



D900 Other Delivery Services

## D910 Post Office Box Service

**Summary** D910 describes post office box service and the use of this service. It explains the basis of fees, when fees are due, and when fees are refunded.

### 1.0 BASIC INFORMATION

**Purpose** Post office box service is a premium service offered for a fee to any customer requiring more than free carrier delivery or general delivery and for no fee to customers who are not eligible for carrier delivery. The service allows a customer to obtain mail during the hours the box lobby is open or access is otherwise available. Post office box service is provided only through receptacles owned or operated by the USPS or its agents. Post office box service does not include alternate means of delivery established to replace, simplify, or extend carrier delivery service. A postmaster and a box customer may not make any agreement that contravenes the regulations on post office box service or its fees.

**Definitions** The term *post office box* (or its address abbreviation *PO BOX*) designates this service in an address. The term *box customer* applies only to the person who signs the application as an individual or to the organization on whose behalf an individual signs the application.

**Number Assignment** A number is assigned to each post office box. Mail intended for delivery through a box must show the assigned post office box number in the address immediately above the city, state, and ZIP Code.

**Box Size** There are five box sizes. A facility might not have each size. A customer is assigned a box size based on the customer's needs and the availability of boxes. The postmaster may require a customer to use a larger size box if the customer's mail volume increases beyond the capacity of the present box.

**Box Availability** When no box of the appropriate size is available, an application for box service may be handled, at the postmaster's discretion, in any one or more of the following ways: by referring the customer to another postal facility with available capacity; by placing the customer's name on a waiting list for box service; by providing general delivery service until an appropriate size box becomes available; by offering a smaller or larger box at its fee; or by offering caller service. Regardless of the box size applied for, customers must pay the correct fee for the service they receive.

**Limitation on Service** The postmaster may require a box customer to use caller service under [D920](#) based on the volume of mail received by the customer, the level of service requested by the customer, or the availability of boxes to meet demand. Existing box customers will not be allowed to use additional boxes at post offices having a waiting list for post office boxes. Not more than once per semiannual payment period, a customer who was required to use caller service based on the volume of mail may submit a written request to the postmaster for a new determination of whether sufficient volume remains to require caller service.

**Service Period** Post office box service is provided in 6-month increments.

**Fees** 1.8 Post office box fees for each 6-month period are listed in R900. Each box customer is charged a refundable deposit for post office box keys. Customers also are charged fees for duplicate and replacement post office box keys and for initiating lock changes on post office boxes.

## 2.0 SERVICE

**Application** 2.1 Procedures for applying for post office box service are as follows:

- a. The applicant must complete all required items on Form 1093, *Application for Post Office Box or Caller Service*, and submit it to any postal facility that provides window service to the public. The facility need not be the one where box service is desired. Furnishing false information on the application or refusing to furnish required information may be sufficient reason for denial of the application or discontinuance of service.
- b. Spouses may complete and sign one Form 1093. Each spouse must present two items of valid identification. A parent or guardian may receive delivery of a minor's mail by listing the name(s) and age(s) of each minor on Form 1093. Other adult persons who receive mail in the post office box of an individual box customer must be listed on Form 1093 and must present two items of valid identification to the post office.
- c. Employees or members who receive mail in the post office box of an organization box customer must be listed on Form 1093. Each person must have verifiable identification and, upon request, present this identification to the Postal Service.
- d. When any information required on Form 1093 changes, the box customer must update the application on file at the post office.

**Verification** 2.2 An application for post office box service may not be approved until the applicant's identity and current permanent physical address where he or she resides or conducts business is verified. Verification criteria are as follows:

- a. At the time of application, applicants must present two items of valid identification; one item must contain a photograph of the applicant. Social Security cards or credit cards and birth certificates are unacceptable as identification. The following are acceptable identification:
  - (1) Valid driver's license or state non-driver's identification card.
  - (2) Armed forces, government, university, or recognized corporate identification card.
  - (3) Passport, alien registration card, or certificate of naturalization.
  - (4) Current lease, mortgage, or deed of trust.
  - (5) Voter or vehicle registration card.
  - (6) Home or vehicle insurance policy.
- b. The identification presented must be current. It must contain sufficient information to confirm that the applicant is who he or she claims to be and must be traceable to the bearer.

**Transferring Service** 2.3 Post office box service may be transferred, without payment of an additional fee, to any box of the same size and fee group at a different facility of the same post office. To transfer service, the box customer must submit a new application either to the facility where service is currently provided or to the facility where service is desired. A box customer may transfer service no more than once in any semiannual payment period and must submit a completed Form 3575 at the time of transfer.



**Minor**  
2.4 Post office box service may be provided to a minor (a person under 18 years of age) unless the minor's parent or guardian submits a written objection to the appropriate postmaster.

### 3.0 CONDITIONS OF USE

**Mail Receipt**  
3.1 In accordance with the application and verification standards in 2.0, any individual box customer or organization may receive through the box any mail properly addressed to the box number.

**Mail Only**  
3.2 Only mail and official USPS notices may be placed into a post office box.

**Accumulation**  
3.3 A box customer must remove mail promptly from the box. If mail will not be removed from the box for more than 30 days and an overflow condition is probable, the customer must make prior arrangements with the postmaster.

**Overflow**  
3.4 When mail for a customer's post office box(es) exceeds the capacity of the box(es) on 12 of any 20 consecutive business days (excluding Saturdays, Sundays, and national holidays), the customer must use caller service, change to a larger box, or use one or more additional boxes (subject to availability) to which mail will be addressed.

**Unlawful Activity**  
3.5 A post office box may not be used for, or in connection with, a scheme or enterprise that violates any federal, state, or local law; breaches an agreement with a federal, state, or local agency whereby the box customer has agreed to discontinue a specified activity; or violates or attempts to evade any order of a court or administrative body.

**Forwarding**  
3.6 A post office box may not be used when the primary purpose is to have the USPS forward or transfer mail to another address free of charge.

**Address Change**  
3.7 Only the box customer or authorized representatives of the organization listed on the Form 1093 may file change-of-address orders. Forwarding of mail for other persons is the responsibility of the box customer.

### 4.0 BASIS OF FEES AND PAYMENT

**General**  
4.1 Post office box fees are based on the size of the box provided and the fee group to which the box's 5-digit ZIP Code is assigned.

**Box Size**  
4.2 Box sizes are standardized and the fees for boxes increase with box size. The following chart describes approximate box capacities and frontal dimensions.

Box Size	Capacity (Cubic Inches)	Width and Height (Linear Inches)
1	Under 296	3 by 5.5
2	296 through 499	5 by 5.5
3	500 through 999	11 by 5.5
4	1,000 through 1,999	11 by 11
5	2,000 or more	22.5 by 12

**Fee Changes**  
4.3 A change in post office box service fees applicable to a given 5-digit ZIP Code can arise from a general fee change. In addition, the Manager, Special Services, can assign a fee group to a new ZIP Code, and may authorize the reassignment of one or more 5-digit ZIP Codes to the next higher or lower fee group if the past fee group assignments were in error. The USPS also may regroup 5-digit ZIP Codes.



No ZIP Code may be moved more than once a calendar year and a ZIP Code may be moved only into the next higher or lower fee group. Any change in post office box service fees takes effect on the date of the action that caused the change unless an official announcement specifies another date. If post office box service fees are increased, no customer must pay the new rate until the end of the current service period, and no retroactive adjustment is to be made for a payment received before the date of the change. The fee charged is that in effect on the date of payment.

- Payment**  
4.4 All fees for post office box service are for a 6-month period. Except under 4.6, 4.7, and 4.10, fees must be paid in advance for each 6-month period. The fee may be paid for two periods at a time (i.e., up to one year in advance), but not more. The fee that must be paid is the one that is in effect on the day that the fee is paid. Fees may be paid using cash, credit or debit card, or check or money order payable to the postmaster. A mailed payment must be received by the postmaster on or before the due date.
- Payment Period**  
4.5 Except under 4.7, the beginning date for a box fee payment period is determined by the approval date of the application. The period begins on the first day of either the same month if the application is approved on or before the 15th of the month, or the next month if approved after the 15th of the month. After that, box fees for service renewal may be paid any time during the last 30 days of the service period, but no later than the last day of the service period.
- U.S. Agencies**  
4.6 Federal agencies whose payment period coincides with the federal fiscal year may pay their box fees during the first quarter rather than in advance.
- Exception**  
4.7 Postmasters at offices with fewer than 500 post office boxes may set April 1 and October 1 as the beginning of payment periods for box customers in their offices. Payment periods beginning other than April 1 or October 1 are brought into alignment with these respective dates by adjusting fees as follows:
- a. New service, one-sixth of the semiannual fee is charged for each remaining month between the beginning of the new payment period and the next April 1 or October 1.
  - b. Existing service, one-sixth of the semiannual fee is charged for each remaining month between the end of all currently paid periods and the next April 1 or October 1.
  - c. Next one or two semiannual payment periods, an adjustment may be accepted in addition to fees.
- Change of Payment Period**  
4.8 Except for customers at post offices subject to 4.7, a box customer of record may change the payment period by submitting a new application noting the month to be used as the start of the revised payment period. The date selected must be before the end of the current payment period. The unused fee for the period being discontinued may be refunded under 6.0, and the fee for the new payment period must be fully paid in advance. A change of payment period date may not be used to circumvent a change in box fees.
- Academic Institutions**  
4.9 The USPS does not set or collect fees for boxes owned by an academic institution if the boxes are separate from designated USPS areas and serviced by employees or agents of the institution.
- Adjusting Fees**  
4.10 In postal facilities primarily serving academic institutions or their students, box fees may be adjusted to fit the semester schedules, using the matrix below. Charges



are rounded up to the next multiple of \$0.10. No refund is made for discontinued service when a box is obtained under this standard.

Service Period	Adjusted Fee
95 days or less	1/2 semiannual fee
96 to 140 days	3/4 semiannual fee
141 to 190 days	Full semiannual fee
191 to 230 days	1-1/4 semiannual fee
231 to 270 days	1-1/2 semiannual fee
271 days to full year	2 semiannual fees

**5.0 FEE GROUP ASSIGNMENTS**

**Regular Fee Groups**

5.1 Post office boxes are assigned to fee groups listed in [R900](#) based upon cost estimates of the facility space for post office boxes in each 5-digit ZIP Code. Local post offices can provide information about fees for a particular ZIP Code.

**Free Box Service (Group E)**

5.2 Customers may qualify for free (Group E) post office box service if their physical address or business location meets all of the following criteria:

- a. The physical address or business location is within the geographic delivery ZIP Code boundaries administered by a post office.
- b. The physical address or business location constitutes a potential carrier delivery point of service.
- c. The USPS chooses not to provide carrier delivery to the physical address or business location.
- d. The customer does not receive carrier delivery via an out-of-bounds delivery receptacle.

**Additional Standards for Free Box Service**

5.3 Only one free (Group E) post office box may be obtained for each potential carrier delivery point of service. Group E customers are assigned the smallest available box that will reasonably accommodate their daily mail volume. Eligibility for Group E boxes does not extend to individual tenants, contractors, employees, or other individuals receiving or eligible to receive single-point delivery such as delivery to a hotel, college, military installation, or transient trailer park. A customer must pay the applicable fee for each additional box requested beyond the initial box obtained at the Group E fee.

**6.0 FEE REFUND**

**Calculation**

- 6.1 When post office box service is terminated or surrendered by the customer, the unused portion of the fee may be refunded as follows:
- a. If service is discontinued any time within the first 3 months of the service period, then one-half of the fee is refunded.
  - b. If service is discontinued after the beginning of the fourth month of the service period, then none of the fee is refunded.
  - c. If service is discontinued and the customer has prepaid for the next semiannual service period, then the entire fee for that next period is refunded.

**Discontinued Postal Facility**

6.2 When a postal facility is discontinued or relocated, a box customer at that facility may obtain a refund of unused box fees if box service at that location is discontinued and additional travel of 1/4 mile or more (from the physical address on the customer's Form 1093) is required to obtain equivalent service. For this purpose, one-sixth of a semiannual fee is refunded for each month left in the

payment period. The refund is computed from the first day of that month (if the effective date of the facility discontinuance is on or before the 15th of the month) or from the first day of the next month (if the effective date is after the 15th of the month).

## 7.0 KEYS AND LOCKS

**Key Deposit**  
7.1 Two post office box keys are initially issued to each new box customer. Box customers must pay a refundable key deposit on each of these keys. The refundable key deposit must be paid on each additional key requested under 7.2. When box service is terminated, the key deposit is refunded to the customer for each key (including additional or replacement keys in 7.2) that is returned to the post office where the box was issued.

**Additional Key Fee**  
7.2 A box customer may obtain additional or replacement keys by submitting Form 1094 and paying the refundable key deposit (see 7.1) and the key fee in R900. The fee for additional or replacement keys is not refundable. Worn or broken keys are replaced without charge when returned to the post office where the box is located.

**Restrictions**  
7.3 A customer using a post office box may not obtain or use keys other than those issued by the USPS.

**Lock Replacement**  
7.4 The primary box customer (box applicant) may request that the post office box lock be changed. To change the lock, the customer must first pay the applicable lock fee in R900. Lock fees are charged for replacing keyed locks and combination locks and for re-setting combination locks. Lock fees are not refundable. Customers may turn in post office box keys for the old lock and get a refund of the key deposit. Two keys are provided with the new lock, with a refundable deposit for each key charged under 7.1. Customers may obtain additional keys for the new lock under 7.2.

## 8.0 SERVICE REFUSAL OR TERMINATION

**Refusal**  
8.1 A postmaster may refuse to approve post office box service if: the applicant submits a falsified or incomplete application for box service; within the 2 years immediately before submitting the application, the applicant physically abused a box or violated a standard on the care or use of a box; or there is substantial reason to believe that the box is to be used for activities as described in 3.5 or 3.6.

**Termination**  
8.2 A postmaster may terminate post office box service, including that of a customer paying a Group E fee, if the box customer or its representative falsifies the application for the box; physically abuses the box; refuses to update information on the box application; violates any standard on the care or use of the box; conducts himself or herself in a violent, threatening, or otherwise abusive manner on postal premises; or uses it for any unlawful activity as described in 3.5. The customer is notified of the postmaster's determination to refuse or terminate service and of the appeal procedures for that determination.

**Customer Appeal**  
8.3 The applicant or box customer may file a petition appealing the postmaster's determination to refuse or terminate service within 20 calendar days after notice, as specified in the postmaster's determination and 39 CFR 958. The filing of a petition prevents the postmaster's determination from taking effect and transfers the case to the USPS Judicial Officer. The Administrative Law Judge's or the Judicial Officer's decision under 39 CFR 958 constitutes the final USPS decision.

**Surrendered Box**  
8.4

A post office box is surrendered if:

- a. A box customer refuses or fails to pay the proper fees by the due date.
- b. A box customer submits a written notice to discontinue service.
- c. Any person other than the box customer attempts to renew service at the end of the period for which the box is issued.
- d. A box customer, or an appointed executor or administrator of a deceased box customer, submits a permanent change-of-address order.

**Boxes Not Surrendered**  
8.5

A post office box is not surrendered if:

- a. A box customer dies or disappears before the end of the period for which the box is issued.
- b. A box customer submits a temporary change-of-address order.
- c. A change-of-address order is submitted by any person other than the box customer, or an appointed executor or administrator of a deceased box customer, for mail going to the box.

