

USPS Report on PRC Service Inquiries for November 2020

The Postal Regulatory Commission referred 21 inquiries to the Postal Service in November 2020. Customers received responses on average within 5 days.

Inquiries covered various topics that fell into three main categories:

- Delivery Services 10 – i.e., time of delivery, tracking inquiries
- Customer Service 10 – i.e., Hours of service, Collection Boxes, Indemnity Claims
- Policies/procedures and International Inquiries 1 i.e., – International Inquiries

While many of the inquiries were customer specific, the following topic is highlighted for possible interest to a larger audience.

Holiday Hours – USPS releases operating schedule

The Postal Service has announced holiday hours for Post Offices and blue collection boxes:

• **Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve.** Some Post Offices *may* have extended hours leading up to the holidays, while others *may* have limited hours on Thursday, Dec. 24. Although there are no plans for limited hours on Thursday, Dec. 31, customers should always check with their local Post Office for hours of operation.

Blue boxes with final collection times before noon will not be affected by an early closing Dec. 24. If a box has a final collection time after noon, its mail may be picked up earlier.

For mail pickup Dec. 24, customers should put their mail into blue boxes by noon regardless of the final collection times posted on the box.

Customers should use usps.com's [Postal Locator](#) tool to find open local Post Offices if they want to mail items after scheduled pickup times on Dec. 24.

• **Christmas Day and New Year's Day:** Post Offices nationwide will be closed Friday, Dec. 25, and Friday, Jan. 1.

All Post Offices will be open after the holidays. Regular mail delivery will resume Saturday, Dec. 26, and Saturday, Jan. 2.

Season's busiest period begins December 14

The Postal Service expects holiday customer traffic to increase beginning Dec. 7, with the season's busiest period for mailing, shipping and deliveries occurring Dec. 14-21.

The organization released the expectations last week, noting that more gifts are expected to be sent through the mail this year as families and friends hold virtual get-togethers instead of opening presents in person. However, while significant volume increases are expected, precise predictions are difficult due to the [coronavirus pandemic](#).

Generally, online shopping sales in November and December are expected to reach \$189 billion, up 33 percent compared with one year ago, according to the Adobe Analytics research firm.

"The holiday shopping season is starting earlier than ever this year, and we expect record online sales as many consumers opt to shop online to avoid stores because of the unknowns around COVID-19," said John Copeland, the firm's marketing and customer insights vice president.

To help handle shipping increases, USPS is hiring seasonal workers where needed, and technology has been expanded to improve package tracking throughout the postal processing and transportation networks.

Additionally, beginning Nov. 29, the organization expanded Sunday deliveries to locations with high volumes. Mail carriers will also deliver packages for an additional fee on Christmas Day in select locations.

To further assist with timely processing and deliveries, the Postal Service is encouraging customers to send their holiday cards and gifts early.

"We thank our customers for their continued support, and we are committed to making sure gifts and cards are delivered on time to celebrate the holidays," the Postal Service's statement read.