

**CHAPTER 1—POSTAL POLICY AND  
DEFINITIONS**

Sec.	
101.	Postal policy.
102.	Definitions.

**§ 101. Postal policy**

(a) The United States Postal Service shall be operated as a basic and fundamental service provided to the people by the Government of the United States, authorized by the Constitution, created by Act of Congress, and supported by the people. The Postal Service shall have as its basic function the obligation to provide postal services to bind the Nation together through the personal, educational, literary, and business correspondence of the people. It shall provide prompt, reliable, and efficient services to patrons in all areas and shall render postal services to all communities. The costs of establishing and maintaining the Postal Service shall not be apportioned to impair the overall value of such service to the people.

(b) The Postal Service shall provide a maximum degree of effective and regular postal services to rural areas, communities, and small towns where post offices are not self-sustaining. No small post office shall be closed solely for operating at a deficit, it being the specific intent of the Congress that effective postal services be insured to residents of both urban and rural communities.

(c) As an employer, the Postal Service shall achieve and maintain compensation for its officers and employees comparable to the rates and types of compensation paid in the private sector of the economy of the United States. It shall place particular emphasis upon opportunities for career advancements of all officers and employees and the achievement of worthwhile and satisfying careers in the service of the United States.

(d) Postal rates shall be established to apportion the costs of all postal operations to all users of the mail on a fair and equitable basis.

(e) In determining all policies for postal services, the Postal Service shall give the highest consideration to the requirement for the most expeditious collection, transportation, and delivery of important letter mail.

(f) In selecting modes of transportation, the Postal Service shall give highest consideration to the prompt and economical delivery of all mail. Modern methods of transporting mail by containerization and programs designed to achieve overnight transportation to the destination of important letter mail to all parts of the Nation shall be a primary goal of postal operations.

(g) In planning and building new postal facilities, the Postal Service shall emphasize the need for facilities and equipment designed to create desirable working conditions for its officers and employees, a maximum degree of convenience for efficient postal services, proper access to existing and future air and surface transportation facilities, and control of costs to the Postal Service.

(Pub. L. 91-375, Aug. 12, 1970, 84 Stat. 719; Pub. L. 110-405, §2(b)(9), Oct. 13, 2008, 122 Stat. 4289.)

**Editorial Notes**

AMENDMENTS

2008—Subsec. (f). Pub. L. 110-405 substituted “mail.” for “mail and shall make a fair and equitable distribution of mail business to carriers providing similar modes of transportation services to the Postal Service.”

**Statutory Notes and Related Subsidiaries**

EFFECTIVE DATE OF 2008 AMENDMENT

Pub. L. 110-405, §2(c), Oct. 13, 2008, 122 Stat. 4290, provided that: “The amendments made by this section [amending this section, sections 3401 and 5402 of this title, and sections 41901 to 41904 and 41910 of Title 49, Transportation, renumbering former sections 41906, 41909, 41910, and 41912 of Title 49 as sections 41905, 41906, 41907, and 41908 of Title 49, respectively, and repealing former sections 41905, 41907, 41908, and 41911 of Title 49] shall take effect on October 1, 2008.”

EFFECTIVE DATE

Section effective Jan. 20, 1971, pursuant to Resolution No. 71-10 of the Board of Governors. See section 15(a) of Pub. L. 91-375, set out as a note preceding this section.

SHORT TITLE OF 2015 AMENDMENT

Pub. L. 114-99, §1, Dec. 11, 2015, 129 Stat. 2201, provided that: “This Act [amending section 414 of this title] may be cited as the ‘Breast Cancer Research Stamp Reauthorization Act of 2015’.”

SHORT TITLE OF 2014 AMENDMENT

Pub. L. 113-165, §1, Sept. 19, 2014, 128 Stat. 1878, provided that: “This Act [amending provisions set out as a note under section 416 of this title] may be cited as the ‘Multinational Species Conservation Funds Sempostal Stamp Reauthorization Act of 2013’.”

SHORT TITLE OF 2010 AMENDMENT

Pub. L. 111-155, §1, Apr. 7, 2010, 124 Stat. 1112, provided that: “This Act [amending section 3001 of this title] may be cited as the ‘Prevent Deceptive Census Look Alike Mailings Act’.”

SHORT TITLE OF 2008 AMENDMENT

Pub. L. 110-405, §1, Oct. 13, 2008, 122 Stat. 4287, provided that: “This Act [amending this section, sections 3401 and 5402 of this title, and sections 41901 to 41904 and 41910 of Title 49, Transportation, renumbering former sections 41906, 41909, 41910, and 41912 of Title 49 as sections 41905, 41906, 41907, and 41908 of Title 49, respectively, repealing former sections 41905, 41907, 41908, and 41911 of Title 49, and enacting provisions set out as a note under this section] may be cited as the ‘Air Carriage of International Mail Act’.”

SHORT TITLE OF 2006 AMENDMENT

Pub. L. 109-435, §1(a), Dec. 20, 2006, 120 Stat. 3198, provided that: “This Act [see Tables for classification] may be cited as the ‘Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act’.”

SHORT TITLE OF 2004 AMENDMENT

Pub. L. 108-447, div. J, title III, §301(a), Dec. 8, 2004, 118 Stat. 3350, provided that: “This title [amending section 5402 of this title] may be cited as the ‘Rural Air Service Improvement Act of 2004’.”

SHORT TITLE OF 2003 AMENDMENT

Pub. L. 108-86, §1, Sept. 30, 2003, 117 Stat. 1052, provided that: “This Act [amending section 1004 of this title and enacting provisions set out as notes under section 1004 of this title] may be cited as the ‘Postmasters Equity Act of 2003’.”

SHORT TITLE OF 2002 AMENDMENT

Pub. L. 107-206, title III, §3002(a), Aug. 2, 2002, 116 Stat. 910, provided that: “This title [amending section