

USPS Report on PRC Inquiries February 2023

The Postal Regulatory Commission referred 48 inquiries to the Postal Service in February 2023. Customers received responses on average within 5 days.

Inquiries covered various topics that fell into two main categories:

- Delivery Services 23 – i.e., time of delivery, tracking inquiries
- Customer Service 24 – i.e., Hours of service, Collection Boxes, Indemnity Claims
- Policies/procedures and International Inquiries 1 – 1.e., Policy Related

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

USPS Warns the Public About Surge in Use of Counterfeit Postage

In recent years, a surge in the use of counterfeit postage has been found in the mail stream. The intentional use, or sale, of counterfeit postage is a crime because it seeks to obtain services without payment. This activity reflects an intentional effort to defraud the Postal Service of the funds it needs to provide services to the public.

In response to this problem, the Postal Service is filing a federal register notice about changes to the *Mailing Standards of the United States Postal Service*, Domestic Mail Manual (DMM®), that will allow the Postal Service to treat items found in the mail stream bearing counterfeit postage as abandoned. “As the most trusted government agency in the nation, we will continue to work together with other law enforcement and government agencies to protect the sanctity of the mail,” said Chief Postal Inspector Gary Barksdale.

The Postal Service’s proposed changes will provide the public notice of the handling of items bearing counterfeit postage. Under the revision to DMM 604.8.4, articles found in the mails with counterfeit postage will be considered abandoned and may be opened and disposed of at the Postal Service’s discretion. The mission of the Postal Service and the Postal Inspection Service is to ensure the safety, security, and integrity of the U.S. Mail. The implementation of these new regulations will continue to support and enhance this mission.

Counterfeit postage is any marking or indicia that has been made, printed, or otherwise created without authorization from the Postal Service that is printed or applied, or otherwise affixed, on an article placed in the mails that indicates or represents that valid postage has been paid to mail the article. Consumers purchasing online items may be surprised to find out that the vendor mailed their goods using counterfeit postage. Under the new regulations, such items will be considered abandoned and disposed of at the Postal Service’s discretion. When this occurs, consumers will have to seek recourse from the vendor.

Public comments can be mailed or delivered on or before March 15, 2023, to: Manager, Product Classification, U.S. Postal Service, 475 L’Enfant Plaza SW, Room 4446, Washington, DC 20260-5015. If sending comments by email, include the name and address of the commenter and send to PCFederalRegister@usps.gov, with a subject line of “Counterfeit Postage.” Faxed comments are not accepted. All submitted comments and attachments are part of the public record and subject to disclosure. Do not enclose any material in your comments that you consider to be confidential or inappropriate for public disclosure.