

\$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Total Operating Expenses for last 12-month data (ADM): \_\_\_\_\_

Average Daily Retail Transactions (12-month data) (Total Transactions divided by number of retail business days) (Source: Monthly, Yearly RDM FLASH): \_\_\_\_\_

Total Retail Transactions for current fiscal year and same period last year (RDM Flash): \_\_\_\_\_

Retail Transaction Trends for last three fiscal years:  
FY \_\_\_\_\_ FY \_\_\_\_\_ FY \_\_\_\_\_

Total Customer Visits for current fiscal year and same period last year (RDM Flash): \_\_\_\_\_



# Community Input



Does facility have physical capacity for both retail and delivery to absorb workload? Include narrative to explain proposed changes

**Nearest Post Office, Station, Branch or CPU (if different from above):**

Name, State & ZIP \_\_\_\_\_ EAS level \_\_\_\_ Miles away: \_\_\_\_\_

Window Service Hours: M-F \_\_\_\_\_ Sat \_\_\_\_\_

Lobby Hours: M-F \_\_\_\_\_ Sat \_\_\_\_\_

Number of PO Boxes Available \_\_\_\_\_

**Community Input**

Community meeting: Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Number of customers attended: \_\_\_\_\_

Questionnaire: Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Number returned: \_\_\_\_\_

# Favorable \_\_\_\_\_ # Unfavorable: \_\_\_\_\_ #No opinion: \_\_\_\_\_

Public Notice (local newspaper) Date (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_

Attach postal and nonpostal concerns of affected customers with Postal Service responses

Prepared By: \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number \_\_\_\_\_ (Remember to include your area code)



# Proposal

- Prepare Proposal that addresses the following:
  - ◆ Responsiveness to Community Needs
  - ◆ Effect on Community
  - ◆ Effect on Employees
  - ◆ Economic Savings
  - ◆ Other Factors
  - ◆ Summary
- Standard Proposal Language available in FDB



## I. RESPONSIVENESS TO COMMUNITY POSTAL NEEDS

- What we are doing and why
- Effected post office information
- Administrative post office information
- Community Involvement
- Postal concerns and USPS responses
- Advantages and disadvantages

## II. EFFECT ON COMMUNITY

- Community profile
- Community demographics
- Nonpostal services
- Nonpostal concerns and USPS Responses
- Growth
- Identity



## III. EFFECT ON EMPLOYEES

- Supervisors
- Clerks
- Carriers
- Noncareer Employees

## IV. ECONOMIC SAVINGS

- Salary
- Rental costs (including utilities)
- Replacement service costs
- One-time costs (i.e. building modifications, CBUs, etc)
  - ◆ Consult with FSO on lease terms, least cost, building modifications, etc.



## V. OTHER FACTORS

The Postal Service has identified no other factors for consideration.

## VI. SUMMARY

- What we are doing and why
- Effect on employees
- Effected post office information
- Services, costs, advantages and disadvantages



## ■ Sample Proposal

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PROPOSAL TO CLOSE  
THE WHITTIER, OK CLASSIFIED STATION  
AND PROVIDE  
CITY DELIVERY SERVICE

DOCKET NUMBER 74104



# Proposal (example)

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## I. RESPONSIVENESS TO COMMUNITY POSTAL NEEDS

The Postal Service is proposing to close the Whittier, OK Classified Station and provide city delivery service administered by the Downtown Classified Station, located 4.16 miles away. Customers also have the option of moving their post office box to the Downtown Station and retain their present address.

The carriers were moved from the Whittier Station to the Downtown Station approximately four years ago. The Whittier facility currently has approximately 5000 square feet of space, the postal service needs only 1900 square feet and feels it is not warranted at this time to pay for a lease that provides space that is not needed for postal operations. Also a workload analysis conducted indicated the office workload has declined. The revenue has declined \$41,000.00 from fiscal year 2006 to fiscal year 2008 and customer visits have declined by 12,000 in the same period. The Postal Service feels that effective and regular service will continue to be provided through city delivery and retail service at the three other classified stations located within three miles of the Whittier Station.

The Whittier Station provides service 42.5 hours a week from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, and closed on Saturday to 491 post office box customers. Retail services include the sale of stamps, stamped paper, and money orders; special services such as registered mail, certified, insured, COD, and Express Mail; and the acceptance and dispatch of all classes of mail. Daily retail window transactions average 448. Office receipts for the last three years were: \$592,624.41 (1729 revenue units) in FY-2006; \$574,381.79 (1650 revenue units) in FY-2007; and \$540,631.38 (1553 revenue units) in FY-2008. There are no permit mailers or postage meter customers.

When this proposal is implemented, delivery and retail services will be provided by city delivery service emanating from the Downtown Station, located 4.16 miles away. Window service hours at Downtown are from 7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, and closed on Saturday. There are 1173 post office boxes available.

Retail service is also available at the Donaldson Classified Station, located 1.45 miles away. Window service hours at Donaldson are from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday and closed on Saturday. There are 150 post office boxes available.

Retail service is also available at the Ulica Square Classified Station, located 2.17 miles away. Window service hours at Ulica Square are from 8:30 a.m. to 6 p.m., Monday through Friday and 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Saturday.

On February 10, 2009 representatives from the Postal Service were available at the Tulsa Technology Center to answer questions and provide information to customers. Thirty customers attended the meeting.

On February 26, 2009 questionnaires were distributed to delivery customers of the Whittier Station. Questionnaires were also available over the counter for retail customers at Whittier. One hundred fifty-six questionnaires were returned. Seventeen responses were favorable, 115 unfavorable, and 24 expressed no opinion regarding the proposed alternate service.

A congressional inquiry was received on March 11, 2009.

The following postal concerns were expressed on the returned questionnaires, at the community meeting, from customer letters and on the congressional inquiry:



# Proposal (example)

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1. **Concern:** A customer was concerned that moving their post office box to the Downtown Station would be inconvenient. The customer would prefer Udca Station.  
**Response:** Customers have the option of obtaining post office box service at any of the classified stations in the area, however, if they move to the Downtown Station they will be able to retain their current address.
2. **Concern:** A customer was concerned about city delivery service since they owned rental property and did not want anyone to find out their street address.  
**Response:** Customers have the option to rent a post office box at three other stations located within three miles of the Whittier Station. If customers move their post office box to the Downtown Station they are able to retain their post office box address.
3. **Concern:** A customer stated they did not get notified of the community meeting.  
**Response:** Letters were mailed to the Whittier post office box holders. The carriers were moved from the Whittier Station approximately four years ago, so those customers were not notified.
4. **Concern:** A customer was concerned that the Donaldson Station had only two retail window stations open.  
**Response:** At this time the Donaldson Station qualifies for two window stations. There is a third window station that can be utilized if needed.
5. **Concern:** Customers were concerned about having to travel to another office for service.  
**Response:** Some services provided at the classified station will be available from the carrier. Stamps by Mail and Money Order Application forms are available for customer convenience. Also there are three other retail units within three miles of the Whittier Station, hopefully customers can combine trips.
6. **Concern:** The lessor of the Whittier facility expressed concern that they have not heard from anyone concerning the proposed closing. When he talked with postal real estate representatives they stated they were unaware of any discontinuance and that the district makes the decision to extend the leases.  
**Response:** The facilities service office maintains the lease contracts, however they do not make the final decision on the renewal of leases. If the district feels that an alternate delivery service will continue to provide effective and regular service they initiate a study to review the office. The meeting tonight is one step in the process.
7. **Concern:** A customer asked if there was an 800 number for complaints.  
**Response:** Customers may call 1-800-275-8777 and the calls go to the ZIP Code of the area. Someone in Tulsa will be responsible to respond to your concerns.
8. **Concern:** Customers expressed concern over the apparent lack of interest, by the Postal Service for the needs of this area.  
**Response:** The Postal Service is a customer-oriented organization that works hard to get its customers and employees to share that orientation. We appreciate hearing from customers on how successful those efforts have been. In this case, the concerns and



# Proposal (example)

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opinions of the Whittier customers are very important in determining the best alternate form of effective and regular service to offer the community.

9. **Concern:** Customers asked why their office was being discontinued while others were retained.
- Response:** Stations are reviewed on a case-by-case basis. It is customary to conduct a study of the business activity and investigate the feasibility of providing service by alternate means, when leases are ready to expire.
10. **Concern:** A customer expressed concern that there are customers who have relatives who are incarcerated and need to buy money orders, since the jail only accepts money orders from the Postal Service.
- Response:** Customers have three other retail outlets located within three miles of the Whittier Station to obtain money orders and other retail products.
11. **Concern:** Customers were concerned about senior citizens.
- Response:** Carrier service is beneficial to many senior citizens and those who face special challenges because the carrier can provide delivery and retail services to roadside mailboxes or GBUs. Customers do not have to make a special trip to the post office for service. Special provisions are made for hardship cases or special customer needs. To request an exception for hardship delivery, customers may contact the Downtown Station Manager for more information.
12. **Concern:** Customers complained about the parking situation at the Donaldson and Downtown Stations.
- Response:** The parking conditions at the Donaldson and Downtown Stations were brought to the attention of Oklahoma District who will review parking conditions at both locations and see if additional parking is needed and if, so can it be acquired.
13. **Concern:** Customers expressed concern that postal employees at the Downtown Station are rude.
- Response:** Employee courtesy is always a concern of postal managers. Postal employees receive periodic instructions regarding employee courtesy. We do not condone our employees' execution of their duties in an unprofessional or discourteous manner. This concern will be conveyed to the administrative postmaster.
14. **Concern:** Customers felt the cost of postage was increasing while service was decreasing.
- Response:** The Postal Reorganization Act requires the Postal Service to operate on a breakeven basis. Most revenue is generated by the sale of postage, so when operational costs cannot be met, the Postal Service requests a rate increase. One advantage of this proposal is a savings for the Postal Service, which contributes in the long run to stable postage rates and savings for customers.



# Proposal (example)

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Some advantages to the proposal are:

1. Carrier delivery service is beneficial to some senior citizens, the handicapped, and working people since customers will no longer need to travel to the post office to pick up their mail.
2. The carrier provides retail services, alleviating the need to go to the post office. Stamps by Mail order forms are provided for customer convenience.
3. A savings for the Postal Service, which contributes in the long run to stable postage rates and savings for customers.
4. Customers opting for carrier service will no longer have to pay post office box fees.
5. Saves time and energy for customers who drive to the post office to pick up mail.

Some disadvantages to the proposal are:

1. The loss of a retail outlet.
2. Meeting the carrier at the mailbox to transact business. However, it is not necessary to be present to conduct most postal transactions.
3. A change in mailing address. The name, ZIP Code and box number will continue to be used in the new address for customers who choose to retain their post office box at the Downtown Station.

Taking all available information into consideration, the Postal Service concludes this proposal will provide a maximum degree of effective and regular postal services to the community.

III. EFFECT ON COMMUNITY

Whittier Station is located in the incorporated city of Tulsa. The area is administered politically by a Mayor and City Council form of government. Police and fire protection, is provided by the City of Tulsa. Customers travel throughout the City of Tulsa for work and entertainment.

Nonpostal services provided at the Whittier Station will be available at the Donaldson Station. Government forms normally provided by the station will also be available at the Donaldson Station or by contacting your local government agency.

The following nonpostal concerns were expressed on the returned questionnaires, at the community meeting, from customers letters and on the congressional inquiry:

1. Concern: Customers were concerned about the loss of a gathering place and an information center.

Response: The Donaldson and Downtown Stations can provide a site for the customers to gather, socialize, and share information.

2. Concern: Customers felt the loss of the station would have a detrimental effect on the business community.



# Proposal (example)

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**Response:** Businesses generally require regular and effective postal services, and these will always be provided to the Whittier area. There is no indication that the business community will be adversely affected. Questionnaire responses revealed that customers will continue to use local businesses if the station is discontinued.

Based on information the Postal Service obtained, it was determined that there has been minimal growth in the area in recent years. Carrier service is expected to be able to handle any future growth in the community.

To help preserve identity, the name, box number and ZIP Code will be retained in the mailing address if customers choose to retain their post office box at the Downtown Station. Customers who choose city delivery service will have to change their address.

Based on information obtained in the course of this discontinuance study, the Postal Service concludes this proposal will not adversely affect the community.

### III. EFFECT ON EMPLOYEES

The two career clerks will be reassigned to the Downtown Station. They will fill vacant positions, thus a savings will be realized. Also a part time flexible (PTF) clerk already assigned to the Downtown Station will not be needed to fill in for absences.

### IV. ECONOMIC SAVINGS

The Postal Service estimates annual savings of \$151,369.00 with a breakdown as follows:

Clerk Salary (Minimum)	\$106,194.00
Fringe Benefits @33.5%	36,575.00
Rental Costs, including Utilities	<u>+50,050.00</u>
Total Annual Costs	\$191,819.00
Less Cost of Replacement Service	-40,450.00
Total Annual Savings	\$151,369.00

A one time expense of approximately \$5000.00 will be incurred for moving the post office box section to the Downtown Station.

### V. OTHER FACTORS

The Postal Service has identified no other factors for consideration.

### VI. SUMMARY

The Postal Service is proposing to close the Whittier Classified Station and provide city delivery service administered by the Downtown Classified Station, located 4.16 miles away. Customers have the option of moving their post office box to the Downtown Station.



# Proposal (example)

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The career clerks will be reassigned to the Downtown Station. The facility is too large for the operational needs of the Postal Service and the workload continues to decline.

The Whittier Classified Station provides 42.5 hours of window service per week to 491 post office box customers and to customers in the business area. Daily retail window transactions average 448. There are no permit mailers or postage meter customers.

Carrier service will continue to provide effective and regular service to the community. There will no longer be a retail outlet in the community. However, delivery and retail services will be available from the carrier, alleviating the need to travel to a post office for service. To help preserve identity, the name and ZIP Code will be retained in the mailing address. The Postal Service will save an estimated \$151,369.00 annually.

Taking all available information into consideration, the Postal Service has determined that the advantages outweigh the disadvantages and this proposal is warranted.



- Assemble official record. Include all supporting documentation and Index
- Send to DM for Approval and transmittal to HQ



## ■ Sample Index of Documentation to be included in Official record



### Official Record Index

<b>Item No.</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Date Entered Rec</b>
1.	Authorization to Study for Discontinuance	
2.	Classified Station, Branch and CPO Checklist	
3.	Map of Retail Units in Area – “Roam”	
4.	Inspection Service and Local Law Enforcement vandalism reports (if needed)	
5.	Three Year Revenue Trend	
6.	WOS – Unit Analysis	
7.	4920 Fact Sheet	
8.	Community Survey--Demographics of the City	
9.	WebEOR – Two week period of incoming mail	
10.	Alternate Service and Estimated Cost	
11.	Instruction letter to distribute on Community Meeting/Questionnaire	
12.	Customer letter Invitation to Community Meeting	
13.	Questionnaire	
14.	Community Meeting Roster	
15.	Community Meeting Analysis	
16.	Returned Questionnaire and Responses	
17.	Analysis of Questionnaires	
18.	Proposal Exhibit	
19.	Transmittal Letter to Headquarters	



# Headquarters Review and Approval



# Headquarters Review

- The Headquarters Reviewer conducts the following:
  - ◆ Reviews the proposal
  - ◆ Prepares Final Determination with instructions to close (if warranted)
  - ◆ Sends Final Determination communication back to the District Manager.
  - ◆ Official Closure date is 60 days from date final decision was signed



- Station and Branch Optimization and Consolidation
  - ◆ Authorization to Study signed after 5/20
    - Final Decisions and Implementation (10/2/2009)
  - ◆ Authorization to Study signed prior to 5/20
    - Final Decisions can occur at any time.



# Office Close-Out



- Manager Post Office Operations or the District Post Office Review Coordinator coordinates the following:
  - ◆ Establishes alternate delivery services for customers
  - ◆ Provides customer communication
  - ◆ Initiates financial closeout procedures
  - ◆ Final Union Notifications



- Complete the Postal Bulletin Post Office Change Announcement Form
- Submit the Postal Bulletin Post Office Change Announcement Form to the Manager, Customer Service Operations, Headquarters



## ■ Sample Post Office Change Announcement Form

**Postal Bulletin Post Office Change Announcement Form**  
**Final Determination 30-Day Posting Dates**

**Post Office Final Determination Posting Dates\***

Date posted: \_\_\_\_\_ Actual discontinuance date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date removed: \_\_\_\_\_ Official discontinuance date: \_\_\_\_\_  
No. of days posted: \_\_\_\_\_ (Headquarters entry): \_\_\_\_\_

**Note:** Unless otherwise stated, the official discontinuance date listed in the Postal Bulletin will be the first Saturday three days after the final determination is posted. For a Community Post Office (CPO), classified station, or classified branch, the official discontinuance date is 60 days after the Headquarters approval date.

BEFORE CHANGE POST OFFICE INFORMATION	AFTER CHANGE POST OFFICE INFORMATION
Post Office Name and State: _____	Administrative Post Office: _____
ZIP Code: _____ Finance No.: _____	ZIP Code: _____ Finance No.: _____
County/Parish: _____	County/Parish: _____
Type of discontinuance: Consolidate ( ) Close ( )	Original name retained? Yes ( ) No ( ) New last line of customer address is: _____
<b>Type of discontinued facility</b> Post Office ( ) Classified Station ( ) Branch ( ) Community Post Office (CPO) ( )	<b>Type of replacement service</b> Post Office ( ) Route ( ) Classified station ( ) Branch ( ) Contract Unit ( ) CPO ( )
Coordinator name and title: _____ Telephone: _____	Date: _____ (Location) District: _____

**Mailing instructions for independent Post Office discontinuance.** When the final determination is removed, send the round-date stamped front cover showing the posting dates and three copies of this *Postal Bulletin Post Office Change Announcement Form* to:

RETAIL OPERATIONS  
UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE  
475 L'ENFANT PLAZA SW RM 5621  
WASHINGTON DC 20260-5621  
FAX: (202) 268-5102

The announcement cannot be made in the Postal Bulletin unless this form is submitted to the above address. Do not send directly to Address Management, Postal Service Headquarters.

**Mailing instructions for CPO/classified station/classified branch discontinuance.** Immediately submit three copies of the announcement form to the above address. For nonsuspended offices, enclose a copy of the letter sent to customers in lieu of the discontinuance.

**For more information, call (202) 268-5083.**  
Headquarters entry: TL HS

\*Final determination posting is not required for CPO, classified station, or classified branch discontinuance. Final determination for an independent Post Office must be posted for at least 30 days.



## The HQ Review Coordinator:

- Submits Postal Bulletin Post Office Change to AMS in Memphis.
  
- Closing is announced in Postal Bulletin
  
- Official Closing Date is 60 days from the date of the final decision
  - ◆ Notify Customers
  - ◆ Notify Unions (minimum of 60 days)
  - ◆ Establish alternate service
  - ◆ Turn over to FSO for Lease Termination
  - ◆ Financial Closeout



# QUESTIONS