

REGULATION

MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Related Entries: CNA-RA, Negotiated Agreements

Responsible Office: Chief Operating Officer

Mail Service

I. PURPOSE

To establish procedures for preparing mail for processing by the Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) mailroom and for authorizing distribution of materials via the postage-free interschool mail service program (Pony) within MCPS offices, schools, and other MCPS facilities, as well as specified non-MCPS locations

II. BACKGROUND

MCPS provides the Pony to expedite communications within the school system and also provides a postage metering program (Blue Bag Postage Program) to expedite outside communications through the U.S. Mail. Staff members assigned to the mailroom are responsible for sorting MCPS mail for delivery to schools and offices, and delivering to the post office mail requiring postage. In addition to scheduled deliveries to schools, the Pony delivers mail addressed to the County Council Office Building, County Executive Office Building, County Court House, Park and Planning Commission, Montgomery College, Montgomery County Teachers Federal Credit Union, Montgomery County Education Association (MCEA), Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 500, Montgomery County Association of Administrators and Principals (MCAAP), and members of the Montgomery County Board of Education.

III. PROCEDURES

A. Preparation of Mail for Processing by the Mailroom

1. Pony

The preparing office is responsible for:

- a) Using interdepartmental envelopes
- b) Lining out the address preceding the block to be used, using the address blocks in sequence, and filling all blocks on one side of the envelope before the reverse side of the envelope is used

- c) Providing complete addresses which include the following:
 - (1) Full name and address or position title
 - (2) School, office, department, or division and location of the office (The school number is not used in lieu of the school name. When there is a mailing to all schools, it is sufficient to indicate Principal on the envelope.)
- d) Sealing a confidential letter in a plain white envelope, carrying the same address as the inside address of the letter, and placing the sealed envelope in an interdepartmental envelope that has complete address information
- e) Forwarding excess interdepartmental envelopes, tied in a bundle, to the mailroom

2. Official MCPS Mail Requiring Postage

- a) Mail requiring postage is classified as follows:
 - (1) Overnight express mail or United Parcel Service for high value items that need to be insured or signature required
 - (2) First-class mail includes:
 - (a) Letters
 - (b) Postcards
 - (c) All manila envelopes sealed or closed to postal inspection that are not designated printed matter
 - (d) Printed matter with an original signature
 - (3) Third-class mail includes printed matter under 4 ounces, including printed matter with a machine-printed signature
 - (4) Fourth-class mail includes printed matter over 4 ounces, including printed matter with a machine-printed signature

- (5) Bulk mail includes a minimum of 200 pieces of identical mail, zip code required (See bulk mail guidelines produced each year by the Department of Materials Management)
- b) The preparing office is responsible for the following:
- (1) Marking mail to be sent as printed matter or first-class (Sealed packages or large manila envelopes to be mailed first-class are to be so marked; otherwise the material is sent third-class mail.)
 - (2) Consulting mailroom personnel concerning the most inexpensive manner of mailing large quantities of like materials
 - (3) Wrapping all packages after consulting mailroom personnel concerning packaging
 - (4) Including the sender's name and department/division/school as part of the return address on a package or preprinted MCPS envelope
 - (5) Assuring that personal mail is not sent to the MCPS mailroom
 - (6) Placing unsealed envelopes in stacks with the flaps not overlapping and with a rubber band around each stack
 - (7) Assuring that the contents of letter-size envelopes are folded and placed in the envelope in such manner as to permit automatic sealing of the envelope in passage through the postage meter (large, thick envelopes should be sealed)
 - (8) Sealing and separating prestamped envelopes furnished by the addressee
 - (9) Forwarding mail for a terminated or transferred employee as follows:
 - (a) Line out the incorrect address and write in the new address, if available

- (b) If a forwarding address is not available, first-class mail is marked Return to Sender (Unknown and junk mail is destroyed.)
- (10) Making arrangements by 3:00 p.m. with mailroom personnel for handling outgoing U.S. Mail to be sent after 4:00 p.m. (Note: The last daily delivery of mail to the post office is 4:00 p.m.)
- (11) Transferring funds into the Blue Bag Postage Program account (required for membership in the program)
- c) Mailroom personnel are responsible for:
 - (1) Determining whether printed matter is sent as third-or fourth-class mail, depending on the weight
 - (2) Automatically mailing sealed packages or large manila envelopes as third-class mail (printed matter) when the material is not specifically marked first-class mail
 - (3) Assigning accounts to new members of the Blue Bag Postage Program

B. Authorization to Use the Pony and Preparation of Mail

Materials sent to schools by the Pony must be in accordance with MCPS Regulation CNA-RA *Display and Distribution of Informational Materials and Announcements*.

1. Employee Associations

- a) Employee associations are authorized to distribute official association materials, consistent with the negotiated agreements.
- b) Other Outside Agencies

Prior to each distribution of materials, outside agencies obtain clearance as follows:

Materials to be distributed to all county schools are submitted to the chief operating officer for approval or disapproval of use of the Pony .

2. Preparation of Pony Mail

- a) Each item distributed by an employee or outside organization through the Pony must be clearly marked to indicate the organization sending the material. The president of that organization will be held responsible for authorizing distribution of the material and for its contents.
- b) An organization using the Pony must sort a large scale (cluster or systemwide) mailing by Pony delivery area prior to delivery to the Carver Educational Services Center (CESC) mailroom.
- c) The agency must securely wrap or tie, and when requested, place the material in the school mailboxes in the CESC mailroom.

C. Pickup and Delivery of Mail

- 1. The Supply and Property Management Unit is responsible for distributing annually a schedule of stops for delivery and pickup by the Pony. A pickup and delivery point of mail bags is designated by each school.
- 2. Central offices are responsible for providing mail boxes for pickup and delivery in a convenient location to assure prompt service by mailroom personnel.

Regulation History: Formerly Regulation No. 225-4, revised October 1982; revised May 2, 1988; revised August 8, 1995, revised December 12, 2011.