

Post Office Discontinuance Guide

Handbook PO-101

August 2004
Transmittal Letter

- A. Introduction.** Handbook PO 101, *Post Office Discontinuance Guide*, serves as a tool for providing district Post Office™ review coordinators information on policies and procedures related to the discontinuance of Post Offices. Through adherence to these policies and procedures, the Postal Service™ will assess the viability of and customer access to Post Offices, ensuring that the Postal Service continues to provide cost-effective universal service to all Americans as outlined in its *Transformation Plan* of April 2002.
- B. Explanation.** This handbook outlines the procedures to follow in the Post Office discontinuance process and emphasizes customer participation in these proceedings. There is no change in law or Postal Service policy governing discontinuance of Post Offices. The purpose of the guide is neither to encourage nor discourage discontinuances, but rather to provide assistance to field personnel in the investigative process.
- C. Distribution.** This handbook is distributed to all appropriate headquarters, area, district and local Post Office employees who are involved in the discontinuance process.
- **Online.** Handbook PO-101 is available on the Postal Service Intranet on the PolicyNet Web site at <http://blue.usps.gov/cpim>, click on *HBKs*.
 - **Additional Copies.** You may order printed copies from the Material Distribution Center (MDC) using the touch tone order entry (TTOE) system. Call 800-332-0317, option 2.
- Note:** You must be registered to use TTOE. To register, call 800-332-0317, option 1, extension 2925, and follow the prompts to leave a message. Then, wait 48 hours after registering before you place your first order.
- D. Revisions.** We will issue any new or revised policies or procedures through *Postal Bulletin* articles.
- E. Rescissions.** Any previous applicable directive that is in conflict with this handbook is rescinded. The previous issue of Handbook PO-101 is obsolete.

F. Comments. Submit comments and questions about the content of this handbook in writing to:

MANAGER
RETAIL OPERATIONS
DELIVERY AND RETAIL
US POSTAL SERVICE
475 L'ENFANT PLAZA SW ROOM 5607
WASHINGTON DC 20260-5607

G. Effective Date. This handbook is effective upon receipt.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Will P. Galligan". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Will" and last name "Galligan" clearly distinguishable.

William P. Galligan
Acting Vice President
Delivery and Retail

Contents

1	Introduction	1
11	Overview	1
111	Purpose	1
112	Scope	1
112.1	General	1
112.2	Exhibits and Forms	1
112.3	References	2
12	Federal Law Regarding Post Office Discontinuances	2
121	Independent Post Offices	2
122	Classified Stations, Branches, and Contractor-Operated Community Post Offices	3
13	Responsibilities	3
131	Vice President, Delivery and Retail	3
132	District Manager, Customer Service and Sales	3
132.1	General	3
132.2	Coordinator Reassignments	4
133	District Post Office Review Coordinator	4
133.1	Responsibilities	4
133.2	Qualifications	4
133.3	Official Correspondence	5
133.31	Headquarters	5
133.32	Area Offices Notification	5
133.4	Proposal Checklist	5
133.5	Log of Post Office Discontinuance Actions	5
133.6	Official Record	6
133.61	Reviewing Official Record	6
133.62	Maintaining Official Record	6
133.63	Archiving Official Record	6
133.631	Preparing to Archive Record	6
133.632	Archiving Record	7
134	Investigative Coordinator	7
134.1	Responsibilities	7
134.2	Investigation	7
134.3	Memorandum to the Record	7
134.4	Proposal Checklist	7
134.5	Communication With District Post Office Review Coordinator	8
134.6	Official Administrative Record	8
134.61	Description	8

134.62	Format	8
134.63	Content	9
134.64	Availability of Record to Public	9
14	Common Problems in Discontinuance Process	9
141	Suspensions	9
142	Initial Investigation	10
143	Questionnaires	10
144	Community Meetings	10
145	Proposal	11
146	Official Record	12
2	Decision to Study and Preproposal Investigation	13
21	Decision to Study	13
211	Authorization	13
212	Insufficient Circumstances to Study for Discontinuance	13
212.1	Building Modifications for the Handicapped	13
212.2	Restroom Facilities	13
212.3	OSHA Requirements	13
212.4	Economic Reasons	14
213	Circumstances Prompting Decision to Study	14
213.1	Postmaster Vacancy	14
213.2	Emergency Suspension	14
213.3	Special Circumstances	14
213.4	Plan of Action Decision Time Frame	14
22	Preproposal Investigation	14
221	Preparing for Investigation	14
222	Conducting an Onsite Investigation	15
23	Analyzing Service Alternatives	17
231	General	17
232	Types of Alternate Services	17
232.1	Consolidation	17
232.11	General	17
232.12	Prohibited Locations	17
232.13	Community Post Office	17
232.14	Classified Station or Branch	18
232.15	Contract Station or Branch	18
232.2	Closing	18
232.21	General	18
232.22	Rural and Highway Contract Route Delivery	18
232.23	Nonpersonnel Rural Unit	18

Contents

24	Recommendation to Management	19
241	General	19
242	Justification for Discontinuance	19
243	Decision to Proceed with Discontinuance Investigation	19
25	Customer Questionnaires	20
251	Purpose	20
252	Developing the Questionnaire	20
252.1	General	20
252.2	Enclosures	20
252.21	Cover Letter	20
252.22	Summary of Post Office Change Regulations	20
252.23	Rural and Highway Contract Route Services	20
253	Sample Community Questionnaires and Cover Letters	21
253.1	Proposal for CPO — Office Not Suspended	21
253.2	Proposal for CPO — Office Suspended	21
253.3	Proposal for CBU, Roadside Box, or Nonpersonnel Rural Unit — Office Not Suspended	21
253.4	Proposal for CBU, Roadside Boxes, or Nonpersonnel Rural Unit — Office Suspended	21
254	Analyzing Customer Questionnaires	21
255	Acknowledging Customer Questionnaires	21
26	Conducting a Community Meeting	21
261	General	21
262	Selecting Date and Location	22
263	Notifying Customers	22
264	Attending Meeting	22
265	Analyzing Meeting	23
27	Preproposal Investigation Analysis	23
271	General	23
272	Recommendation to Management	23
3	The Proposal	25
31	General	25
32	Components of the Proposal	25
33	Writing Tips	27
331	Numbers	27
332	Contractions	27
333	Time	27
334	Customer Names	27
335	Sample Paragraphs for Proposal	27
336	Sample Proposal	27

34	60-Day Posting Period	28
341	Before Posting	28
341.1	District Coordinator Review	28
341.2	Notification to Government Relations and Public Policy	28
341.3	ZIP Code Elimination	28
341.31	Proposed Closing	28
341.32	Proposed Consolidation	28
342	Posting	28
342.1	General	28
342.2	Letter of Instructions	29
342.3	Invitation for Comments	29
342.4	Comment Forms	29
343	After Posting	29
343.1	Letter of Instructions	29
343.2	Notice of Taking Proposal and Comments Under Internal Consideration	30
343.3	Analysis of Comments	30
343.4	Response to Customer Comments	30
35	Revising Proposal	30
351	Definition	30
352	Components of Revised Proposal	30
352.1	Description	30
352.2	Cover Page	31
352.3	Responsiveness to Community Postal Needs	31
352.4	Effect on Community	31
352.5	Effect on Employees	31
352.6	Economic Savings	31
352.7	Summary	31
352.8	Notice	31
353	60-Day Posting Period	31
4	Transmittals and Headquarters Review/Decision	33
41	Review	33
411	Official Record Review	33
412	Certification of Record	33
413	Transmittal Letter from MPOO	33
42	District Review	33
421	Official Record Review	33
422	Log of Post Office Discontinuance Actions	34
423	Transmittal Letter from District to Headquarters	34
424	Headquarters Acknowledgment of Receipt of Official Record	34

Contents

43	Headquarters Review	34
431	General	34
432	Determinations	35
432.1	Returned for Further Action or Information	35
432.2	Proposal Not Warranted	35
432.3	Proposal Warranted	35
432.31	General	35
432.32	30-Day Public Notice	35
432.33	Postal Bulletin Post Office Change Announcement	36
432.34	Official Discontinuance	36
432.35	Publication 65, National Five-Digit ZIP Code and Post Office Directory	36
433	Notification	37
433.1	To Local Officials	37
433.2	To Customers	37
5	Appeal Procedures	39
51	General	39
511	Who May Appeal	39
512	Where to Appeal	39
513	When to Appeal	39
514	Notification to District Manager	39
515	Appeal Documents	39
52	Discontinuance Pending Appeal	40
53	Postal Rate Commission Decisions	40
531	Final Determination Affirmed	40
532	Final Determination Remanded	40
532.1	General	40
532.2	Discontinuance Not Warranted	40
532.3	Returned for Further Consideration	41
6	Special Considerations	43
61	Emergency Suspensions	43
611	Definition	43
612	Authority	43
613	Notification	43
613.1	To Headquarters	43
613.2	To Local Officials	44
613.3	To Customers	45
614	Alternate Service	45
615	Employee Reassignment	45

616	Suspension Review Team	45
617	Plan of Action	46
618	Restoration of Service	46
62	Post Office Name Change	46
621	Current Instructions	46
622	General	46
623	Changes to Post Office Names	46
624	Community Name When Post Office Closed	47
625	Name of Facility Established by Consolidation	47
626	Use of Branch or Station Designation	48
626.1	Purpose	48
626.2	Definitions	48
626.3	Naming Guidelines	49
63	Merging Facilities	49
631	Definition	49
632	A Hypothetical Situation	50
632.1	Background	50
632.11	General	50
632.12	Post Office A	50
632.13	Post Office B	50
632.2	Suggested Plan of Action	51
632.21	Post Office A	51
632.22	Post Office B	51
632.23	Post Office Name Change	51
632.24	Headquarters Review	51
64	ZIP Code Elimination	52
641	General	52
642	Post Office Closing	52
642.1	Community Place Name	52
642.2	Request for ZIP Code Elimination	52
642.3	Justification for ZIP Code Elimination	52
642.4	Post Office Box Range	52
642.5	Rural and Highway Contract Route Numbers and Box Ranges	53
642.6	Customer Notification	53
643	Post Office Consolidation	53
643.1	Community Place Name and ZIP Code	53
643.2	Customer Notification	53
644	Official Record Documentation	53
644.1	Post Office Closing	53
644.2	Post Office Consolidation	53

7	Discontinuance of Classified Stations, Branches, or CPOs	55
71	General	55
72	Responsibilities	55
721	District Manager, Customer Service and Sales	55
722	Vice President, Delivery and Retail	55
73	Name Changes	56
8	Exhibits	57
	Appendix A – Glossary of Terms	213
	Appendix B – Forms Index	217
	Appendix C – Document References	219
	Appendix D – Exhibit List	221
	Appendix E – Index	225

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Exhibits

Exhibit 133.31	
Headquarters Legislative Affairs Notification Instructions	58
Exhibit 134.62e	
Official Record Index	59
Exhibit 211	
Sample Letter — Authority to Conduct Preproposal Investigation	61
Exhibit 221b	
Sample Letter Requesting Customer Information	62
Exhibit 221e	
Sample Letter to County Officials Requesting Growth Information	63
Exhibit 221f	
Sample Request for Inspection Service Report	64
Exhibit 221h	
Sample Request to Conduct Surveys Letter	66
Exhibit 221i	
PS Form 4920, Post Office Closing or Consolidation Proposal – Fact Sheet	70
Exhibit 222c	
PS Form 150, Postmaster Workload Information	71
Exhibit 222f	
Post Office Survey Sheet	75
Exhibit 232.22	
Sample Highway Contract Route Cost Analysis Form	80
Exhibit 251	
Sample Questionnaire Transmittal Letter	82
Exhibit 252.22	
Summary of Post Office Change Regulations for Independent Post Offices	83
Exhibit 252.23	
Welcome to Rural Delivery Service	84
Exhibit 253.1	
Sample Questionnaire Cover Letter — Proposal for CPO (Office Not Suspended)	87
Exhibit 253.2	
Sample Questionnaire Cover Letter — Proposal for CPO (Office Suspended)	90
Exhibit 253.3	
Sample Questionnaire Cover Letter — Rural Route/HCR Service to CBU/Roadside Box/ Nonpersonnel Unit (Office Not Suspended)	93
Exhibit 253.4	
Sample Questionnaire Cover Letter — Rural Route/HCR Service to CBU/Roadside Box/ Nonpersonnel Unit (Office Suspended)	97
Exhibit 254	
Sample Postal Service Customer Questionnaire Analysis	100

Exhibit 255	
Sample Response to Postal Service Customer Questionnaire	101
Exhibit 263	
Sample Community Meeting Notification Letter	102
Exhibit 264a	
Public Affairs and Communication Address List	103
Exhibit 264b	
Community Meeting Roster	105
Exhibit 265	
Sample Community Meeting Analysis	106
Exhibit 335	
Sample Proposal Cover Sheet and Paragraphs	107
Exhibit 336	
Sample Proposal to Close Post Office and Extend Rural Route Service	130
Exhibit 341.1	
Proposal Checklist	137
Exhibit 341.2	
Sample Notification to Government Relations of Proposal Posting	139
Exhibit 342.2	
Sample Proposal Posting Instructions to Postmaster	140
Exhibit 342.3	
Sample Invitation for Customer Comments	141
Exhibit 342.4	
Sample Customer Comment Form	142
Exhibit 343.1	
Sample Letter of Instructions – Removal of Proposal and Invitation for Comments	143
Exhibit 343.2	
Sample Notice of Taking Proposal and Comments Under Internal Consideration	144
Exhibit 343.3	
Sample Analysis of 60-Day Posting Comments	145
Exhibit 343.4	
Sample Response Letter to Customer Comments	147
Exhibit 352.1	
Sample Revised Proposal to Close Post Office and Continue to Provide Rural Route Service	148
Exhibit 412	
Sample Certification of the Record	155
Exhibit 413	
Sample Record Transmittal Letter from Post Office Operations Manager to District Manager	156
Exhibit 422	
Log of Post Office Discontinuance Actions	157
Exhibit 423	
Sample Record Transmittal Letter from District to Headquarters	159

Exhibits

Exhibit 424	
Sample Headquarters Acknowledgment of Receipt of Official Record	160
Exhibit 432.1	
Sample Returned for Further Consideration Letter	161
Exhibit 432.2a	
Sample Proposal Not Warranted Letter	162
Exhibit 432.2b	
Sample Notice to Customers – Proposal to Discontinue Withdrawn	163
Exhibit 432.31	
Sample Final Determination Transmittal Letter	164
Exhibit 432.32	
Sample Letter of Instructions for Posting the Final Determination	173
Exhibit 432.33	
Postal Bulletin Post Office Change Announcement Form	174
Exhibit 432.35	
Sample Letter of Instruction to AMS	175
Exhibit 433.1	
Sample Notification Letter to District Personnel	176
Exhibit 433.2	
Sample Notification Letter to Customers	177
Exhibit 514a	
Sample No Appeals Letter	179
Exhibit 514b	
Sample Appeal Filed Letter	180
Exhibit 531	
Sample Determination Affirmed Notice and PRC Opinion	181
Exhibit 532.1	
Sample PRC Opinion Remanding Determination	192
Exhibit 532.2	
Sample PRC Appeal Remanded Notice Determined Not Warranted	200
Exhibit 532.3	
Sample PRC Appeal Remanded Notice Returned for Further Consideration	201
Exhibit 613.1	
Notice of Post Office Emergency Suspension	202
Exhibit 613.2	
Sample Notice to Local Officials of Post Office Emergency Suspension	204
Exhibit 613.3	
Sample Notice to Customers of Post Office Emergency Suspension	205
Exhibit 616b	
Sample Notification to District Manager of Suspension Review Team Onsite Visit	207
Exhibit 618	
Notice of Restoration of Service from Area to Headquarters	208

Exhibit 642.2	
Sample ZIP Code Elimination Request Letter	209
Exhibit 721	
Classified Station/Branch or Community Post Office Discontinuance Checklist	210

1 Introduction

11 Overview

111 Purpose

This guide is designed to assist field discontinuance personnel in the Post Office™ discontinuance process.

112 Scope

112.1 General

These guidelines apply primarily to the discontinuance of independent Post Offices. Chapters 2 through 5 are organized according to the steps in that process. Special considerations are covered in chapter 6. Separate procedures for discontinuing classified stations, branches, and contractor-operated community Post Offices (CPOs) are in chapter 7. Regulations affecting “Expansion, Relocation, and Construction of New Post Offices” are found in 39 CFR 241.4.

112.2 Exhibits and Forms

Forms, letters, and questionnaires in this guide may be photocopied or reproduced as necessary. Post Office closing standard language (POCSL) templates are also available for ACE workstations of employees who have requested delivery of the POCSL templates. Once the templates have been installed, you can access them on the ACE workstation by starting Microsoft Word. For further information on POCSL templates, please contact the Headquarters Post Office review coordinator. However, the *Postal Bulletin Post Office Change Announcement* form is provided as information only (see section 432.33). Original *Postal Bulletin Post Office Change Announcement* forms are transmitted to the district manager, Customer Service and Sales, with the final determination from Headquarters. A copy of the final determination is transmitted to the vice president, Area Operations.

112.3 References

See appendix C for a list of document references on the discontinuance process. This list is a guide to further resources. For information or assistance on station and branch discontinuances, contact the district Post Office review coordinator.

12 Federal Law Regarding Post Office Discontinuances

121 Independent Post Offices

Under Title 39, *United States Code*, Section 404(b), any decision to close or consolidate a Post Office must be based on certain criteria. These include the effect on the community served; the effect on employees of the Post Office; compliance with government policy established by law that the Postal Service™ must provide a maximum degree of effective and regular postal services to rural areas, communities, and small towns where Post Offices are not self-sustaining; the economic savings to the Postal Service; and any other factors the Postal Service determines necessary. By means of a 1998 amendment, the Postal Service may not consider Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) compliance when deciding whether to close a Post Office. In addition, certain mandatory procedures apply:

- a. The public must be given 60 days' notice of a proposed action to enable the persons served by a Post Office to evaluate the proposal and provide comments.
- b. Final determination to close or consolidate a Post Office must be made in writing and must include findings covering all the required considerations after public comments are received and taken into account.
- c. Written determination must be made available to the customers served by the office at least 60 days before the discontinuance takes effect.
- d. Any customer served by the affected Post Office may appeal the decision to the Postal Rate Commission (PRC) within the first 30 days after the written determination is made available.
- e. The PRC may either affirm the determination of the Postal Service or return the matter for further consideration, but may not modify the determination.
- f. The PRC is required by 39 *United States Code* 404(b)(5) to make a determination on the appeal no later than 120 days after receiving the appeal.

122 **Classified Stations, Branches, and Contractor-Operated Community Post Offices**

When a district manager, Customer Service and Sales, determines it is necessary to discontinue the operation of a classified station, branch, or contractor-operated community Post Office (CPO) that is attached administratively to an independent Post Office, written notice must be provided immediately to the vice president, Delivery and Retail. The notice must include the reasons for the proposed discontinuance. The vice president or designee approves or disapproves the proposed discontinuance based on the justification provided by the district manager, Customer Service and Sales. No final action on a proposed discontinuance may be taken without the vice president's approval.

13 Responsibilities

131 **Vice President, Delivery and Retail**

The vice president, Delivery and Retail (or designee), makes final determinations to discontinue independent Post Offices, classified stations, branches, and contract community Post Offices.

132 **District Manager, Customer Service and Sales**

132.1 **General**

The district manager, Customer Service and Sales, is responsible for overseeing the Post Office discontinuance investigations within the district and must provide written approval before any investigation is initiated. Post Office and community Post Office discontinuance activities are generally initiated by the manager, Post Office Operations. Classified station and branch discontinuance proposals are generally initiated by the installation head. The district manager, Customer Service and Sales, must immediately notify the Headquarters Post Office review coordinator when an action contrary to a discontinuance proposal occurs after a proposal is sent to the vice president, Delivery and Retail for review. Such contrary actions may warrant withdrawal of the proposal by the district manager, Customer Service and Sales. Examples of contrary actions include the following:

- a. Soliciting contract offer.
- b. Failing to get interested offerors for a community Post Office proposal.
- c. Filling the postmaster position.
- d. Making significant building modifications.
- e. Renewing lease.
- f. Proposing change in alternate service.
- g. Changing Post Office level and hours of operation.

132.2 **Coordinator Reassignments**

The district manager, Customer Service and Sales, is responsible for ensuring that the Headquarters Post Office review coordinator is notified immediately, in writing, of any district Post Office review coordinator reassignments. This notification must include the name, address, and telephone numbers of all newly assigned coordinators. This information is entered into the Headquarters directory of Post Office review coordinators. Current information in this directory is important for the efficient review and conclusion of discontinuance proposals, the timely response by Government Relations and Public Policy to congressional inquiries, and the provision of assistance and instructions to field personnel.

133 **District Post Office Review Coordinator**

133.1 **Responsibilities**

The district Post Office review coordinator provides assistance and support to subordinate investigative coordinators throughout the discontinuance process. The district Post Office review coordinator is responsible for thoroughly reviewing official records and certifying their accuracy and compliance with federal law, Postal Service policy, and the instructions in this guide. District Post Office review coordinators are also responsible for training incumbent and newly assigned subordinate investigative coordinators, disseminating information, and maintaining open lines of communication by providing regular, effective assistance and guidance to subordinate coordinators and investigative personnel.

133.2 **Qualifications**

The employee appointed by the district manager, Customer Service and Sales, to serve as the district Post Office review coordinator should have extensive Post Office discontinuance and field operations experience, as well as good oral and written communication skills. If the district Post Office review coordinator has no such experience, consideration should be given to reassigning the coordination responsibilities to a more experienced employee. If a more knowledgeable employee is not available, the inexperienced coordinator must begin training immediately under the guidance of experienced personnel at the district or other location where adequate training is available. If adequate training is not available in the district, ask an experienced coordinator from another district to provide assistance. Requests for Headquarters hosted field training must be made in writing to the vice president, Delivery and Retail, by the district manager, Customer Service and Sales.

133.3 Official Correspondence**133.31 Headquarters**

District Post Office review coordinators must instruct all subordinate investigative coordinators that no correspondence may be sent to Headquarters without the name, title, and telephone number of the employee most familiar with the subject of the correspondence. This includes the transmittal of proposals to Government Relations and Public Policy at Headquarters. Exhibit 133.31 shows the address and telephone number for Government Relations and Public Policy. Except for emergency suspension information (closing, service restoration, and 90-day plan of action notices), correspondence may be faxed to Headquarters only with prior authorization. Do not transmit lengthy information. All fax transmissions *must* include the originating fax number and location, along with the other required information.

133.32 Area Offices Notification

District Post Office review coordinators must make sure that the vice president, Area Operations, is notified of Post Office discontinuances.

133.4 Proposal Checklist

When a proposed discontinuance reaches the stage where a proposal to close or consolidate a Post Office is prepared for posting, the district Post Office review coordinator must thoroughly review the proposal before the 60-day posting period. District Post Office review coordinators must sign a proposal checklist to certify that they have conducted the review and that all necessary activities have been performed. The district Post Office review coordinator must mail a copy of the proposal, along with a complete and current PS Form 4920, *Post Office Closing or Consolidation — Proposal Fact Sheet*, to the senior vice president, Government Relations and Public Policy, at Headquarters 10 days before posting the proposal (see sections 341.1 and 341.2).

133.5 Log of Post Office Discontinuance Actions

The district Post Office review coordinator must maintain a log of Post Office discontinuance actions for each Post Office in the district that is under investigation for possible discontinuance (see part 422). The log must include the name, title, and telephone number of the coordinator most familiar with the case. It must be current and available at all times. This log assists the coordinator when responding to questions from Government Relations and Public Policy at Headquarters regarding congressional inquiries. The log of Post Office discontinuance actions should be readily available to personnel who handle inquiries in the absence of the coordinator. A copy of the log must be included in the official record submitted to the vice president, Delivery and Retail.

133.6 Official Record**133.61 Reviewing Official Record**

Before transmitting the official record to Headquarters, the district Post Office review coordinator must thoroughly review the record to make sure that there are no inconsistencies, errors, or omissions. It may be necessary to return the record to the investigative coordinator for additional clarification, correction of deficiencies, or the reposting of an incorrectly posted proposal. An updated PS Form 4920 may be needed to ensure that information is current. The district Post Office review coordinator must sign and enter into the record the log of Post Office discontinuance actions to certify that the record is ready for the vice president, Delivery and Retail, to review and, in the event of an appeal, appropriate for review by the general counsel at Headquarters and the Postal Rate Commission. See part 422 for information about the log of Post Office discontinuance actions.

133.62 Maintaining Official Record

The official record containing *original* documents is kept at the district level. The district Post Office review coordinator is responsible for updating this original official record from the time it arrives at the district until the end of the discontinuance process. The final entry to the record is the *Postal Bulletin Post Office Changes* announcement. The original official record is filed at district archives. Other copies of the record may be destroyed at the discretion of the district manager, Customer Service and Sales.

133.63 Archiving Official Record**133.631 Preparing to Archive Record**

Before permanently closing the record to be filed at district archives, the district Post Office review coordinator must review the record documentation from the time the record was transmitted to Headquarters for final determination to ensure that all final phases of the process are documented chronologically. (Documents filed in the official record must be entered chronologically.) Examples of required documents include:

- a. Final determination postings.
- b. Copy of the completed *Postal Bulletin Post Office Change Announcement* form.
- c. Appeal notices and decision (when appropriate).
- d. Copy of the instructions to the local address management office to update the AMS (Address Management System) report.
- e. Copy of the published *Postal Bulletin Post Office Changes* announcement.

133.632 Archiving Record

In accordance with Handbook AS-305, *Records Control*, the complete archived record must be kept at the district office for two years from the end of the calendar year in which the final decision is made. The record may be disposed of after that time at the discretion of the district manager, Customer Service and Sales. Copies of the log of Post Office discontinuance actions (see section 133.5) must be kept at the district office for 20 years from the end of the calendar year in which the final decision is made.

134 Investigative Coordinator**134.1 Responsibilities**

The investigative coordinator is responsible for:

- a. Collecting and analyzing data on discontinuance investigations.
- b. Making recommendations to the district Post Office review coordinator based on this analysis.
- c. Compiling the official record of documentation.
- d. Ensuring that the discontinuance investigation is conducted in compliance with federal law, Postal Service policy, and the instructions set forth in this guide.

134.2 Investigation

The investigative coordinator should obtain and analyze data in an accurate, thorough, and objective manner, solicit the views of customers, and address their concerns. A thorough initial investigation avoids misunderstandings, problems, and possible appeals later in the process. Analysis and decision making may occur throughout the process, and a decision may be made at any time to stop the discontinuance investigation.

134.3 Memorandum to the Record

If at any time discrepancies or inconsistencies appear in the record documentation, the investigative coordinator should explain them by writing a memorandum to the record. The investigative coordinator must sign and date the memorandum on the day the information is obtained and entered into the official file record.

134.4 Proposal Checklist

Before the 60-day posting period, the investigative coordinator must send the proposal, PS Form 4920, and the proposal checklist to the district Post Office review coordinator for review. No posting is to be made before this review is complete and the district Post Office review coordinator notifies Government Relations and Public Policy at Headquarters.

134.5 **Communication With District Post Office Review Coordinator**

The investigative coordinator must keep the district Post Office review coordinator informed of the progress of each discontinuance case. This communication is necessary to maintain current information in the log of Post Office discontinuance actions and to facilitate efficient response to congressional and other inquiries received at the district level.

134.6 **Official Administrative Record**

134.61 **Description**

The official record includes all information that the district manager, Customer Service and Sales, has considered, and the decision must stand on the record. No information or views submitted by customers may be excluded, whether they support the proposal or not. The discontinuance process can be lengthy, and more than one coordinator may be involved in the investigation. The official record must be updated and maintained in an accurate and timely manner to assist new coordinators and others who need to review the documentation in the record.

134.62 **Format**

The record must be maintained in the following format:

- a. The record is assigned a docket number, which is the ZIP Code™ for the Post Office under study for discontinuance.
- b. The sequential number assigned to each document becomes the item number. The docket number and item number are placed in the upper right corner of each document when entered into the record.
- c. A numeric rather than alphabetical numbering system is used. Page numbers can be assigned consecutively throughout the document or consecutively within each item. Page numbers should be placed in the upper right corner of each document below the docket and item number.
- d. The items are filed in chronological order.
- e. A chronological index is included that identifies each document by item number and the date entered in the record. See exhibit 134.62e for a sample index.
- f. The entire record is bound in a folder that opens from the side. A label bearing the Post Office name and docket number is displayed on the folder cover. Three-ring binders and notebooks are not acceptable.

134.63 Content

These conditions apply to the content:

- a. Do not refer to customers by name in the index or proposal.
- b. Ensure that photographs in the record sent to Headquarters are originals. Digital photographs printed in color on premium paper are also acceptable.
- c. Ensure that photocopies in the record are legible, and that *both sides of two-sided documents are included*.
- d. Ensure that the record supports statements in the proposal.
- e. An updated PS Form 4920 must be completed to reflect current information when necessary. If an office is suspended, copy the information that has not changed and update other data on the new PS Form 4920. Keep old PS Forms 4920 in their chronological place in the record.
- f. Have the record thoroughly reviewed by coordinators to ensure it is accurate and in compliance with federal law, Postal Service policy, and the instructions in this guide.

134.64 Availability of Record to Public

A complete copy of the record must be available for public inspection during normal office hours at the affected Post Offices, beginning no later than the date when the proposal or final determination is posted and extending through the posting period. Provide copies of documents in the record on request and collect payment of fees prescribed by *Administrative Support Manual* 352.7. Provide copies of the proposal and comment form on request without charge.

14 Common Problems in Discontinuance Process

141 Suspensions

The following must be done/accomplished:

- a. Provide sufficient valid reason to suspend.
- b. Provide sufficient documentation justifying suspension.
- c. Involve Postmaster organizations.
- d. Notify and adequately explain reason for suspension to customers.
- e. Identify most likely recommended permanent service as temporary alternate service.
- f. Conduct timely investigations and followup. (A plan of action should be sent to the Headquarters Post Office review coordinator through the vice president, Delivery and Retail, within 90 days after the suspension occurs.)
- g. Notify Headquarters.

- h. Conduct and document search for suitable alternate quarters.
- i. Conduct and document a search for qualified personnel.

142 Initial Investigation

The following must be accomplished:

- a. Thoroughly conduct or document Post Office and community visits.
- b. Adequately investigate alternate services.
- c. Conduct and document search for suitable alternate quarters.
- d. Provide sufficient reason or documentation to support discontinuance.
- e. Post final determination before presenting conclusion as to alternate service to customer.

143 Questionnaires

The following must be accomplished:

- a. Provide reason for discontinuance or recommended alternate service in cover letter.
- b. Provide name and telephone number of contact person in cover letter.
- c. Tailor questionnaires to the local situation and to the recommended alternate service.
- d. Send questionnaires in a timely manner.
- e. Thoroughly complete analysis. (Customer concerns should be listed and paraphrased, with the number of customers expressing each concern and the Postal Service response. Concerns should be classified as postal or nonpostal.)
- f. Adequately research and address customer comments. A response should be sent to each customer who submits a questionnaire, and the response should address specific customer concerns.

144 Community Meetings

The following must be accomplished:

- a. Conduct meetings in a timely manner.
- b. Select time and site to encourage customer participation.
- c. Give adequate notice to customers.
- d. Thoroughly record documentation and analysis of meeting.
- e. Present a full range of alternate service options, together with advantages and disadvantages.

145 **Proposal**

Do the following:

- a. Notify Government Relations and Public Policy at Headquarters and Area Public Affairs and Communication 10 days before the 60-day posting of the proposal.
- b. Clearly state reason for discontinuance in Section I of the proposal.
- c. Document the record to support the proposal.
- d. Adequately answer customer concerns from questionnaires and community meetings.
- e. Verify existence of any interested offerors when a CPO is recommended.
- f. Check for mail theft or vandalism reports with the Inspection Service or local authorities in areas with recommended rural or highway contract route.
- g. Obtain prior authorization from the vice president, Area Operations (or designee), before proposing ZIP Code elimination on a closing.
- h. Include information about petitions and congressional inquiries.
- i. Explain effect on all employees, including noncareer status.
- j. Post invitation for comments *with the proposal* for at least 60 days.
- k. Post proposal for at least 60 days (always begin the count at day zero).
- l. Post proposal in all affected offices.
- m. Round date stamp proposal and invitation for comments on date of posting and date of removal.
- n. Post proposal and invitation for comments concurrently at all affected offices.
- o. Make sure information in the proposal is consistent with PS Form 4920.
- p. Make comment forms and copies of proposal available for customers.
- q. Make official record available at all affected offices.
- r. Thoroughly record analysis of comments.
- s. Respond to customer comments.
- t. Write or prepare revised proposal with information from proposal posting and customer comments on proposal.
- u. Post notice of taking proposal and comments under internal consideration after removal of the proposal.
- v. Accurately state the number of businesses in the community (need to include small and in-home businesses operated from rural residences).
- w. Check with municipal, county, or state officials regarding community growth and population trends.
- x. Check with local or state officials on historical value of building owned or leased by the Postal Service.
- y. State distance to nearest Post Office offering permit mail acceptance.

146 Official Record

The following must be accomplished:

- a. District manager, Customer Service and Sales, must give written authorization to study.
- b. Inconsistencies, contradictions, and anomalies must be clarified in the record by a memorandum to the record (see section 134.3).
- c. List docket and item numbers on each document.
- d. Enter documents in chronological order.
- e. Complete or review index for consistency with the entries.
- f. Include legible photocopies or both sides of two-sided documents.
- g. Provide original photographs or digital photographs printed in color on premium paper to Headquarters.
- h. Conduct or include in record window transaction and mail volume surveys.
- i. Provide current and complete PS Form 4920.
- j. Update documentation. (Example: The description of community omits or miscounts significant local establishments, such as schools, businesses, and churches; or, the analysis of community postal needs omits or miscounts postage meter customers or bulk mailing permits.)
- k. Conceal customer names in index or proposal.
- l. Certify record (see part 412).
- m. District manager, Customer Service and Sales, must make transmittal to Headquarters.

2 Decision to Study and Preproposal Investigation

21 Decision to Study

211 Authorization

The first step in the Post Office discontinuance process is an official decision to study. No discontinuance investigation may begin without written authorization from the district manager, Customer Service and Sales, to study the Post Office for possible discontinuance. See exhibit 211 for a sample request for authorization. Begin compilation of the official record as soon as a decision is made to study for discontinuance.

212 Insufficient Circumstances to Study for Discontinuance

212.1 Building Modifications for the Handicapped

Any claim that the continued operation of a building without handicapped modifications is inconsistent with the Architectural Barriers Act only serves to show that necessary modifications must be made to satisfy these requirements or that a waiver must be received. Such a claim does not, in and of itself, constitute justification to discontinue a Post Office.

212.2 Restroom Facilities

The absence of running water or restroom facilities may be considered in conjunction with other factors in the discontinuance investigation. However, the absence of such facilities does not, in and of itself, constitute justification to discontinue a Post Office.

212.3 OSHA Requirements

The Postal Service may not consider compliance with Occupational Safety and Health Agency (OSHA) requirements in making a discontinuance determination.

212.4 Economic Reasons

The Postal Service is prevented from closing a small Post Office solely for operating at a deficit.

213 Circumstances Prompting Decision to Study**213.1 Postmaster Vacancy**

A postmaster vacancy may lead to a decision to conduct a study for evaluating the Post Office workload and the service needs of the community. However, the fact that an office is vacant does not, in and of itself, constitute justification to discontinue a Post Office.

213.2 Emergency Suspension

The cancellation of a lease or rental agreement when no suitable alternate quarters are available in the community, a fire or other natural disaster, severe health or safety hazards, or similar reasons may lead to a decision to study (see chapter 6).

213.3 Special Circumstances

Special circumstances — such as the incorporation of two communities into one — may also warrant a decision to study. See subchapter 63 or contact the Headquarters Post Office review coordinator for assistance.

213.4 Plan of Action Decision Time Frame

Within 90 days (3 months) of a relevant occurrence, a decision should be made to fill a postmaster position, secure suitable alternate quarters, take any other necessary corrective action, or initiate a preproposal investigation.

22 Preproposal Investigation

221 Preparing for Investigation

Begin preparations for a preproposal investigation after receiving written authorization from the district manager, Customer Service and Sales (see exhibit 211). To compile the preparations:

- a. Obtain maps of the area showing the proximity of the office under study to other Post Office locations.
- b. Request the postmaster or officer-in-charge (OIC) to compile a list of customers' addresses. Identify customers with disabilities and special provisions, as well as customers receiving duplicate delivery service. Obtain a list of the schools, churches, businesses, postage meter customers, permit mailers, and civic organizations served by the office. See exhibit 221b for a sample letter requesting customer information from the postmaster or OIC.

- c. Obtain PS Forms 4003 and 4003-A, *Official Rural Route Description and Continuation Sheet*, and a route map for rural or highway contract routes that may be able to provide alternate service.
- d. Obtain a copy of the lease from the Facilities Service Office. If the facility is inadequate, obtain a copy of a *recent* building inspection and a list of facility deficiencies. Also obtain photographs of the building showing any deficiencies.
- e. Consult county or city officials for information about population, area or Post Office building historical significance, and growth trends within the community. If population records are not available, use Post Office delivery statistics to show growth trends for the past several years. See exhibit 221e for a sample letter to county officials requesting growth information.
- f. Send a request to the Postal Inspection Service and the local law enforcement agency to determine and verify any reports of mail theft or vandalism in the area. Include a franked, self-addressed envelope with the request. See exhibit 221f for a sample request for inspection service report.
- g. Consult the managers of the Post Office under study and nearby offices that may provide alternate service, and make an appointment to visit those offices. It may also be useful to meet with local leaders. Encourage Postal Service managers and the public to provide their opinions about the investigation in writing so that those opinions may be included in the official record. If the Postal Service managers and the public do not want to do so, add a memorandum for the record stating this fact. During the visit to nearby Post Offices, meet with the carriers of the routes being considered as alternate service.
- h. Send window transaction and mail volume survey forms to the postmaster or OIC or the station or branch manager of the office under study. Have the postmaster or OIC or the station or branch manager conduct a 2-week survey. See exhibit 221h for a sample request to conduct surveys letter to the postmaster or OIC and sample survey forms.

Note: If the office is utilizing POS ONE equipment, print the window operation survey report each day during the 2-week time period to obtain the average number of transactions by type. For offices utilizing IRT equipment, the IRT item count report should be printed each day during the 2-week period.
- i. Complete as much of PS Form 4920 as possible (see exhibit 221i).

222 Conducting an Onsite Investigation

Visit the community and affected Post Offices to learn first-hand the operations, workload, local service needs, and community geography and economy. While onsite do the following:

- a. Photograph the interior and exterior of the Post Office. Photograph any structural defects, safety hazards, and security deficiencies, and place the originals in the Headquarters copy of the official record. Take

- careful notes on the condition of the building. Request a building inspection from the Facilities Service Office or Administrative Services Office, when appropriate. Take photographs of the community, such as views of the community facing north, south, east, and west of the Post Office. Photograph any potential alternate quarters, community Post Office, or nonpersonnel rural unit sites.
- b. Explain Post Office discontinuance regulations to the postmaster or OIC or to the classified or station branch manager at the affected Post Offices. Explain the discontinuance process and how to handle customer inquiries. Make it clear that no final decision has been made at this point in the investigation.
 - c. Complete a PS Form 150, *Postmaster Workload Information* (see exhibit 222c). Exhibit 222c also shows the workload service credit ranges and fiscal year revenue unit values. Current workload service credit ranges and worksheets are available for download from the Intranet at <http://blue.usps.gov/hrisp/cr>. Determine the current executive and administrative schedule (EAS) grade and service hour category of the office by completing the *Worksheet for Calculating Workload Service Credit for Post Offices* in exhibit 222c. If the PS Form 150 indicates that the Post Office evaluation has changed, an adjustment in the EAS level and service hour category is required. The PS Form 150 must be coordinated with human resources, since that office is responsible for changes to authorized postmaster grades and postmaster compensation for Post Offices within the district that are covered by the Workload Service Credit System. Evaluate whether any changes can be recommended to the postmaster/OIC to improve the efficiency of the office. Example: Should the intermediate rural route be moved to the emanating office? Should a Highway Contract Route (HCR) trip be eliminated by having mail dropped off by locked pouch by a rural carrier? Any proposed changes should include updated PS Forms 150 for the affected Post Offices to show the impact, if any, on currently authorized postmaster grades. For assistance in completing the PS Form 150, contact compensation and staffing personnel in the district.
 - d. Review the town map and carrier's line of travel, where appropriate. Measure the distance of the rural extension. Look for potential cluster box unit (CBU) and parcel locker sites. (All new neighborhood and delivery collection box units (NDCBUs) are referred to as CBUs.)
 - e. Meet with civic leaders, such as the mayor and local business managers. Working with the Facilities Service Office, look for potential alternate quarters and community Post Office (CPO) sites. Inquire into community interest and availability of quarters for contracting a CPO (see section 232.12 for prohibited locations).
 - f. Complete the Post Office survey sheet and community survey sheet. See exhibit 222f (pages 1–3). Complete PS Form 4920. See exhibit 221i. The PS Form 4920 must contain accurate data. The expense part of PS Form 4920 includes the basic postmaster salary without cost of living adjustment (COLA) (use Step 1 for vacant

positions), 33.5 percent fringe benefits, and rent (excluding utilities). If the postmaster evaluation has been reduced, base the expenses on the EAS grade at which the position would be filled. See exhibit 222f (pages 4 and 5) for postmaster salaries. It is the Post Office review coordinator's responsibility to update salary schedules in this guide. Hourly rate schedules are posted on the human resources Web site at <http://blue.usps.gov.hrisp/comp>.

23 Analyzing Service Alternatives

231 General

Rank possible replacement services in order of practicality, costs, and the need to maintain effective and regular service to the community. In some cases, a combination of services may prove beneficial to customers and the Postal Service. A Post Office closing or consolidation may affect the Post Office box fees for customers. If so, state this information in any subsequent proposal. See the *Domestic Mail Manual* for information on Post Office box fees. *It is imperative that effective, regular service be maintained.* If the office is given emergency suspension, the temporary alternate service should be the one most likely to be the permanent alternate service on any later proposal.

232 Types of Alternate Services

232.1 Consolidation

232.11 General

Consolidation involves replacing an independent Post Office with a classified station, branch, or contractor-operated community Post Office that reports to an administrative Post Office. No address changes are required. Consult the vice president, Area Operations, for ZIP Code™ elimination of stations and branches. A consolidation of an independent Post Office to a station or branch also requires the approval of the vice president, Area Operations, for ZIP Code elimination.

232.12 Prohibited Locations

Postal units may not be located in or directly connected to a room in which intoxicating beverages are sold to be consumed on the premises.

232.13 Community Post Office

Visit potential CPO sites to determine whether there are interested offerors. A CPO is usually located in an established business, such as a grocery store, and often adds to the financial base of the community. Postal services are usually identical to those of an independent Post Office, except for postage meter settings and permit mailings. Nonpostal services continue to be available at a CPO. Hours of operation are generally the same as the evaluated hours of the Post Office. Before proposing a CPO, be sure that

there are interested offerors and that a reasonable offer can be expected. The economy of the area must be considered in determining a reasonable bid. When establishing a CPO, refer to the Denver Category Management Center (CMC).

232.14 **Classified Station or Branch**

Classified stations and branches offer the same postal and nonpostal services as those of an independent Post Office.

232.15 **Contract Station or Branch**

Contract stations or branches offer the same postal and nonpostal services as those of an independent Post Office, except for postage meter settings and permit mailings.

232.2 **Closing**

232.21 **General**

A Post Office closing involves ending operations at an independent Post Office and providing alternate services from another office. Normally, the ZIP Code for each address served by a discontinued Post Office is retained. A Post Office closing does not require a change in ZIP Code unless ZIP Code elimination is approved in writing by the vice president, Area Operations. Do not make a request for ZIP Code elimination unless needed for logistics to provide efficient mail service. Obtain written authorization for ZIP Code elimination *before* telling customers that their ZIP Code will change and *before* beginning the 60-day posting period (see sections 642.2 and 642.3).

232.22 **Rural and Highway Contract Route Delivery**

Evaluate the route workload and determine the change in evaluation and other cost factors. Is the route overburdened? Has there been mail theft or vandalism on the route? Will service be to roadside mailboxes installed by customers, to CBUs, or will both options be provided to customers? If CBUs are selected, provide parcel lockers for customer convenience. Customer addresses may change. However, the community name and ZIP Code are retained in the address. Customers will have 24-hour access to their mail and can obtain retail services through the carrier. Consult a customer service analyst to determine the change in workload and cost to provide delivery. See exhibit 232.22 for sample analysis forms.

232.23 **Nonpersonnel Rural Unit**

The Postal Service leases space in a facility and maintains Post Office boxes. The carrier brings mail to the office, distributes mail into the boxes, and provides retail services for a specified time. Retail services are available a minimum of 15 minutes each delivery day. The nonpersonnel unit provides a centralized location for customers to meet, and retains a retail outlet in the community. Address changes are not required. If space is leased in another business in the community, this may provide customers with improved accessibility to their Post Office boxes. It is very important to discuss this

option with the carrier. A customer service analyst can assist in evaluating the carrier workload and the cost analysis.

24 Recommendation to Management

241 General

When the initial investigative data are compiled and analyzed, the Post Office review coordinator makes a recommendation to the manager, Operations, to pursue or not to pursue the discontinuance and the preferred alternate service. The justification for discontinuance must be documented in the record.

242 Justification for Discontinuance

Examples of justification for discontinuance include, but are not limited to, the following:

- a. The lease is canceled by the lessor. The Facilities Service Office advises that no suitable alternate quarters are available. (Include a copy of the letter of termination in the official record.)
- b. The lease is canceled by the Postal Service because of the inadequacy of the facility or unreasonable rental increase demands by the lessor. The Facilities Service Office advises that no suitable alternate quarters are available. (Include documentation in the official record that supports the Postal Service's decision to cancel the lease and explains what efforts were made to find alternative quarters.)
- c. The postmaster position is vacant. Service needs in the community have declined and the recommended alternate service would provide as good or better service to the community. (Include documentation in the official record to support such statements.)
- d. A natural disaster, such as a flood or fire, makes it impossible to continue services at the Post Office. The Facilities Service Office advises that no suitable alternate quarters are available.

Note: In and of itself, any of the various conditions discussed in part 212 do not generally constitute justification for discontinuance. However, consider all such conditions with other factors in the preproposal investigation.

243 Decision to Proceed with Discontinuance Investigation

If the manager, Operations, wants to continue the investigation, then develop a questionnaire and send it to customers for additional information and comments. Also, schedule a community meeting (see subchapters 25 and 26).

25 Customer Questionnaires

251 Purpose

Questionnaires are used to gather additional information about a community and its postal customers. This information helps the Postal Service to determine the service needs of the community. The information also helps in assessing the most efficient and economical way to provide those services. See exhibit 251 for a sample letter to the postmaster or OIC regarding distribution of the questionnaire.

252 Developing the Questionnaire

252.1 General

Tailor questionnaires to the community and to the type of service deemed most appropriate to serve the needs of that community. Use appropriate phrases and proper tense when referring to a suspended office. Provide customers with a preaddressed, business reply envelope for returning the completed questionnaire. See part 253 for sample questionnaires.

252.2 Enclosures

252.21 Cover Letter

Include a cover letter with each questionnaire that clearly explains the alternate services under consideration and why the Postal Service is considering a change in service. Be sure to provide the name, address, and telephone number of a Postal Service representative for customers to contact for additional information. The cover letter may also be used to notify customers of the time and location of a community meeting. Give customers a deadline to return the questionnaires (Example: 14 days). You may also give customers the option of returning the questionnaires at a community meeting. See part 253 for sample questionnaires and cover letters.

252.22 Summary of Post Office Change Regulations

Include a copy of the *Summary of Post Office Change Regulations* with each questionnaire and cover letter (see exhibit 252.22).

Note: Do not include the *Summary of Post Office Change Regulations* to customers when discontinuing a classified station, branch, or CPO.

252.23 Rural and Highway Contract Route Services

The fact sheets on rural delivery service shown in exhibit 252.23 may be enclosed with the questionnaire to provide a more detailed explanation to customers of the services available from rural route and highway contract route carriers. Enclose the fact sheet on neighborhood and delivery collection box units (NDCBUs) and cluster box units (CBUs) shown in exhibit 252.23 when CBUs and parcel lockers are being recommended.

253 **Sample Community Questionnaires and Cover Letters**

253.1 **Proposal for CPO — Office Not Suspended**

Exhibit 253.1 provides a sample of a cover letter and community questionnaire for opening a CPO when services at the independent Post Office have not been suspended.

253.2 **Proposal for CPO — Office Suspended**

Exhibit 253.2 provides a sample of a cover letter and community questionnaire for opening a CPO when service at an independent Post Office is suspended and a temporary CPO is established.

253.3 **Proposal for CBU, Roadside Box, or Nonpersonnel Rural Unit — Office Not Suspended**

Exhibit 253.3 provides a sample cover letter and community questionnaire for converting service at a nonsuspended Post Office to rural or highway contract route service to CBUs, roadside boxes, or a nonpersonnel rural unit.

253.4 **Proposal for CBU, Roadside Boxes, or Nonpersonnel Rural Unit — Office Suspended**

Exhibit 253.4 provides a sample cover letter and community questionnaire for converting service at a suspended Post Office to rural or highway contract route service to CBUs, roadside boxes, or a nonpersonnel rural unit.

254 **Analyzing Customer Questionnaires**

After the response deadline expires, prepare a questionnaire analysis in a timely manner. See exhibit 254. Group written customer comments by subject and count them. Address these comments in Section I or Section II of the proposal as appropriate. Include all questionnaires in the official record. (This includes questionnaires submitted after the deadline.)

255 **Acknowledging Customer Questionnaires**

Provide written acknowledgment to customers thanking them for returning the questionnaires. Be sure to answer any specific comments or concerns noted on the questionnaires. This means writing individual letters when necessary. See exhibit 255 for a sample acknowledgment letter.

26 **Conducting a Community Meeting**

261 **General**

The community meeting is an excellent opportunity to explain service alternatives, to answer customer questions about the proposed alternatives,

and to help customers complete their questionnaires. At the meeting, provide the customers with reasons for the proposed change in service. State the advantages and disadvantages for them and for the Postal Service (i.e., tell customers how their address will be affected and whether box fees will increase if they choose that service at a neighboring Post Office). Make it clear that no final decision has been made. Do not argue or raise your voice with customers. Always tell them the truth. If the answer to a customer's question is not apparent, obtain the customer's name and address and respond in writing after the meeting. Make notes of customer concerns and responses for inclusion in the official record. However, do not tape the meeting because this inhibits open discussion. Immediately terminate the meeting if it gets out of control.

262 **Selecting Date and Location**

Discuss the time and location of the community meeting with the postmaster or OIC. Be sure to schedule the meeting at a time that encourages customer participation, such as during an evening or weekend. Potential community locations include a community center, church meeting room, city hall, school, or the Post Office. Designate a set time for the meeting, but be flexible enough to extend the meeting if necessary to answer customer questions. Dress appropriately for the community. If a second meeting is in order, plan and schedule it according to the same guidelines as the initial meeting. If an emergency suspension is required, a community meeting should be held before the suspension if at all possible.

263 **Notifying Customers**

Notify customers of the community meeting date, time, and location at least 10 days in advance. The cover letter to the customer questionnaire provides an excellent opportunity for notifying customers of the community meeting (see section 252.21). If you receive information that the time is inconvenient for most customers, reschedule the meeting at a more convenient time. See exhibit 263 for a sample notification letter.

264 **Attending Meeting**

The area manager, Public Affairs and Communications, should be notified of the date, time and location of the meeting. Exhibit 264a shows the addresses and telephone numbers for area managers, Public Affairs and Communications. The Post Office review coordinator and district representatives generally attend the meeting. The employees conducting the meeting must be knowledgeable about community needs and available alternate services. These employees must also possess highly developed human relations and communications skills. At the meeting, provide a sign-in roster for those attending the meeting. Provide space on the roster for the attendees' names, addresses including ZIP Codes, and telephone numbers. The sign-in roster must include the statement "This document will be entered into the official record for public viewing." See exhibit 264 for a sample community meeting roster. If CBUs are being considered as service

alternatives, hand out pamphlets or display a poster or a CBU and parcel locker to introduce customers to this proposed delivery option. Do not show pictures of CBUs that are not appropriate to the community.

265 **Analyzing Meeting**

After the meeting, categorize customer concerns as postal and nonpostal. Indicate the number of customers expressing each type of concern. Also indicate the Postal Service response. See exhibit 265 for a sample format for analyzing community meetings.

27 **Preproposal Investigation Analysis**

271 **General**

It is important to note that the investigative process involves constant analysis and decision making. Continue to ask the following questions:

- a. Is the discontinuance warranted?
- b. Does the record support discontinuance?
- c. Does the recommended alternate service maintain a maximum degree of effective, regular service to the community?
- d. Does the investigation indicate that an independent Post Office and postmaster position should be retained?

272 **Recommendation to Management**

Based on the preproposal investigation, the Post Office review coordinator makes a recommendation to management. If the manager, Operations, determines to pursue discontinuance, a formal proposal is prepared for district review.

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3 The Proposal

31 General

The district manager, Customer Service and Sales, is administratively responsible for overseeing the gathering and preserving for the official record all documentation used to assess the proposed change. If the proposed action appears warranted, a formal proposal to close or consolidate the Post Office is prepared and forwarded to the district for review and concurrence before it is posted.

32 Components of the Proposal

The proposal must provide a description and analysis that sufficiently details, both to higher management and to the persons served by the affected Post Office, the nature and cause of the proposed change in service. The written proposal must address each of the areas described below:

- a. *Responsiveness to Community Postal Needs.* It is the policy of the government, as established by law, that the Postal Service will provide a maximum degree of effective and regular postal services to rural areas, communities, and small towns where Post Offices are not self-sustaining. The proposal should contrast the postal services available before and after the proposed change; describe how the changes respond to the postal needs of the affected customers; and highlight particular aspects of customer service that might be less advantageous as well as those that might be more advantageous.
- b. *Effect on Community.* The proposal must include an analysis of the effect the proposed discontinuance might have on the community served and discuss the application of the requirements in the *Postal Operations Manual*.
- c. *Effect on Employees.* The written proposal must summarize the possible effects of the change on the postmaster, supervisors, and other employees of the Post Office considered for discontinuance. The district manager, Customer Service and Sales, must suggest measures to comply with personnel regulations related to Post Office discontinuance and consolidation. (See the *Employee and Labor Relations Manual*.)

- d. *Economic Savings.* The proposal must include an analysis of the economic savings to the Postal Service from the proposed action, including the cost or savings expected from each major factor contributing to the overall estimate. Follow the economic savings analysis format in the sample proposals, sample revised proposal, and sample final determination. Do not include a one-time expense for installing CBUs and parcel lockers in the economic savings analysis. Show that expense in a separate paragraph.
- e. *Other Factors.* The proposal should include an analysis of other factors that the district manager, Customer Service and Sales, determines necessary for a complete evaluation of the proposed change, whether favorable or unfavorable. If not already addressed elsewhere, explain how unusual services provided by the Post Office, such as reading mail to illiterate or blind customers, or special accommodations for physically challenged customers, can be provided upon the Post Office discontinuance.
- f. *Summary.* The proposal must include a summary that explains why the proposed action is necessary and assesses how factors supporting the proposed change outweigh any negative factors. In taking competing considerations into account, the need to provide effective and regular service is paramount.
- g. *Notice.* The proposal must include the following notice:
 - (1) *Support Materials.* "Copies of all materials on which this proposal is based are available for public inspection at the _____ Post Office(s) during normal office hours."
 - (2) *Proposal (office not suspended).* "This is a proposal. It is not a final determination to (close) (consolidate) this Post Office. If a final determination is made to (close) (consolidate) this Post Office, after public comments on this proposal are received and taken into account, a notice of that final determination will be posted in this Post Office. The final determination will contain instructions on how affected customers may appeal that decision to the Postal Rate Commission. Any such appeal must be received by the commission within 30 days of the posting of the final determination."
 - (a) *Proposal (suspended office).* "This is a proposal. It is not a final determination to (close) (consolidate) this Post Office. If a final determination is made to (close) (consolidate) this Post Office, after public comments on this proposal are received and taken into account, a notice of that final determination will be posted in the (name of administrative office) Post Office. The final determination will contain instructions on how affected customers may appeal that decision to the Postal Rate Commission. Any such appeal must be received by the Commission within 30 days of the posting of the final determination."

33 Writing Tips

331 Numbers

- a. Always spell out a number that begins a sentence. Example:
“Twenty-five customers attended the community meeting.”
- b. For consistency, always spell out related numbers. Example:
“Seventeen Post Office box and six general delivery customers chose the same type of delivery at the Skyline Post Office, 1 mile away, rather than accepting rural route delivery to CBUs.”
- c. Spell out numbers one to nine. Use figures for numbers above nine. Use figures for numbers that precede any unit of measurement or time. However, use the same style to express related numbers as mentioned in part 331b. If most of the numbers are below ten, spell them out. If most of the numbers are above ten, express them all in figures.
 - Example A (most numbers are below ten): “There are two mills, one school, one church, and 21 stores in the community.”
 - Example B (most numbers are above ten): “The Little Towne Post Office serves 97 rural route customers, 57 Post Office box customers, and 9 general delivery customers.”

332 Contractions

Do not use contractions, such as “can’t” or “couldn’t.”

333 Time

Throughout the proposal, type the abbreviations a.m. and p.m. in small letters followed by periods, but no spaces. Example: “Prior to suspension of service, the Furry River Post Office provided service from 7 a.m. to 12 noon and from 3 to 6 p.m. on Monday through Friday, and from 7 to 11 a.m. on Saturday.” (Notice that when using a.m. to a.m. and p.m. to p.m., the first a.m. or p.m. is omitted.)

334 Customer Names

Do not refer to customers by name in the proposal or in the official record index. Do not refer to senior citizens as “old people,” “old folks,” or “elderly.”

335 Sample Paragraphs for Proposal

See exhibit 335 for sample paragraphs to help in writing proposals. Select appropriate paragraphs from each group and *tailor* them to the situation.

336 Sample Proposal

See exhibit 336 for a sample written proposal.

34 60-Day Posting Period

341 Before Posting

341.1 District Coordinator Review

Before posting, the investigative coordinator submits a copy of the proposal, PS Form 4920, *Post Office Closing or Consolidation — Proposal Fact Sheet*, and a completed proposal checklist to the district coordinator for review. After review, the district coordinator signs the proposal checklist to certify that the review has been conducted and all required activities performed. See exhibit 341.1 for a sample proposal checklist.

341.2 Notification to Government Relations and Public Policy

The district manager, Customer Service and Sales, must notify Government Relations and Public Policy at Headquarters and Area Public Affairs and Communications at least *10 days* before posting the proposal for the 60-day posting period. Provide a copy of the proposal and PS Form 4920 with this notification. See exhibit 341.2 for a sample notification letter to Government Relations and Public Policy.

341.3 ZIP Code Elimination

341.31 Proposed Closing

If it is desirable to eliminate the ZIP Code of the Post Office proposed for closing, the district manager, Customer Service and Sales, must submit a written request and justification to the vice president, Area Operations, *before* the proposal is posted for the 60-day posting period. Normally, the ZIP Code for each address served by a discontinued Post Office is retained. Thus, the district manager, Customer Service and Sales, must never advise a community that it will lose its ZIP Code without first receiving written permission from the vice president, Area Operations (see subchapter 64 for ZIP Code elimination).

341.32 Proposed Consolidation

When a Post Office is proposed for consolidation and it is proposed to establish a Community Post Office, station, or branch, the ZIP Code remains the same as the original Post Office. Consult your vice president, Area Operations, for name and ZIP Code elimination for community Post Offices, stations, and branches.

342 Posting

342.1 General

A copy of the written proposal and a signed invitation for comments must be prominently posted in each affected Post Office for at least 60 days. Always begin the count at day zero. For offices that are suspended, the posting is

done at the offices providing alternate service. The proposal and invitation for comments must be round-date stamped on the date of posting and the date of removal. Provide the affected Post Offices with additional copies of the proposal and comment forms to be given to customers on request. A copy of the official record must also be available at affected offices for public inspection during normal office hours. Copies of documents in the official record are available on payment of the fees established in *Administrative Support Manual* 352.7.

342.2 **Letter of Instructions**

The Post Office review coordinator sends a letter of instructions to the postmaster or OIC at affected offices to explain procedures for posting the proposal and invitation for comments. See exhibit 342.2 for a sample letter of instructions. Include in the letter the dates for posting (at least 60 days). In computing the posting days, begin the count with zero as the first day and include every calendar day thereafter for at least 60 days. This computation ensures that the proposal is available for the mandatory 60 days required by law. Documents should be posted at the start of business hours and removed on the appropriate day at the close of business.

342.3 **Invitation for Comments**

An official invitation for comments, signed by the manager, Post Office Operations, or the district manager, Customer Service and Sales, must be round-date stamped and posted, at the same time as the proposal, for at least 60 days. The invitation for comments must state a deadline for customer comments. The invitation must also include the name, address, and telephone number of the Postal Service representative to contact about the proposal and must indicate that copies of the proposal and comment forms are available on request. See exhibit 342.3 for a sample invitation for comments.

342.4 **Comment Forms**

These forms, along with a copy of the proposal, must be made available to customers on request. No fee is charged for these copies. Use this form only during the 60-day posting period. See exhibit 342.4 for a sample comment form.

343 **After Posting**

343.1 **Letter of Instructions**

Before the end of the 60-day posting period, the Post Office review coordinator must send a letter of instruction to the postmaster or OIC at the affected Post Offices for removal of the proposal and the invitation for comments. The instructions must provide the date for removing the proposal and the invitation for comments and must instruct the postmaster or OIC to round-date stamp both on the date of removal and return them, with the official record, to the coordinator. The instructions must also include guidelines for posting the *Notice of Taking Proposal and Comments Under*

Internal Consideration. See exhibit 343.1 for a sample letter of instructions for removal of the proposal and invitation for comments.

343.2 **Notice of Taking Proposal and Comments Under Internal Consideration**

The postmaster or OIC at the affected Post Office must post a *Notice of Taking Proposal and Comments Under Internal Consideration* after the 60-day posting period of the proposal and invitation for comments. This notice should be posted until further instructions are received from the coordinator. See exhibit 343.2 for a sample notice of taking proposal and comments under internal consideration.

343.3 **Analysis of Comments**

The coordinator prepares an analysis of customers' written comments. Group the comments by the type of concern (postal and nonpostal) and by subject. Indicate the number of customers expressing each concern. If no comments are received, the coordinator prepares a memorandum for the record stating that no comments were received. See exhibit 343.3 for a sample analysis of 60-day posting comments and a sample memorandum to the record.

343.4 **Response to Customer Comments**

A written response must be sent to each customer comment. The response must address the individual concerns expressed by the customer. See exhibit 343.4 for a sample response letter.

35 **Revising Proposal**

351 **Definition**

A revised proposal contains new information obtained during and after the 60-day posting period. In essence, it is a new proposal that updates the original proposal. If there are no changes to the original proposal and no comments were received, a revised proposal is not necessary. However, a memorandum must be included in the record stating the dates and locations of the original proposal postings and that there were no changes to or comments on the proposal.

352 **Components of Revised Proposal**

352.1 **Description**

Most sections in a revised proposal are identical with the original proposal. Exceptions are listed in the following sections. Be sure to substitute the terms "revised proposal" throughout the text where appropriate. See exhibit 352.1 for a sample of a revised proposal.

352.2 Cover Page

Change the cover page to read “revised proposal.” See exhibit 352.1.

352.3 Responsiveness to Community Postal Needs

Update the proposal to include information about posting the original proposal, the comments received, and Postal Service responses to those comments. State the number of comments received and indicate whether favorable or unfavorable. List each concern, the number of customers expressing that concern, and the Postal Service response.

352.4 Effect on Community

Make sure that this section reflects current information about the community. Example: Businesses are correctly listed.

352.5 Effect on Employees

Note any changes that have occurred since the 60-day posting period.

352.6 Economic Savings

Update salary information and other economic factors, as appropriate.

352.7 Summary

Revise the summary to include information regarding posting of the original proposal and the comments received.

352.8 Notice

Change the word “proposal” to “revised proposal” where appropriate. See exhibit 352.1.

353 60-Day Posting Period

If a significant change is made in the proposal (e.g., a change in the proposed type of alternate service), repost the revised proposal with an invitation for comments for a new 60-day posting period. Use the procedures in subchapter 34. The following is an example of a significant change. The original proposal was to extend rural delivery. After reviewing customer comments, it is determined that a CPO would better meet the needs of the community. The revised proposal is to establish a CPO rather than to extend rural delivery. This revised proposal must be posted for a new 60-day posting period. After that 60-day posting requirement is met, follow the procedures in part 343.

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4 Transmittals and Headquarters Review/Decision

41 Review

411 Official Record Review

The official record must be thoroughly reviewed and the reason for discontinuance must be documented in the record. The PS Form 4920 and revised proposal must reflect current information.

412 Certification of Record

After a complete review of the record is conducted and necessary updates and corrections are made, the district manager, Customer Service and Sales, prepares a memorandum for the record certifying that all comments and documents in the record are originals or true copies of the originals (see exhibit 412).

413 Transmittal Letter from MPOO

The manager, Post Office Operations (MPOO), must prepare a memorandum to the district manager, Customer Service and Sales. Enclose the original and one copy of the official record. Make sure that both sides of documents are copied when applicable. Inform the district manager, Customer Service and Sales, to keep the original record for district archives and to send the second copy to the vice president, Delivery and Retail, at Headquarters (see part 423 and exhibit 413).

42 District Review

421 Official Record Review

The district coordinator must thoroughly review the official record to ensure compliance with federal law, Postal Service policy, and the instructions in this guide.

422 Log of Post Office Discontinuance Actions

Before forwarding the official record to Headquarters, the district Post Office review coordinator must sign and enter into the record a completed log of Post Office discontinuance actions. This log certifies that a thorough review of the official record is completed and that everything is in order. It is the district Post Office review coordinator's responsibility to update the log throughout the discontinuance process. See exhibit 422 for a sample log of Post Office discontinuance actions.

423 Transmittal Letter from District to Headquarters

The district manager, Customer Service and Sales, keeps the original official record for district files and sends the second copy of the record (with original photos) to the vice president, Delivery and Retail, at Headquarters. See exhibit 423 for a sample transmittal letter.

424 Headquarters Acknowledgment of Receipt of Official Record

If an acknowledgment of Headquarters' receipt of official record is desired, prepare an acknowledgment form and send it and a self-addressed postage-paid envelope with the transmittal of the official record to Headquarters. The date Headquarters receives and logs in the record is entered on the acknowledgment form, which is then returned to the district. Add this date to the district log of Post Office discontinuance actions. Acknowledgment requests are optional. See exhibit 424 for a sample acknowledgment of receipt form.

43 Headquarters Review

431 General

At Headquarters, the vice president, Delivery and Retail, forwards the official record for the proposed discontinuance to the Headquarters Post Office review coordinator. The Headquarters Post Office review coordinator reviews official records in the order received, except in special circumstances. Each proposal is evaluated on its own merit. Final determinations and appeal decisions are based on the information in the official record. Thus, the importance of thorough documentation cannot be overemphasized. It may be necessary to return the record, with instructions, to the district manager, Customer Service and Sales, for additional information. Add a copy of each such instruction and response to the official records.

432 Determinations

432.1 Returned for Further Action or Information

If the official record contains deficiencies or inconsistencies, it may be returned to the district manager, Customer Service and Sales, with written instructions to give additional consideration to specific areas in the record or to provide additional information. See exhibit 432.1 for a sample letter returning the record for further action or information. Include these instructions and the responses in the official record. No determination is reached at this point. The district manager, Customer Service and Sales, may resubmit the proposal and official record to Headquarters after providing further documentation or clarification. Follow the procedures in subchapter 42 for resubmitting proposals.

432.2 Proposal Not Warranted

When the vice president, Delivery and Retail, determines that the proposal is not warranted, the proposal is denied and no further action may be taken on the record sent. The record is returned to the district manager, Customer Service and Sales, with written reasons for the determination. See exhibit 432.2(a). The district manager, Customer Service and Sales, must then prominently post a notice in the affected Post Offices stating that the proposal has been found unwarranted and that no further action is to take place on this proposal to discontinue that Post Office. See exhibit 432.2(b) for a sample notice. The following are examples of reasons why a proposal may not be warranted:

- a. The reason for the discontinuance is inappropriate or based solely on economic reasons.
- b. Documentation in the record does not support the proposal.
- c. The proposed alternate service does not provide effective and regular service to the community.
- d. The discontinuance investigation was not conducted in accordance with the law and Postal Service policy.

432.3 Proposal Warranted

432.31 General

When the vice president, Delivery and Retail, determines that proposal is warranted, a written final determination under cover letter is sent to the district manager, Customer Service and Sales. See exhibit 432.31 for a sample transmittal letter and sample final determinations for closing and consolidating independent Post Offices. The following sections outline discontinuance instructions provided with the final determination document.

432.32 30-Day Public Notice

The district manager, Customer Service and Sales, must make sure that a copy of the final determination is prominently posted in the affected Post Offices for at least 30 days. To ensure that the posting is at least 30 days,

begin the count at day zero. A copy of the complete official record must be available for public inspection during normal business hours at the affected Post Offices during the mandatory 30-day public notice period. See exhibit 432.32 for a sample letter of instructions for posting the final determination. If there is an error or other reason for amending the final determination, immediately contact the Headquarters Post Office review coordinator. No changes to a final determination are authorized without Headquarters' approval.

432.33 Postal Bulletin Post Office Change Announcement

A *Postal Bulletin Post Office Change Announcement* form is also enclosed with the final determination. The manager, Post Office Operations, or designee must complete and mail the original and two copies of the announcement form to the Headquarters Post Office review coordinator on the day the final determination posting is *removed* (the first day following the completion of the 30-day public notice period). A copy of the round-date stamped final determination cover page from each location that the final determination was posted must accompany the original announcement form. At Headquarters, the original of the announcement form and the copy of the round-date stamped final determination posting are entered into the official record. At the appropriate time, one copy of the announcement form is forwarded to Address Management at Headquarters for announcing the Post Office closing or consolidation in the *Postal Bulletin*; the other is returned to the district for inclusion in the official record. See exhibit 432.33. Do *not* reproduce this form. Do *not* mail a copy to Address Management at Headquarters.

432.34 Official Discontinuance

If there are no appeals to the Postal Rate Commission (PRC), the affected Post Office is officially discontinued the first Saturday that falls 90 days after posting of the final determination. Please contact the Headquarters Post Office review coordinator if a specific date is required for official discontinuance. However, federal law prohibits the official discontinuance sooner than 60 days after the date the final determination was posted. Headquarters sends written notice to the district manager, Customer Service and Sales, indicating whether an appeal is filed with the PRC. If an appeal is filed, Headquarters provides written instructions on how to proceed. See chapter 5 for information on appeals.

432.35 Publication 65, National Five-Digit ZIP Code and Post Office Directory

When the district manager, Customer Service and Sales, receives written notification from Headquarters that an appeal has not been filed with the PRC (see part 514), the Post Office review coordinator must instruct the field address management unit to update the Address Management System (AMS) database. A copy of that instruction must be entered in the official record. See exhibit 432.35 for a sample letter of instruction to AMS.

433 Notification**433.1 To Local Officials**

Follow local instructions for reporting an official closure within the district.
Prepare a local memorandum to notify district personnel and the manager, Facilities Service Office (see exhibit 433.1).

433.2 To Customers

Notify affected customers of the official closure by posting a notice of discontinuance in the office for 30 days (see exhibit 433.2).

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5 Appeal Procedures

51 General

511 Who May Appeal

Any person served by the affected Post Office may appeal the final determination.

512 Where to Appeal

All appeals must be directed to:

POSTAL RATE COMMISSION
1333 H STREET NW SUITE 300
WASHINGTON, DC 20268-0001

513 When to Appeal

Appeals must be received by the Postal Rate Commission within 30 days of the date the final determination was posted.

514 Notification to District Manager

Headquarters sends written notice to the district manager, Customer Service and Sales, indicating whether an appeal is filed. See exhibits 514a and 514b for sample notices.

515 Appeal Documents

The office of General Counsel, at Headquarters, provides the district manager, Customer Service and Sales, with copies of all pleadings, notices, orders, briefs, and opinions filed in the appeal proceedings on behalf of the Postal Rate Commission or the parties to the appeal. The district manager, Customer Service and Sales, must ensure that copies of all these documents are included in the official record, prominently displayed in the affected Post Offices, and made available for public inspection at the affected Post Offices during normal business hours. If the Post Office is suspended, display the documents in the Post Offices serving the affected customers. All documents except the Postal Rate Commission's final order and opinion must be

displayed until the final order and opinion are issued. The final order and opinion must be displayed for 30 days.

52 Discontinuance Pending Appeal

An affected Post Office may be discontinued before the final disposition of an appeal only by the authority of the vice president, Delivery and Retail. This authority, however, does not permit discontinuance until 60 days after the date the final determination is posted.

53 Postal Rate Commission Decisions

531 **Final Determination Affirmed**

If the Postal Rate Commission dismisses the appeal or affirms the Postal Service's determination, the official closing date of the Post Office must be published in the *Postal Bulletin*, effective the first Saturday that falls 90 days after the date of the Postal Rate Commission's opinion. See exhibit 531 for a sample notice of final determination affirmed notice from Headquarters and a sample Postal Rate Commission opinion affirming the determination.

532 **Final Determination Remanded**

532.1 **General**

If the Postal Rate Commission remands the Postal Service's determination, the vice president, Delivery and Retail, may determine the discontinuance is not warranted or may return the proposal for further consideration (see sections 532.2 and 532.3). The vice president provides written instructions to the district manager, Customer Service and Sales, on the decision. See exhibit 532.1 for a sample Postal Rate Commission opinion remanding determination.

532.2 **Discontinuance Not Warranted**

Based on the Postal Rate Commission's opinion, the vice president, Delivery and Retail, may determine that the discontinuance is not warranted at this time. If so, the vice president provides written instructions to the district manager, Customer Service and Sales, to that effect. See exhibit 532.2 for a sample final determination remanded, determined not warranted, notice from Headquarters. Based on the official record submitted, no further action may be taken to discontinue the affected Post Office. The district manager, Customer Service and Sales, must make sure that a copy of the Postal Rate Commission's decision is posted at the affected Post Office for a period of 30 days. A notice stating that the final determination to discontinue the Post Office is withdrawn and that no changes in service will occur at this time must also be posted at the affected Post Office. See exhibit 432.2(b) for a sample notice letter to customers.

532.3 Returned for Further Consideration

Based on the Postal Rate Commission's opinion, the vice president, Delivery and Retail, may determine that the discontinuance proposal requires consideration of other service alternatives or additional investigation and documentation. See exhibit 532.3 for a sample final determination remanded, returned for further consideration, notice from Headquarters.

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6 Special Considerations

61 Emergency Suspensions

611 **Definition**

An emergency is an occurrence that constitutes a threat to the safety and health of Postal Service employees or customers or to the security of the mail or revenue. When a situation is tolerated for an extended time or is expected to occur, it probably cannot be classified as an emergency. Circumstances that may justify an emergency suspension include, but are not limited to the following:

- a. A natural disaster.
- b. Termination of a lease or rental agreement when other quarters suitable for housing an independent Post Office are not available, especially when the termination is sudden or unexpected.
- c. Lack of qualified personnel to operate the office.
- d. Severe health or safety hazard.
- e. Severe damage to, or destruction of, the office.
- f. Lack of adequate measures to safeguard the office or its revenues.

612 **Authority**

District managers, Customer Service and Sales, may suspend the operations of any Post Office under their jurisdiction when an emergency or other condition requires such action.

613 **Notification**

613.1 **To Headquarters**

The district manager, Customer Service and Sales (or designee), must provide immediate notice of any suspension by fax to (202) 268-5102 or (202) 268-5104. All fax transmissions must include the originating fax

number. If a fax machine is unavailable, send a written notice by Express Mail® service to:

VICE PRESIDENT DELIVERY AND RETAIL
ATTN HEADQUARTERS POST OFFICE REVIEW COORDINATOR
US POSTAL SERVICE
475 L'ENFANT PLAZA SW RM 5621
WASHINGTON DC 20260-5621

See exhibit 613.1 for a sample notice of emergency suspension.

613.2 To Local Officials

Follow local instructions for reporting emergency suspension within the district. Use a copy of the emergency suspension notice or prepare a local memorandum (see exhibit 613.2). Notification may be required to the following:

- a. All direct reports to the district manager, Customer Service and Sales.
- b. Area vice president.
- c. State and national postmaster organizations.
- d. Transportation and logistics.
- e. Philatelic operations. To stop and resume automatic distribution of commemorative stamps, notify:

POSTAL ACCOUNTS SECTION
FINANCE BRANCH
MINNEAPOLIS ACCOUNTING SERVICE CENTER
2825 LONE OAK PARKWAY
EAGAN, MN 55121-9312.

- f. Accounting services and postmaster accounts.
- g. Mail processing and distribution center.
- h. Address management.
- i. Human resources.
- j. Postmaster or OIC at affected Post Offices.
- k. District and subordinate Post Office review coordinators.
 - (1) The district Post Office review coordinator must be immediately provided information to enter in the log of Post Office discontinuance actions (see section 133.5). That coordinator may be called on to provide information to Government Relations and Public Policy at Headquarters during a congressional inquiry.
 - (2) A copy of the emergency suspension notice must be placed in the official record when the Post Office is investigated for permanent discontinuance.
- l. Facilities Service Office for appropriate action regarding the lease and possible alternate quarters.

613.3 To Customers

Notify affected customers immediately by individual letter. See exhibit 613.3 for a sample customer notice of emergency suspension. Include in the notice the following information:

- a. Effective date.
- b. Reason for emergency suspension.
- c. Alternate services available.
- d. Nearest Post Office and hours of service.
- e. Name and telephone number of person to contact for more information.

614 Alternate Service

Establish alternate service as quickly as possible. If a discontinuance proposal appears likely, make every effort to provide the alternate service that is most likely to be recommended in the discontinuance proposal. A change from emergency replacement service often generates community opposition regardless of the rationale. If there is enough time, conduct a community meeting before suspension to explain circumstances and obtain customer opinion about alternate service.

615 Employee Reassignment

Temporarily reassign all eligible employees of the suspended office according to *Employee and Labor Relations Manual* 354. Reassignment of bargaining unit employees must be in accordance with the applicable provisions of the National Agreement.

616 Suspension Review Team

When a district manager, Customer Service and Sales, suspends operations at a Post Office, a suspension review team must be formed to review the decision. The suspension review team members must include the district Post Office review coordinator; manager, Post Office Operations, or his/her designee; state presidents of each postmaster organization or their designees and a representative from administrative services.

- a. The suspension review team must conduct an onsite visit to the suspended Post Office.
- b. Within 10 business days of the onsite visit, the suspension review team must notify the district manager, Customer Service and Sales, the national postmaster organizations and the vice president, Delivery and Retail, of their recommendation to suspend or not suspend the office. See exhibit 616b for a sample notice.
- c. If the suspension team recommends suspension, the formal discontinuance process should be initiated.
- d. If the suspension team finds that there is insufficient justification to suspend the office, the office should be reopened.

617 Plan of Action

The district manager, Customer Service and Sales, must determine a plan of action to restore service, secure suitable alternate quarters, take other necessary corrective action, or initiate a discontinuance study within 90 days (3 months). That plan of action must be sent in writing to the vice president, Delivery and Retail, no later than the 90th day.

618 Restoration of Service

Notify Headquarters of restoration of service immediately by fax machine to (202) 268-5102 or (202) 268-5104. If a fax machine is unavailable, send a written notice to the following address:

VICE PRESIDENT DELIVERY AND RETAIL
ATTN HEADQUARTERS POST OFFICE REVIEW COORDINATOR
US POSTAL SERVICE
475 L'ENFANT PLAZA SW RM 5621
WASHINGTON DC 20260-5621

Also send a copy of this notice to the area office. See exhibit 618 for a sample notice of restoration of service. Provide affected customers with notice of the service restoration by public service announcements or individual letters. Inform district personnel previously notified of the suspension of the restoration of service (see section 613.2) and take appropriate action to ensure a smooth restoration of service.

62 Post Office Name Change

621 Current Instructions

When the information in this section and chapter 7 appears to conflict with previous *Postal Operations Manual* (POM) instructions, contact the Headquarters Post Office review coordinator for guidance. The information in this guide was developed with Address Management.

622 General

A Post Office should normally bear the official name of the incorporated city, town, or borough in which it is located, as shown in its charter. A Post Office located in an unincorporated place should generally bear the approved name of the principal community served (normally the community in which located) or the approved name of the town or township, if it serves a number of communities within a town or township.

623 Changes to Post Office Names

A request for a change to a Post Office name should be initiated by the local postmaster. This request should be submitted through the district manager, Customer Service and Sales, to the vice president, Area Operations, for

transmittal with a recommendation to the manager, Address Management, at Headquarters.

624 **Community Name When Post Office Closed**

When a Post Office is permanently closed and no replacement facility is established in the community, the name of the closed Post Office is normally established as a place name and used as the city name in the last line of the address. The ZIP Code is normally retained. Customers should be notified at the community meeting and in the questionnaire cover letter if the Post Office closing involves a change of address.

625 **Name of Facility Established by Consolidation**

Community Post Offices, stations, branches, and other named Postal Service facilities generally are given names recognized by the public as indicating their locations, using the following policies:

- a. *Station Designations.* A station's name should describe its location (neighborhood or section of city, for example) to the general public. There must be no duplication of station names within a single city, county, or three-digit ZIP Code area.
- b. *Community Post Office (CPO) and Branch Designations.* CPO and classified branch names are valid mailing names. Therefore, each CPO or classified branch must bear the name of the principal community it serves. There must be no duplication among CPO, classified branch, and Post Office names within a state. Each contract branch also must bear the name of the principal community it serves. Exceptions are historic sites, etc. (e.g., Grand Canyon Branch), which must be approved by the vice president, Operations Support. When there is a proposal to discontinue a Post Office and establish a CPO in the same community, the name of the CPO is the same as the name of the discontinued Post Office.
- c. *Permanent Numbers and Letters.* The use of permanent number and letter designations for branches or classified stations is prohibited, unless the number or letter signifies a location, as in M Street Station, 3rd Avenue Station, or Fourth of July Plaza Station. Number and letter designations in use at the time of the establishment of this regulation may continue to be used permanently.
- d. *Temporary Numbers and Letters.* Number and letter designations for branches and classified stations that do not signify locations, such as Station A or Branch #4, may be used for a period not to exceed 1 year. These designations may be used beyond 1 year only by written approval of the vice president, Area Operations.
- e. *Facilities Named for Individuals.* A Postal Service facility may be named for an individual only with the approval of the postmaster general and only if the individual has been deceased for at least 10 years, with the exception of deceased U.S. Presidents or Postmasters General. Official commitments announced prior to the establishment of this regulation will be fulfilled. Occasionally, Congress honors an individual by passing

a law naming a Postal Service facility after that individual. For the procedures to be followed in such cases, see *Administrative Support Manual (ASM)* 519.2.

- f. *Changes in Designations of Stations, Branches, or Other Named Postal Service Facilities.* A local request for a change in the name of a station, branch, or other named Postal Service facility must be submitted to the vice president, Area Operations. A request that results from an official change in the community's name is handled as a change in the name of a Post Office (see *Postal Operations Manual (POM)* 123.412). The vice president, Area Operations, has authority, subject to the policies established in this section, to approve all other changes in designations of facilities, except for those discussed in POM 123.413a.

626 Use of Branch or Station Designation

626.1 Purpose

This section addresses the confusion surrounding the decision whether to designate a subordinate postal unit a station or a branch. It is intended to define the usage in an unambiguous fashion and in a way that makes the distinction between a station and a branch useful to the Postal Service and the mailing industry.

626.2 Definitions

Stations, branches, community Post Offices (CPOs), and nonpersonnel units are subordinate units located within main Post Offices' service areas to provide one or more services at sites more convenient to customers. The Postal Service definitions of which requirements constitute a branch and which constitute a station are as follows:

- a. *Classified Units.* Classified units are stations and branches operated by Postal Service employees in quarters owned or leased by the Postal Service.
- b. *Stations.* Stations are located within the corporate limits or city carrier delivery area of the city or town in which the main Post Office is located.
- c. *Branches.* Branches are located outside the corporate limits or city carrier delivery area of the city or town in which the main office is located.
- d. *Contract Postal Units.* Contract postal units (CPUs) are stations, branches, and community Post Offices (CPOs) operated under contract by persons who are not Postal Service employees. The quarters are provided by the contractor. Contracts to operate CPUs provide that the contractor will transact specified Postal Service business.
- e. *Community Post Offices.* Community Post Offices (CPOs) are CPUs that provide service in small communities where an independent Post Office has been discontinued. A CPO bears its community's name and ZIP Code as part of a recognized mailing address.

- f. *Nonpersonnel Units.* Nonpersonnel units are small, nonstaffed stations and branches that are served by a rural carrier in quarters provided by a contractor. The contractor also furnishes custodial and security support. A nonpersonnel unit provides on a self-service basis essential mail services such as the collection and delivery of mail and the sale of stamps. Rural carriers, who are required to remain at nonpersonnel units for a minimum of 15 minutes each day their routes operate, provide other services such as the sale of money orders and the acceptance and delivery of Certified Mail™, Insured Mail™, Registered Mail™, Delivery Confirmation™, and COD mail services, and all other special services.

626.3 Naming Guidelines

Currently, mailers are advised that a *station name is usually not used as the last line of address*. Further, when a unit is designated as a branch, *the branch name is often used as the last line of address*. While this naming procedure has not been universally applied, the Postal Service wants to take advantage of any new opportunity to designate postal units with these guidelines in mind. *This is not an instruction to make wholesale changes to the existing records in the AMS file*. Rather, it is an instruction to code all new facilities with this convention. Existing facilities *may* be changed as time and circumstances permit.

Example 1: A subordinate unit is located outside the corporate limits of Houston, TX. The last line of the mailing address used by the community served from this unit is Houston, and the unit should be designated as a *branch*.

Example 2: A subordinate unit serves an existing community that is incorporated into the city limits of Houston, TX. The last line of the mailing address used by the community is something other than Houston, TX. This unit should be designated as a *station*.

Note: The designation is determined by the location of the unit inside or outside the corporate limits in these examples.

63 Merging Facilities

631 Definition

The dictionary definition of merge is “to unite or combine.” In Post Office discontinuance investigations, this term is often misused and misunderstood. *All mergers are really either a closing or a consolidation and should be referred to as such. Do not use the term merge in the investigative process or in the proposal.* Rather, refer to a closing or consolidation, as appropriate. Coordinators generally define a merge in one of two ways:

- a. Two or more towns (Post Offices) combined into a single incorporated village, town, or city with one administrative Post Office.

- b. Two or more towns (Post Offices) combined by building a replacement facility (centrally located between the existing Post Offices) that serves as the administrative Post Office for all the delivery areas involved.

632 **A Hypothetical Situation**

632.1 **Background**

632.11 **General**

There are two rural unincorporated communities in the same geographical area. Population growth is not great; however, the communities are growing together. Each community has a Post Office. The Post Offices are located within a mile and a half of each other. For simplicity, we refer to these two facilities as Post Office A and Post Office B.

632.12 **Post Office A**

At Post Office A:

- a. The EAS-13 postmaster position is not vacant. The clerk and rural carrier are career employees.
- b. There are eight hours of service daily, Monday through Friday, and three hours on Saturday.
- c. The building is unsafe because of structural deterioration.
- d. There is a 30-day lease cancellation clause.
- e. There is some growth in the community.
- f. There are 350 customers: 10 general delivery, 100 Post Office box, and 240 rural route customers.
- g. Postal Service revenue has increased each of the past three fiscal years. The average number of daily retail window transactions is 48.
- h. There are two permit mailers.
- i. There are eight small businesses (two are new), two churches, and one elementary school.

632.13 **Post Office B**

At Post Office B:

- a. The EAS-C postmaster position is vacant. The OIC is noncareer. No career employees are at the office.
- b. There are four hours of service daily, Monday through Saturday.
- c. The building is deteriorating and unsafe. No alternate quarters are available.
- d. There is a 30-day lease cancellation clause.
- e. There is low growth in the community.
- f. There are 30 general delivery customers.
- g. Postal Service revenue has declined each of the past three fiscal years. The average number of daily retail window transactions is 11.

- h. There are no permit mailers or postage meter customers.
- i. There are two businesses and one church in the community.

632.2 **Suggested Plan of Action**

632.21 **Post Office A**

Move the Post Office to adequate quarters. The district manager, Customer Service and Sales, does not require approval from the vice president, Delivery and Retail, to move Postal Service operations from an unsuitable building to a suitable building in a geographical area where customers would have no change in service, address, or ZIP Code. However, the regulations in Title 39, *Code of Federal Regulations*, section 241.4, Expansion, Relocation, Construction of New Post Offices, must be followed and a customer who disagrees with a local decision may appeal to the vice president, Facilities. Explain to customers that the Post Office is not closing but moving to other suitable quarters within the community. Present the positive aspects of the move to the customers. Advise the customers that consideration is being given to serving Post Office B customers from the same facility; and in such an event, the Post Office name may change to identify both communities. If it seems desirable to close Post Office B, the best location for Post Office A is midway between the two Post Offices. Make sure that the new quarters can accommodate the workload of both Post Office operations. If suitable alternate quarters are not available and a new facility is constructed, the site plans, and funding must be available and approved before any proposal can be presented to the customers. Do not proceed on promises or conjecture.

632.22 **Post Office B**

After Post Office A is moved, propose to close Post Office B. Use as a justification the deterioration of the building (supported by photographs and safety reports), the lack of suitable alternate quarters in the community, and the decline in service needs. Propose Post Office box, general delivery, and extension of rural delivery from Post Office A. Propose a name change for Post Office A to identify both communities A and B. Focus on the positive aspects and service improvements of the change.

632.23 **Post Office Name Change**

Examples of Post Office names for this hypothetical situation are shown below. (Consult your local address management unit for name change requirements.)

- a. A & B Post Office.
- b. A Post Office Serving B.

632.24 **Headquarters Review**

When making a proposal similar to this hypothetical situation, remember the following:

- a. The Post Office A move to suitable alternate quarters must be complete or, in the case of new construction, a target date set *before* sending the proposal to close Post Office B to Headquarters. The final

determination to close Post Office B is decided, among other justifications, based on the definite availability of suitable quarters.

- b. Decisions to discontinue a Post Office are made on a case-by-case basis.
- c. Adequate justification for discontinuance must be clearly stated and documented in the official record.

64 ZIP Code Elimination

641 General

The ZIP Code for each address formerly served by the discontinued Post Office ordinarily is the ZIP Code of the discontinued Post Office.

642 Post Office Closing

642.1 Community Place Name

In a Post Office closing, it is customary to retain the community place name and ZIP Code of the discontinued facility. ZIP Code elimination may be approved in appropriate circumstances by the vice president, Area Operations. *Never* advise a community that the ZIP Code will be eliminated before receiving written permission from the vice president, Area Operations.

642.2 Request for ZIP Code Elimination

The district manager, Customer Service and Sales, must make a written request with justification *before* telling customers that their ZIP Code will change and *before* the 60-day proposal is posted. The request must include, at a minimum, the number of deliveries affected and the number of unused ZIP Codes remaining in the 3-digit ZIP Code area. Mail requests to the vice president, Area Operations. See exhibit 642.2 for a sample letter requesting ZIP Code elimination.

642.3 Justification for ZIP Code Elimination

Base justification for ZIP Code elimination on operational requirements.

642.4 Post Office Box Range

If the Post Office being discontinued has Post Office boxes, give consideration to the Post Office box number range. Duplicate Post Office box number ranges within the same finance number create problems for mail distribution and ZIP Code assignment. Renumbering Post Office boxes to eliminate address duplications should be done at the time of the Post Office discontinuance.

642.5 **Rural and Highway Contract Route Numbers and Box Ranges**

Rural route or highway contract route numbers should not be duplicated within a finance number. Rural route or highway contract route box numbers may not be duplicated within a route. Renumbering routes and boxes should be done at the time of the Post Office discontinuance.

642.6 **Customer Notification**

Customers should be notified of plans to change Post Office box numbers and the ZIP Code before the 60-day proposal posting. If the address change increases Post Office box fees for any customers, specific Post Office box fee information should also be clearly communicated to customers before posting. This applies even when delivery is available and Post Office box service at a neighboring facility is a customer option.

643 **Post Office Consolidation**

643.1 **Community Place Name and ZIP Code**

When a community Post Office (CPO) is established, it is customary to retain the community place name and ZIP Code of the discontinued Post Office. Consult your vice president, Area Operations, regarding name and ZIP Code elimination for Community Post Offices, stations and branches.

643.2 **Customer Notification**

The first notice to customers that consideration is being given to consolidating the Post Office and establishing a community Post Office (CPO) should state clearly that customer addresses will *not* change (except as noted in part 642).

644 **Official Record Documentation**

644.1 **Post Office Closing**

The official record must include the letter authorizing or denying ZIP Code elimination (see sections 232.2 and 642.2).

644.2 **Post Office Consolidation**

The official record must include the letter authorizing or denying ZIP Code elimination (see sections 232.2 and 642.2).

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7 Discontinuance of Classified Stations, Branches, or CPOs

71 General

Although thorough investigation and customer participation are encouraged in the discontinuance of a classified station, branch, or a community Post Office (CPO), the formal process followed in the discontinuance of independent Post Offices is not required. However, requests for discontinuance of classified stations, branches, or CPOs must be submitted in writing to the vice president, Delivery and Retail, for approval. A change from a classified station or classified branch to a nonpersonnel unit or contract postal unit (CPU) is considered a discontinuance and must be submitted for approval.

72 Responsibilities

721 District Manager, Customer Service and Sales

The district manager, Customer Service and Sales, is responsible for submitting all requests to discontinue a classified station, classified branch, or contractor-operated CPO to Headquarters. Requests for discontinuance must be accompanied by enough information to document the request. Clearly define the reasons and justification for the discontinuance. Evaluate and address the effect on employees and customers. Develop a questionnaire and send it to customers for additional information and comments or conduct a community meeting. A classified station, branch, or CPO discontinuance checklist must accompany a request for discontinuance. See exhibit 721 for a sample discontinuance checklist. After Headquarters' approval is received, notify appropriate Postal Service officials and affected customers of the discontinuance.

722 Vice President, Delivery and Retail

The vice president, Delivery and Retail, must approve or disapprove the proposed discontinuance. No final action on a proposed discontinuance may be taken without the vice president's approval.

73 Name Changes

When discontinuance of a classified station, classified branch, or CPO involves a name change, make a written request to Address Management at Headquarters. Wait for a written response before continuing the discontinuance process. Submit a copy of the name change request and Address Management approval to the vice president, Delivery and Retail, with the written request for official discontinuance. See subchapter 62 for more information on Postal Service facility name changes.

8 Exhibits

Exhibit 133.31

Headquarters Legislative Affairs Notification Instructions

Ten days before the posting of a discontinuance proposal for an independent Post Office, mail a copy of the proposal, with PS Form 4920, *Post Office Closing or Consolidation Proposal — Fact Sheet*, and telephone numbers of personnel who can provide information about the proposal, to the appropriate Headquarters Government Relations and Public Policy representative at the address below. A copy should also be sent to the Area Public Affairs and Communication.

GOVERNMENT RELATIONS AND PUBLIC POLICY
US POSTAL SERVICE
475 L'ENFANT PLAZA SW RM 10846
WASHINGTON DC 20260-3100

When you contact Government Relations and Public Policy, ask for a representative for the state where the Post Office under inquiry is located. The telephone number is (202) 268-3752.

Exhibit 134.62e (p. 1)

Official Record Index

Item No.	Description	Date Entered into Record
1.	Request/approval to study for discontinuance	
2.	Notice (if appropriate) to Headquarters of suspension	
3.	Notice (if appropriate) to customers/district personnel of suspension	
4.	Highway map with community highlighted	
5.	Eviction notice (if appropriate)	
6.	Building inspection report and original photos of building deficiencies (if appropriate)	
7.	Post Office and community photos	
8.	PS Form 150, <i>Postmaster Workload Information</i>	
9.	Worksheet for calculating work service credit	
10.	Window transaction record	
11.	Record of incoming mail	
12.	Record of dispatched mail	
13.	Administrative postmaster/OIC comments	
14.	Inspection Service/local law enforcement vandalism reports	
15.	Post Office fact sheet	
16.	Community fact sheet	
17.	Alternate service options/cost analysis	
18.	Form 4920, <i>Post Office Closing or Consolidation Proposal — Fact Sheet</i> (with past 3 fiscal years of total revenue and revenue units)	
19.	Analysis of investigative findings/recommendations	
20.	Questionnaire instruction letter to postmaster/OIC	
21.	Cover letter, questionnaire, and enclosures	
22.	Returned customer questionnaires and Postal Service response letters	
23.	Analysis of questionnaires	
24.	Community meeting roster	
25.	Community meeting analysis	
26.	Community meeting letter (if community meeting held prior to questionnaire)	
27.	Petition and Postal Service response letter (if appropriate)	
28.	Congressional inquiry and Postal Service response letter (if appropriate)	
29.	Proposal checklist	
30.	District notification to Government Affairs	
31.	Instructions to postmaster/OIC to post proposal	
32.	Invitation for comments exhibit	
33.	Proposal exhibit	
34.	Comment form exhibit	
35.	Instructions for postmaster/OIC to remove proposal	
36.	Round-date stamped proposals and invitations for comments from affected offices	
37.	Notification of taking proposal and comments under internal consideration	

Exhibit 134.62e (p. 2)

Official Record Index

Item No.	Description	Date Entered into Record
38.	Customer comments and Postal Service response letters	
39.	Premature Postal Rate Commission appeal and Postal Service response letter (if appropriate)	
40.	Analysis of comments	
41.	Revised proposal (if appropriate)	
42.	Updated PS Form 4920 (if appropriate)	
43.	Certification of record	
44.	Log of Post Office discontinuance actions	
45.	Transmittal to vice president, Delivery and Retail, from district manager, Customer Service and Sales	
46.	Headquarters' acknowledgment of receipt of record	
47.	Final determination transmittal letter from Headquarters	
48.	Instruction letter to postmaster/OIC on posting	
49.	Round-date stamped final determination cover sheets	
50.	Postal Bulletin Post Office Change Announcement	
51.	Appeal letter (if appropriate)/No appeal letter	
52.	Public notice postings on appeal (if appropriate)	
53.	Postal Rate Commission opinion on appeal affirming final determination (if appropriate)	
54.	Vice president, Delivery and Retail, instruction letter	
55.	Letter to customers	
56.	Notification to local Address Management Systems (AMS) to update AMS database	
57.	Announcement in <i>Postal Bulletin</i>	

Exhibit 211

Sample Letter — Authority to Conduct Preproposal Investigation

<date>

<NAME>

DISTRICT MANAGER

CUSTOMER SERVICE AND SALES

SUBJECT: Authority to Conduct Investigation

I request your authorization to investigate a possible change in postal services for the following office in the <name> congressional district.

Post Office Name: _____

ZIP+4 Code: _____

EAS Level: _____

Finance Number: _____

County: _____

Number of Customers:

Post Office Box _____

General Delivery _____

Rural Route (RR) _____

Highway Contract Route (HCR) _____

Intermediate RR _____

Intermediate HCR _____

City Delivery _____

Total Customers _____

The above office <became/will become> vacant when the postmaster <retired, resigned, was promoted> on <date>. <List other circumstances of significance, such as eviction with no suitable alternate quarters>.

Please indicate your approval of this study by signing below and returning the original form to this office.

<name>

Manager, Post Office Operations

Approval to Study for Discontinuance:

District Manager, Customer Service and Sales_____
Date

cc: Area Manager, Public Affairs and Communication

Exhibit 221b

Sample Letter Requesting Customer Information

<date>

OIC/POSTMASTER

SUBJECT: <name>_Post Office

Please provide the names and addresses of businesses, religious institutions, civic organizations, and local government offices, and schools that are served by the <name> Post Office. The list of businesses should include small, part-time and in-home businesses, as well as public institutions, such as schools, police departments, etc; religious institutions and businesses physically located outside the community that use retail services on a routine basis at the <name> Post Office. Also, please provide the total number of permit mailers and postage meter customers. Indicate in the space below the total number of Post Office box, general, and street delivery customers served by the office. Return all documents to <name of coordinator> by <date>. This information will be entered into the official record for public viewing.

Post Office Box _____

General Delivery _____

Rural Route (RR) _____

Highway Contract Route (HCR) _____

Intermediate RR _____

Intermediate HCR _____

City Delivery _____

Total Customers _____

List of Businesses: _____

If you have any comments on alternate means of providing services to the <name> customers, please provide them below.

Post Office Review Coordinator

Comments:

Exhibit 221e

Sample Letter to County Officials Requesting Growth Information

<date>

<name and title of county official>

<address>

<city>, <state> <ZIP+4>

SUBJECT: Possible Discontinuance of Post Office

Dear <>:

The Postal Service is currently conducting an investigation concerning the possible discontinuance of the <name> Post Office, located in <name> County. Please search your records for any indication of recent or planned growth in the area including population growth, residential development, and commercial or public sector development.

Please return your findings in the enclosed envelope. You can use the bottom of this form to report your findings. Please also have the responding official sign and date the response, and indicate his or her title.

Thank you for your assistance in this matter.

<name>

Post Office Review Coordinator

Comments/Findings: _____

Signature: _____ Title: _____

Date: _____

Exhibit 221f (p. 1)

Sample Request for Inspection Service Report

<date>

POSTAL INSPECTION SERVICE

SUBJECT: Possible Discontinuance of Post Office

The Postal Service is currently conducting an investigation concerning the possible discontinuance of the <name> Post Office, <ZIP + 4>, located in <name> County. Please search your records for any recent reports of mail theft or vandalism in the area.

Please return your findings in the enclosed envelope. You may use the bottom of this form to report your findings, accompanied by your signature, title, and date.

Thank you for your assistance in this matter.

<name>

Post Office Review Coordinator

Enclosure: Return Envelope

No records of mail theft or vandalism ☐

Comments/Findings: _____

Signature: _____ Title: _____

Date: _____

Exhibit 221f (p. 2)

Sample Request for Local Law Enforcement Report

<date>

<name and title of local law official>

<address>

<city>, <state> <ZIP+4>

SUBJECT: Possible Discontinuance of Post Office

The Postal Service is currently conducting an investigation concerning the possible discontinuance of the <name> Post Office, <ZIP + 4>, located in <name> County. Please search your records for any recent reports of mail theft or vandalism in the area.

Please return your findings in the enclosed envelope. You may use the bottom of this form to report your findings, accompanied by your signature, title, and date.

Thank you for your assistance in this matter.

<name>

Post Office Review Coordinator

Enclosure: Return Envelope

No records of mail theft or vandalism ☐

Comments/Findings: _____

Signature: _____ Title: _____

Date: _____

Exhibit 221h (p. 1)

Sample Request to Conduct Surveys Letter

<date>

OIC/POSTMASTER

SUBJECT: <name > Post Office

As you are aware, the Postal Service is evaluating a possible change in how postal services are provided to <name> customers.

Please conduct the following surveys: Window Transaction Survey, Survey of Incoming Mail, and Survey of Dispatched Mail at the <name> Post Office for a 2-week period. The surveys should begin <date> and end on <date>. Please complete the enclosed forms as accurately as possible.

Return all forms to <name> by <date>. The completed forms may become part of an official and public record.

Thank you for your assistance. If you have any questions, please contact <name>, Post Office Review Coordinator, at <telephone number>.

<name>

Post Office Review Coordinator

cc: Official Record

Enclosures: Window Transaction Survey
Survey of Incoming Mail
Survey of Dispatched Mail

Window Transaction Survey**Window Transaction Survey**

PO Name: _____ ZIP +4: _____ Completed by: _____ (Signature and Title)

Survey Period: _____ Through: _____

Record the number of retail window transactions in the appropriate columns for each day. Consider a sale of stamps as one transaction. A sale of stamps and a money order is two transactions. Do not record the handing out over the counter of box mail, general delivery mail, or carrier mail. Instead of this worksheet, you may use PS Form 2007-A, *Window Transaction Record*; PS Form 2007-B, *Window Transaction Conversion*; and PS Form 2007-C, *Window Transaction Survey*. Use hash marks (///) for daily entries in the columns. To obtain the average daily number of transactions, divide the total number of transactions during the survey period by the number of days in the survey. The allowable time per transaction is shown in each column in minutes. To determine the average daily workload in minutes, multiply the number of transactions in each column by the time conversion for that column, total the time conversions for all columns, and divide the total number of minutes by the number of days in the survey period.

Day/Date	Postage Sales (.777)	Priority Parcels Money Orders (1.083)	Express Registered C.O.D. (1.969)	Passports Meter Settings (5.06)	Box Rent (2.875)	Certified Insured Special Service (1.792)	Misc. Services (1.787)	Nonrevenue Services (1.188)
Saturday								
Monday								
Tuesday								
Wednesday								
Thursday								
Friday								
Saturday								
Monday								
Tuesday								
Wednesday								
Thursday								
Friday								
Total Transactions								
Time Factor	x .777	x 1.083	x 1.969	x 5.06	x 2.875	x 1.792	x 1.787	x 1.188
Total Minutes								

Average Number Daily Transactions: _____

Average Daily Retail Workload in Minutes: _____

Exhibit 221h (p. 3)

Survey of Incoming Mail**Survey of Incoming Mail**
(Record in Pieces)**Post Office Name and ZIP+4:** _____**Dates Recorded:** _____ **through** _____

Date	Letters		Flats		Parcels		Other	
	First Class	Standard	First Class	Standard	Priority	Standard		
Saturday								
Monday								
Tuesday								
Wednesday								
Thursday								
Friday								
Saturday								
Monday								
Tuesday								
Wednesday								
Thursday								
Friday								
TOTALS								
Daily Average								

Signature of Person Making Count: _____

Printed Name: _____

Title: _____

Conversion Rate

Letter Type	Total Pieces Per Foot	Flat Type	Total Pieces Per Foot
Manual Letters	227	Manual Flats	115
Automated Letters	215	Automated Flats	115
Sequenced Letters	227	Sequenced Flats	115

Note: Conversion rates are subject to periodic updates which will be published and disseminated when applicable.

Exhibit 221h (p. 4)

Survey of Dispatched Mail**Survey of Dispatched Mail***(Record in Pieces)***Post Office Name and ZIP+4:** _____**Dates Recorded:** _____ **through** _____

Date	Letters		Flats		Parcels		Other	
	First Class	Standard	First Class	Standard	Priority	Standard		
Saturday								
Monday								
Tuesday								
Wednesday								
Thursday								
Friday								
Saturday								
Monday								
Tuesday								
Wednesday								
Thursday								
Friday								
TOTALS								
Daily Average								

Signature of Person Making Count: _____

Printed Name: _____

Title: _____

Exhibit 221i

PS Form 4920, Post Office Closing or Consolidation Proposal – Fact Sheet

U.S. Postal Service POST OFFICE CLOSING OR CONSOLIDATION PROPOSAL Fact Sheet						1. Date Prepared _____	
2. Post Office Name _____				3. State and ZIP + 4 Code _____			
4. District, Customer Services _____		5. Area, Customer Services _____		6. County _____		7. Congressional District _____	
8. Reason for Proposal to Discontinue _____			9. Post Office Emergency Suspended (<i>Reason and Date</i>) _____			10. Proposed Permanent Alternate Service _____	
11. Staffing				12. Hours of Service			
a. ☐ PM Occupied ☐ PM Vacancy Reason & Date: _____ b. ☐ OIC ☐ Career ☐ Non-Career c. Current PM POSITION Level (150) EAS-____ Downgraded from EAS-____ d. No. of Clerks _____ No. of Career _____ No. of Non-Career _____ e. No. of Others _____ No. of Career _____ No. of Non-Career _____				a. Time M-F _____ Sat. _____ b. Lobby Time M-F _____ Sat. _____		Total Window Hours Per Week 	
13. Number of Customers Served				14. Daily Volume (Pieces)			
a. General Delivery				Types of Mail	Received	Dispatched	
b. P.O. Box				a. First-Class			
c. City Delivery				b. Newspaper			
d. Rural Delivery				c. Parcel			
e. Highway Contract Route Box				d. Other			
f. Total				e. Total			
g. No. Receiving Duplicate Service				f. No. of Postage Meters			
h. Average No. Daily Transactions				g. No. of Permits			
15. Finances		a. FY _____ Receipts \$ _____		b. EAS Step 1 PM Basic Salary (No Cola) \$ _____		c. PM Fringe Benefits (33.5% of b.) \$ _____	
16a. Quarters							
☐ Postal Owned ☐ Leased (<i>If Leased, Expiration Date</i>) _____ Annual Lease \$ _____ 30-day cancellation clause? ☐ Yes ☐ No Evicted? ☐ Yes ☐ No (<i>If Yes, must vacate by</i> _____ <i>(Date)</i>). Located in: ☐ Business ☐ Home ☐ Other Suitable alternate quarters available? ☐ Yes ☐ No							
16b. Explain: _____							
17. Schools, Churches and Organizations in Service Area Names: _____ No: _____				19. Administrative/Emanating Office (<i>Proposed</i>) Name _____ EAS Level _____ Miles Away _____ Window Service Hours: M-F _____ Sat. _____ Lobby Hours: M-F _____ Sat. _____ P.O. Boxes Available _____			
18. Businesses in Service Area Names: _____ No: _____				20. Nearest Post Office (<i>If different from above</i>) Name _____ EAS Level _____ Miles Away _____ Window Service Hours: M-F _____ Sat. _____ Lobby Hours: M-F _____ Sat. _____ P.O. Boxes Available _____			
21. Prepared By							
Printed Name and Title _____				Signature _____		Telephone No. AC () _____	
PO Discontinuance Coordinator Name _____		Telephone No. AC () _____		Location _____			

PS Form 4920, June 1993

Exhibit 222c (p. 1)

PS Form 150, Postmaster Workload Information

Post Office, State & ZIP Code	Postmaster's Signature	Date
MSC, State & ZIP Code	MSC Manager's Signature	Date
District Office, State & ZIP Code	District Manager's Signature	Date

(Check Box)
☐ Vacancy ☐ Management Review ☐ RFR **See Instructions on Reverse** 

1. Current Office Level		☐
2. Finance Number	(1-6)	☐
3. General Delivery Families Served	(7-9)	☐
4. Post Office Boxes/Call Boxes Rented	(10-15)	☐
5. Possible City Deliveries	(16-20)	☐
6. Administrative Rural Boxes Served	(21-25)	☐
7. Intermediate Rural Boxes Served	(26-30)	☐
8. Administrative Responsibility for Intermediate Rural Boxes for Other Offices	(31-35)	☐
9. Administrative Highway Contract/Star Route Boxes Served	(36-39)	☐
10. Intermediate Highway Contract/Star Route Boxes Served	(40-43)	☐
11. Administrative Responsibility for Intermediate Highway Contract/Star Route Boxes for Other Offices	(44-47)	☐
12. Number of Carrier Stations/Branches	(48-49)	☐
13. Number of Finance Stations/Branches	(50-51)	☐
14. Number of Contract Stations/Branches & Community Post Offices	(52-53)	☐
15a. Does Office Experience A Seasonal Workload? (box one "Y" for yes, "N" for no) (If you answer 'yes' for this question, complete 'Seasonal Workload' section on reverse.)	(54)	☐
15b. Duration of Seasonal Workload (Minimum of 8 weeks)	(55-56)	☐
16. Does Office Perform Outgoing Distribution for Other Offices?	(57)	☐
17. Does Office Perform Incoming Primary Distribution for Other Offices?	(58)	☐
18. Does Office Perform Incoming Secondary Distribution for Other Offices?	(59)	☐
19. Do You Separate All Incoming Letter Size Mail to City & Rural Carrier Routes for Your Own Office?	(60)	☐
20. Do You Separate All Incoming Flat Mail to City & Rural Carrier Routes for Your Own Office?	(61)	☐
21. Do You Have Responsibility for Vehicle Maintenance Facilities?	(62)	☐
22. Does Your Office Have Administrative Responsibility for An Air Transfer Office?	(63)	☐
23. Is Postmaster Lessor for Government Owned Building?	(64)	☐
24. Does Office Have MPLSM/SPLSM?	(65)	☐
25. Does Office Distribute Food Stamps?	(66)	☐

PS Form 150, January 1983

Exhibit 222c (p. 2)

PS Form 150, Postmaster Workload Information

	Normal	During Seasonal Period
General Delivery Families Served		
Post Office Boxes/Call Boxes Rented		
Possible City Deliveries		
Administrative Rural Boxes Served		
Intermediate Rural Boxes Served		
Administrative Responsibility/Number Intermediate Rural Boxes		
Administrative Highway Contract/Star Route Boxes Served		
Intermediate Highway Contract/Star Route Boxes Served		
Administrative Responsibility/Number Intermediate Highway Contract/Star Route Boxes		

Instructions

1. Enter current evaluated office level.
2. Enter the 6 digit post office finance number.
3. Enter number of general delivery families served.
4. Enter total number of post office boxes and call boxes *rented*. Do not confuse with the total number available. This total should include boxes rented at classified stations/branches as well as the main office including GPO's.
5. Enter total possible city deliveries. The total reported should equal the total possible deliveries shown on Form 1621, *Carrier Route Report*, for the previous accounting period.
6. Enter the number of administrative boxes served. This is the number of rural route boxes served, within your ZIP Code ONLY by carriers administratively reporting to you. Do not include boxes on the routes which are in the ZIP Code of an intermediate office.
7. Enter the number of intermediate rural boxes served. This is the number of rural boxes, within your ZIP Code, served by a carrier administratively reporting to another postmaster. For credit, the mail must be incoming to your office and separated to the routes within your ZIP Code by you or your employees prior to carrier sequencing.
8. Enter the number of intermediate rural boxes for which you are administratively responsible. This is the number of boxes served by a carrier administratively responsible to you, but which are located in the ZIP Code for another office.
9. Enter the number of administrative highway contract star route boxes served. This is the total number of star route boxes served within your ZIP Code ONLY by a contractor for whom you have administrative responsibility. Do not include boxes on the routes which are in the same ZIP Code of an intermediate office.
10. Enter the number of intermediate highway contract star route boxes served. This is the total number of star route boxes served within your ZIP Code ONLY by a contractor who administratively reports to another Postmaster. For credit the mail must be incoming to your office and separated to the contract route by you or your employees.
11. Enter the number of intermediate highway contract star route boxes for which you are administratively responsible. This is the number of boxes served by a contractor for whom you are administratively responsible and which are located in the ZIP Code of another office.
12. Enter the number of classified stations and/or branches that have carrier delivery service.
13. Enter the number of classified finance stations and/or branches (*without carrier delivery service*) staffed by postal employees.
14. Enter the total number of contract stations, rural stations and community post offices.
 - (a) A contract station is a detached finance unit manned by non-postal employees.
 - (b) A rural station is a post office box delivery unit serviced by a rural carrier.
 - (c) A community post office is a contract unit which provides service in a small community.
15. To receive credit for a seasonal workload increase the items shown on the seasonal workload portion of the form must show a 25% increase and must last for a minimum of 8 weeks. The Christmas Season is not to be considered as a seasonal workload increase. Should your office have a seasonal workload increase you should enter the exact number of weeks the season lasts and complete the seasonal workload portion of the form in its entirety.

Questions 16 Thru 25 Should Be Answered Y (Yes) or N (No)

16. Does office separate massed outgoing mail originating in other associate offices to three digit ZIP CODE designating offices and/or area distribution centers and demonstrate a culling, facing and cancelling operation?
17. Does office separate massed three digit sorted incoming mail to a five digit sort for other associate offices?
18. Does office separate incoming mail to carrier routes for other associate offices?
19. Does office separate all incoming letter size mail to city, rural and/or star routes?
20. Does office separate all incoming flats to city and/or rural carrier routes without assistance from an MPC?
21. Do you have a vehicle maintenance facility under your jurisdiction?
22. Do you have an air transfer office under your jurisdiction?
23. Do you occupy a government-owned building and lease a portion of the building to someone else?
24. Does your office operate a Multiple Position Letter Sorting Machine (MPLSM) or Single Position Letter Sorting Machine (SPLSM)?
25. Does your office distribute food stamps?

PS Form 150, January 1983 (Reverse)

Exhibit 222c (p. 3)

Workload Service Credit Ranges

Grade EAS	Service Hour Category	Zone of Tolerance**	WSC Range*	Zone of Tolerance**	Lower Grade	WSCs Required to Raise Grade
A	2 hr	-----	1-40	41-45	-----	46
C	4 hr	36-40	41-82	83-93	35	94
E	6 hr	73-82	83-125	126-141	72	142
11	Full-time	111-125	126-335	336-376	110	377
13		298-335	336-820	821-914	297	915
15		736-820	821-2,075	2,076-2,291	735	2,292
18		1,869-2,075	2,076-5,500	5,501-6,049	1,868	6,050
20		4,951-5,500	5,501-13,000	13,001-14,299	4,950	14,300
21		11,701-13,000	13,001-26,000	26,001-28,599	11,700	28,600
22		23,401-26,000	26,001-68,200	68,201-75,020	23,400	75,021
24		61,381-68,200	68,201-167,200	167,201-183,919	61,380	183,920
26		150,481-167,200	167,201 and up	-----	150,480	-----

*WSC Range: Applies in ranking Post Offices with vacant postmaster positions.

**Zone of Tolerance: Applies in ranking Post Offices with incumbent postmasters. A Post Office with an incumbent postmaster will not change grade unless (1) the WSCs fall below or exceed the Zone of Tolerance WSCs for the current grade; or (2) the WSCs fall within the Zone of Tolerance for the current grade and have consistently remained within the Zone for 2 years, which must be documented. The 2-year waiting period begins when a PS Form 150, *Postmaster Workload Information*, substantiating the operational changes, is prepared by the postmaster and is received and verified by the district manager, Customer Service and Sales.

Note: The Zone of Tolerance does not apply to incumbent postmasters whose converted grade on June 2, 1979, was higher than the evaluated grade of the office on July 28, 1979. In these cases, the incumbent postmaster retains the converted grade and corresponding work schedule as long as he or she remains in that same office. This retention is referred to as the "present incumbent" policy.

Revenue Unit Value		Revenue Unit Value	
1980	\$158.24	1992	\$274.34
1981	\$170.53	1993	\$275.63
1982	\$195.11	1994	\$276.78
1983	\$193.93	1995	\$298.48
1984	\$189.24	1996	\$306.65
1985	\$194.65	1997	\$302.90
1986	\$201.32	1998	\$301.20
1987	\$201.76	1999	\$308.22
1988	\$215.24	2000	\$308.11
1989	\$231.73	2001	\$315.21
1990	\$232.49	2002	\$325.46
1991	\$257.53		

Exhibit 222c (p. 4)

Worksheet for Calculating Workload Service Credit (WSC) for Post Offices**Worksheet for Calculating Workload Service Credit (WSC) for Post Offices**

Office Name: _____

Office ZIP+4: _____ District: _____

Activity WSCs

General Delivery Families Served (Item 3, PS Form 150)	__ X 1.0	=	_____
Post Office Boxes/Call Boxes Rented (Item 4, PS Form 150).	__ X 1.0	=	_____
Possible City Deliveries (Item 5, PS Form 150).	__ X 1.33	=	_____
Administrative Rural Boxes Served (Item 6, PS Form 150).	__ X 1.0	=	_____
Intermediate Rural Boxes Served (Item 7, PS Form 150).	__ X 0.7	=	_____
Administrative Responsibility for Intermediate Rural Boxes for Other Offices (Item 8, PS Form 150).	__ X 0.3	=	_____
Administrative Highway Contract/Star Route Boxes Served (Item 9, PS Form 150).	__ X 1.0	=	_____
Intermediate Highway Contract/Star Route Boxes Served (Item 10, PS Form 150).	__ X 0.7	=	_____
Administrative Responsibility for Intermediate Highway Contract/Star Route Boxes for Other Offices (Item 11, PS Form 150).	__x 0.3	=	_____
Total activity WSCs.			_____

Revenue WSCs

First	25 revenue units: 1.0	x	__ units	=	_____
Next	275 revenue units: 0.5	x	__ units	=	_____
Next	700 revenue units: 0.25	x	__ units	=	_____
Next	5,000 revenue units: 0.1	x	__ units	=	_____
Balance of revenue units:	0.01	x	__ units	=	_____
Total revenue WSCs.					_____

Activity WSCs _____ + Revenue WSCs _____ = Base WSCs _____ = EAS Grade _____

Previous evaluation: EAS grade _____

Effective date for change in service hours: _____ (if appropriate)

(when a vacancy exists, hours must reflect the appropriate EAS grade)

Worksheet completed by:

Printed name_____
Signature_____
Title_____
Date

Exhibit 222f (p. 1)

Post Office Survey Sheet**Post Office Survey Sheet**

Post Office Name: _____ ZIP+4: _____

Congressional District: _____ Date: _____

1. List specific information about the facility, such as structural defects, safety hazards, lack of running water or restrooms (if so, where restrooms are available), security, and other deficiencies or factors to consider.

2. Is the facility accessible to persons with disabilities? _____

3. Lease terms? 30-day cancellation clause? _____

4. Are suitable alternate quarters available for an independent Post Office? If so, where?

5. List potential CPO sites. _____

6. Are there any postage meter customers or permit mailers? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, please identify them by name and address. _____

7. Which career and noncareer employees will be affected and what accommodations will be made for them?

8. How is mail received and dispatched at the office and at what times? How will this be affected by discontinuance? Will a collection box be retained? Will a locked pouch be utilized?

How many Post Office boxes are installed? _____

How many Post Office boxes are used? _____

What are the window service hours? _____ M-F

_____ S

What are the lobby hours? _____ M-F

_____ S

9. Have there been recent cases of mail theft or vandalism reported to the postmaster/OIC? Explain.

Exhibit 222f (p. 2)

Post Office Survey Sheet

10. What equipment in the Post Office is not owned by the Postal Service (e.g., Post Office Boxes, furniture, safe)?

11. List potential CBU/parcel locker sites and distances from present Post Office site.

12. Are there any special customer needs? (people who cannot read or write, who cannot drive, who have infirmities or physical handicaps, etc.) How can these people be accommodated?

13. Rural delivery/HCR delivery.
- a. What is current evaluation? _____
 - b. Will this change result in the route being overburdened? ☐ Yes ☐ No
 If so, what accommodations will be made to adjust the route? _____
 - c. How many boxes and miles will be added to the route? _____
 - d. What would be the additional annual expense if the route is increased? _____
 - e. What is the one-time cost of CBU/parcel locker installation (if appropriate)? _____
 - f. At what time of the day does the carrier begin delivery to the community? _____
 Will this delivery time be affected if the office is discontinued? ☐ Yes ☐ No
 If so, how? _____
14. Are the Post Office box fees at the facility that will provide alternate service different from those at the office to be discontinued? If so, how? _____

Exhibit 222f (p. 3)

Community Survey Sheet**Community Survey Sheet**

Post Office Name: _____ ZIP+4: _____

Congressional District: _____ Date: _____

1. Incorporated? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Local government provided by: _____

Police protection provided by: _____

Fire protection provided by: _____

School location: _____

2. What population growth is expected? (Please document your source) _____

3. What residential, commercial, or business growth is expected? (Please document your source) _____

4. History. (Are there any special historical events related to the community? Are there any special community events to consider? Is the Post Office facility a state or national historic landmark (see ASM 515.23)? Check with the field real estate office when verification is needed.)

5. What is the geographic/economic make-up of the community (e.g., retirees, commuters, self-employed, farmers)?

6. Which nonpostal services are provided by the Post Office (e.g., public bulletin board, school bus stop, community meeting location, voting place, government form distribution center. Do employees of the office offer assistance to senior citizens and handicapped)? What provisions can be made for these services if the Post Office is discontinued?

Exhibit 222f (p. 4)

Executive and Administrative Schedule (EAS) Postmaster Schedule

**Executive and Administrative Schedule (EAS)
Effective 12/27/2003***

EAS Grade	Minimum	25th Percentile	50th Percentile	75th Percentile	Maximum
A-E	11.31	12.41	13.52	14.62	15.72
1	20,875	22,284	23,693	25,102	26,511
2	21,559	23,014	24,470	25,925	27,380
3	22,269	23,772	25,275	26,778	28,281
4	23,167	24,731	26,295	27,858	29,422
5	23,939	25,555	27,171	28,786	30,402
6	24,802	26,476	28,150	29,824	31,498
7	25,818	27,561	29,304	31,046	32,789
8	26,853	28,666	30,478	32,291	34,103
9	27,902	29,785	31,669	33,552	35,435
10	28,931	30,884	32,837	34,789	36,742
11	30,492	33,842	37,193	40,543	43,893
12	31,955	35,467	38,978	42,490	46,001
13	33,446	37,121	40,796	44,471	48,146
14	35,192	39,059	42,927	46,794	50,661
15	37,120	41,199	45,277	49,356	53,434
16	38,437	43,659	48,882	54,104	59,326
17	40,142	45,596	51,049	56,503	61,956
18	41,905	47,598	53,292	58,985	64,678
19	43,891	49,854	55,817	61,780	67,743
20	46,272	52,559	58,845	65,132	71,418
21	48,520	55,112	61,704	68,295	74,887
22	51,405	58,747	66,088	73,430	80,771
23	54,207	61,949	69,690	77,432	85,173
24	56,889	65,014	73,139	81,263	89,388
25	59,719	68,248	76,777	85,305	93,834
26	62,698	71,652	80,606	89,560	98,514

*Current Postmaster schedules are posted on the Human Resources Web site at <http://blue.usps.gov/hrisp/comp>.

Exhibit 222f (p. 5)

EAS A-E Postmaster Salary Schedule

Hourly Rates Grade A-E Postmasters

Effective December 27, 2003

EAS Grade	Minimum	25 th Percentile	50 th Percentile	75 th Percentile	Maximum
A-E	11.31	12.41	13.52	14.62	15.72

Grade	Weekly Service	Annual Service
A (51)	12 Hours	624 Hours
B (52)	18 Hours	936 Hours
C (53)	24 Hours	1,248 Hours
D (54)	30 Hours	1,560 Hours
E (55)	36 Hours	1,872 Hours

Note: This schedule reflects an increase to the range effective 12/27/2003.

Postmaster Salaries and Fringe Benefits

**EAS A-E Post Offices
Effective December 27, 2003**
Current Yearly Salary and Benefits

EAS-A Minimum Salary	\$7,057
Fringe Benefits (33.5%)	\$2,364
EAS-B Minimum Salary	\$10,586
Fringe Benefits (33.5%)	\$3,546
EAS-C Minimum Salary	\$14,114
Fringe Benefits (33.5%)	\$4,728
EAS-D Minimum Salary	\$17,643
Fringe Benefits (33.5%)	\$5,910
EAS-E Minimum Salary	\$21,172
Fringe Benefits (33.5%)	\$7,092

Current hourly rate schedules are posted on the Human Resources Web site at <http://blue.usps.gov/hrisp/comp>.

Exhibit 232.22 (p. 1)

Sample Highway Contract Route Cost Analysis Form

**Highway Contract Route
Estimated Cost for Alternative Replacement Service**

1. Enter the number of additional boxes to be added to the route _____ x 3.64 hours per year _____

2. Enter the number of additional miles to be added to the route _____ x 10.40 hours per year _____

Total time added to the route _____

3. Enter the HCR hourly rate
(Contact Area Manager, Purchasing/Contracting Officer) _____

Total additional compensation (HCR hourly rate x total time added to the route) _____

Exhibit 232.22 (p. 2)

Sample Rural Route Cost Analysis Form

Rural Route Carrier Estimated Cost for Alternative Replacement Service

1.	Number of additional boxes to be added to the rural route				
2.	Enter the volume factor of the gaining route				
				Total (additional boxes x volume factor)	
3.	Enter the number of additional boxes to be added to the rural route				
	Centralized boxes		x	1.00 Min	
	Regular L route boxes		x	1.82 Min	
	Regular Non-L route boxes		x	2.00 Min	
				Total additional box allowance	
4.	Enter the number of additional daily miles to be added to the rural route		x	12 Mileage Standard	
				Total additional minutes per week (miles carried to two decimal places)	
5.	Total additional annual minutes (additional minutes per week x 52 weeks per year)		x	52 Weeks	
6.	Total additional annual hours (additional annual minutes/60 minutes per hour)		/	60 Minutes	
7.	Enter the rural cost per hour (see national payroll summary report – rural carrier, consolidated)				
				Total Annual Cost (additional annual hours x rural cost per hour)	
8.	Enter lock pouch allowance (if applicable)				
				Total annual cost for alternate service (annual cost minus lock pouch allowance)	

Exhibit 251

Sample Questionnaire Transmittal Letter

<date>

OIC/POSTMASTER

SUBJECT: <name> Post Office

Enclosed are questionnaires addressed to customers of the <name> Post Office. I have also enclosed additional copies of the questionnaires for any retail or other customer who wishes to complete one. Please furnish these questionnaires to retail customers upon request. All completed forms should be forwarded to my office by <date> for further review.

<name>
Post Office Review Coordinator

Enclosures

Exhibit 252.22

Summary of Post Office Change Regulations for Independent Post Offices**Summary of Post Office Change Regulations**

Certain regulations based on federal law apply when Postal Service managers propose to replace a Post Office with an alternate form of postal service. These regulations are designed to ensure that the reasons for proposing such changes in postal service are fully disclosed at a stage when customers can make helpful contributions toward a final decision. The full text of the statutory provisions appears in Title 39, *United States Code*, Section 404(b), while the implementing regulations appear in Title 39, *Code of Federal Regulations*, Part 241.3.

According to implementing regulations, an initial investigation and any subsequent formal proposal to discontinue a Post Office originate with Postal Service field managers responsible for Post Offices in that area. The proposal must explain the services recommended as substitutes and the rationale that supports this recommendation. The written proposal is prominently posted for 60 days at affected Post Offices, along with an "Invitation for Comments," which formally invites customer comments. At the end of the 60-day comment period, additional review is made at lower and upper levels of Postal Service management.

When a final decision is made at Postal Headquarters in Washington, DC, that decision is posted in affected Post Offices for 30 days, during which customers may appeal the decision to the Postal Rate Commission in Washington, DC. The Postal Rate Commission has 120 days to consider and decide an appeal. Even without an appeal, no Post Office may be closed sooner than 60 days after the public posting of the final decision.

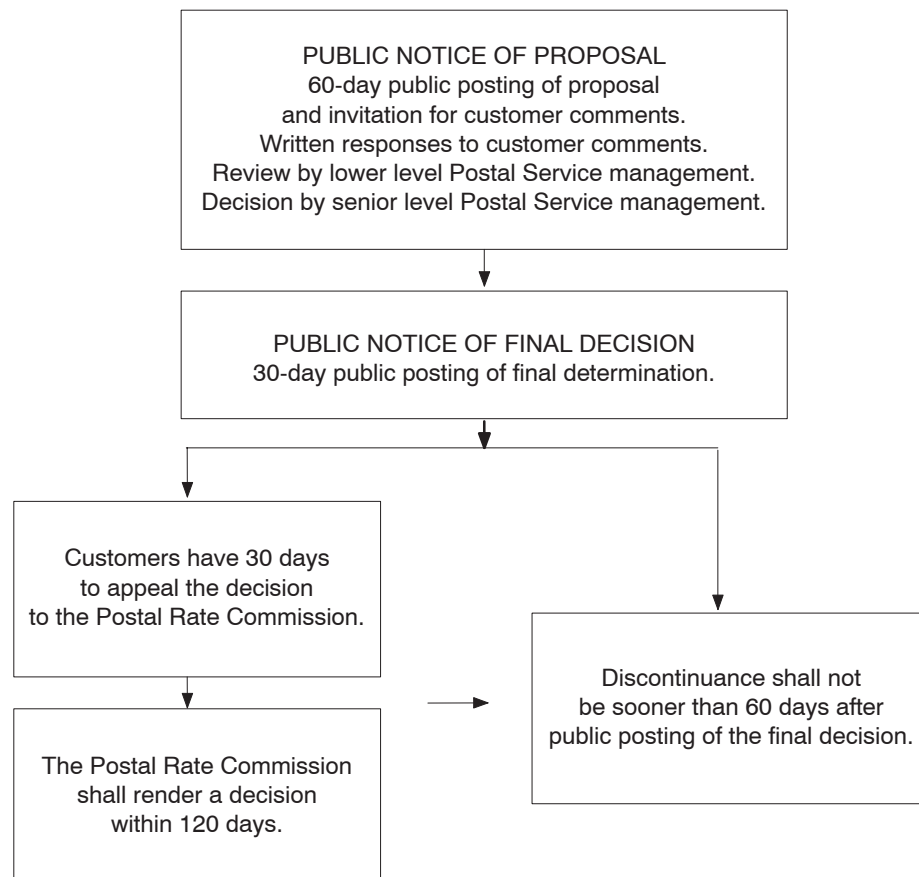


Exhibit 252.23 (p. 1)

Welcome to Rural Delivery Service

Welcome to Rural Route (RR) Service

Today it is difficult to envision the isolation and loneliness that were the lot of the farmer and his family in early America. The typical farm family had no telephone, automobile, radio, or television. The farmers' only links to the outside world were the mail and the newspapers that came by mail to the nearest Post Office. Because the mail had to be picked up, this meant a trip to the Post Office, often taking a day of travel. The farmer often delayed picking up his mail for days, weeks, or even months until the trip could be combined with one for supplies, food, or equipment.

John Wanamaker was the first postmaster general to advocate rural route (RR) delivery. Although funds were appropriated a month before he left office in 1893, subsequent postmaster generals postponed starting the new service. It was not until 1896 before experimental rural delivery routes began in West Virginia, with carriers working out of Post Offices in Charles Town, Halltown, and Uvilla. The West Virginia experiment with rural free delivery was launched in relative obscurity and in an atmosphere of hostility. Critics of the plan maintained that it was too impractical and expensive to have a postal carrier trudge over rutted roads and through forests to attempt mail delivery in all kinds of weather.

The farmers, on the other hand, were delighted with the new service and with the new world that was being opened up to them. After receiving free delivery for a few months, one observer said that it would take away a part of life to give up the service. Another farmer estimated that in 15 years he had traveled 12,000 miles going to and from the Post Office to get his mail.

One of the by-products of rural-free delivery was the stimulation it provided to the development of the great American system of roads and highways. A prerequisite for rural delivery was good roads. After hundreds of petitions for rural delivery were turned down by the Post Office because of unserviceable and inaccessible roads, local governments spent \$72 million on bridges, culverts, and other improvements. In one Indiana county, farmers themselves paid more than \$2,600 to grade and gravel a road to qualify for RR service.

The impact of RR service as a cultural and social agent for millions of Americans was even more striking, and in this respect rural delivery is still a vital link between industrial and rural America.

Today there are more than 77,476 rural routes covering 3.2 million miles that serve 33 million boxes. Rural delivery no longer serves just farmers in remote areas of the country. Modern rural routes provide daily service to high-rise office buildings, shopping malls, and large apartment buildings in and around large cities.

In many rural areas, highway contract routes (HCR) have been established. These routes often provide the same services as a rural route and are administered by the Postal Service to ensure compliance with the contract and with postal regulations.

RR and HCR services continue to grow, binding this great nation together, and meeting the mailing needs of rural America.

Exhibit 252.23 (p. 2)
Post Office on Wheels

**Post Office on Wheels
Services Available From Rural and
Highway Contract Route Carriers**

You can eliminate almost all trips to the Post Office, because doing business with the Postal Service is as close as your mailbox. The carrier can provide virtually all postal services to you, and most transactions do not require meeting the carrier at the mailbox. Some of the most frequently used services are the following:

MAILING PACKAGES

Carriers will accept packages at the mailbox without a customer being present, provided the postage is fully prepaid, and the customer is known to reside or conduct business at that collection point. The package **MUST** have a matching return address that is the same as the collection point. If postage has not been applied, estimate the amount of postage needed and leave the money in the mailbox. If insurance is desired, the value of the contents must be specified. The carrier will take the package to the Post Office, and it will be weighed to determine the appropriate rate. The package will be mailed that same day. The carrier will leave the customer's change and insurance receipt, if appropriate, in the mailbox on the next delivery day.

PURCHASING STAMPS BY MAIL

The Stamps by Mail program provides customers the opportunity to purchase stamps, envelopes, and postal cards by using PS Form 3227-R, *Stamp Purchase Order (Rural)*, available from the Post Office or the carrier. Commemorative stamps and stamp-collecting products are also available. The customer addresses the postage paid order form envelope, encloses payment by personal check or postal money order made payable to the United States Postal Service, and mails the form (postage-free) or leaves it in the mailbox for the carrier to pick up. Most orders are processed overnight, and some immediately.

PURCHASING POSTAL MONEY ORDERS

Customers may purchase money orders by meeting the carrier at the mailbox, completing an application, and paying the carrier (in cash) the price of the money order, plus the fee. The carrier gives the customer a receipt for the application. The money order is completed when the carrier returns to the Post Office, and a money order receipt is left in the customer's mailbox on the next delivery day. Most customers provide the carrier with a stamped, self-addressed envelope in which the completed money order is mailed to its destination. If customers prefer, the completed money orders will be returned for verification on the next delivery day.

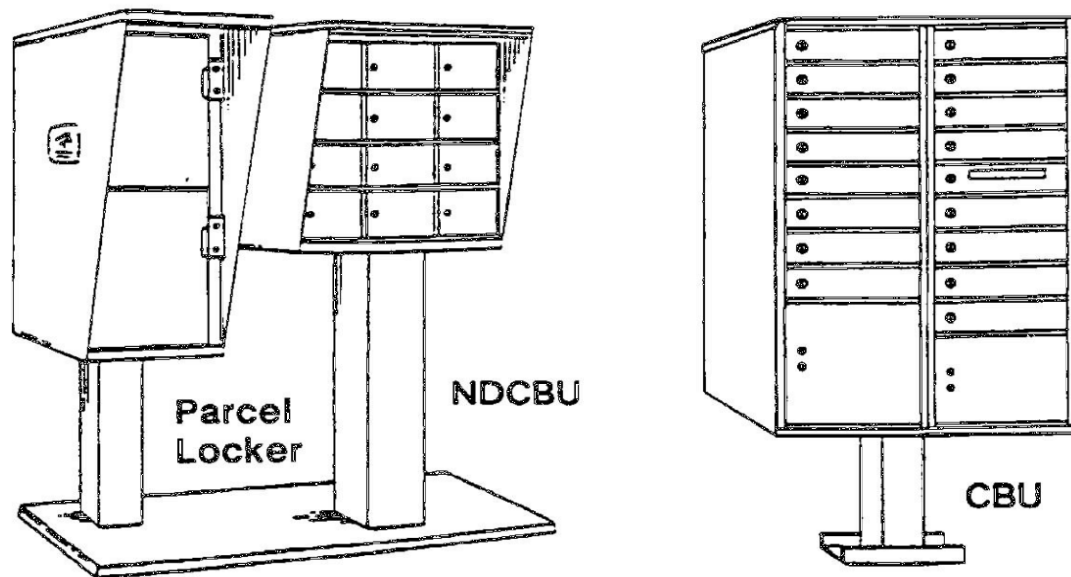
SPECIAL SERVICES

Special services such as Certified, Registered, Express Mail®, Delivery Confirmation, Signature Confirmation, and COD may be obtained from the carrier by leaving a note in the mailbox, along with the appropriate payment. The carrier will provide the services that day and leave a customer receipt in the mailbox on the next delivery day.

HOLDING MAIL

Customers who will be away for an extended time, such as a vacation, may request that their mail be held at the Post Office during their absence. Upon return, the customer asks the Post Office to resume delivery.

Exhibit 252.23 (p. 3)

Cluster Box Units and Neighborhood Delivery and Collection Box Units (NDCBUs)

Neighborhood delivery and collection box units (NDCBUs) and cluster box units (CBUs) are secure, free-standing units of individually locked mail compartments that are provided, installed, and maintained by the Postal Service at no cost to customers. These units benefit customers in time and money because they eliminate the customer's cost to install new boxes, and any future replacement and maintenance. A significant benefit of the NDCBUs and CBUs is the security they provide against mail theft and mailbox vandalism. Another advantage is the convenience of depositing outgoing mail in the designated collection compartment in the CBU or NDCBU.

Each customer's unit is large enough to hold several days' accumulation of mail, thereby eliminating the need to have mail held at the Post Office during short periods away from home. For longer periods away from home, customers should continue to contact the Post Office and request their mail to be:

1. Held at the Post Office until they return, or
2. Delivered to a specified friend or neighbor, or
3. Forwarded to their temporary address.

Parcel lockers may be installed next to NDCBUs for receiving packages that do not require a signature. Each CBU includes at least one parcel locker.

Customers are provided keys to their individual mailbox compartments in CBUs and NDCBUs. Parcel locker keys are placed in a customer's mailbox compartment when a parcel is secured in a locker for that customer.

Exhibit 253.1 (p. 1)

Sample Questionnaire Cover Letter — Proposal for CPO (Office Not Suspended)

<date>

Dear Postal Service Customer:

As the Postal Service manager responsible for all Post Offices in your area, I would like your opinion concerning a possible change in how your postal services are provided. The recommended change under consideration will not lead to a formal proposal unless we conclude that it will provide a maximum degree of regular and effective service.

The <name> Post Office is located in a store owned by the postmaster. The postmaster will retire and close the store on <date>, and the Postal Service has been asked to vacate the quarters. No suitable alternate quarters are available.

Briefly, we would like to provide service to you by establishing a community Post Office (CPO) located within your community, administered by the <name> Post Office. The CPO will provide the same services as an independent Post Office, except permit mailings and postage meter setting. The Postal Service will solicit offers from the public for operation of the facility. Award of the contract is based on evaluation of criteria including the annual monetary amount, contractor ability and background, and the quality and location of the facility. The successful offeror must be bonded and will be trained, administered, and supervised by the Postal Service. Generally, a member of the community is awarded the contract, which may add to the financial base of the community. Many communities such as yours are very satisfied with this type of postal service.

Under this arrangement, a community continues to use its name and ZIP Code and it will continue to appear in Publication 65, *National Five-Digit ZIP Code and Post Office Directory*. Your address will not be changed.

I invite you to send us your thoughts on a possible change to a community Post Office by completing the enclosed questionnaire. Please return the enclosed questionnaire by <month/day/year>, using the preaddressed envelope provided. Please be aware that if we formalize a proposal, your questionnaire will become part of an official record and will be available for public viewing.

If you wish to discuss this form of service with us, we invite you to meet with a Postal Service representative who will be at <location>, on <month/day/year>, from <time> to <time>, to answer questions and provide information about our service. You may wish to discuss and submit your questionnaire at that time or later. The enclosure entitled "United States Postal Service Summary of Post Office Change Regulations" describes what is involved in making a formal proposal if a permanent change in postal service appears warranted.

If you have any questions, you may call <name of Postal Service representative>, at <telephone number>.

Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

<name>
Manager, Post Office Operations
<Street Address>
<City, State, ZIP+4>

Enclosures: Questionnaire and return envelope
Summary of Post Office Change Regulations

Exhibit 253.1 (p. 2)

Sample Postal Service Customer Questionnaire — Proposal for CPO (Office Not Suspended)**Postal Service Customer Questionnaire**

1. Please check the appropriate box to indicate whether you use the <name> Post Office for each of the following:

Postal Services	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Never
a. Buying stamps	☐	☐	☐	☐
b. Mailing letters	☐	☐	☐	☐
c. Mailing parcels	☐	☐	☐	☐
d. Picking up Post Office box mail	☐	☐	☐	☐
e. Picking up general delivery mail	☐	☐	☐	☐
f. Buying money orders	☐	☐	☐	☐
g. Obtaining special services, including Certified Mail, Registered Mail, Insured Mail, Delivery Confirmation, or Signature Confirmation	☐	☐	☐	☐
h. Sending Express Mail	☐	☐	☐	☐
i. Buying stamp-collecting material	☐	☐	☐	☐

Other postal services:

- a. Entering permit mailings ☐ Yes ☐ No
- b. Resetting/using postage meter ☐ Yes ☐ No

Nonpostal Services

- a. Picking up government forms (such as tax forms) ☐ Yes ☐ No
- b. Using for school bus stop ☐ Yes ☐ No
- c. Assisting senior citizens, persons with disabilities, etc. ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, please explain: _____

- d. Using public bulletin board ☐ Yes ☐ No

- e. Other ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, please explain: _____

2. Do you pass another Post Office during business hours while traveling to or from work, or shopping, or for personal needs?

☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, which offices: _____

3. If you now receive carrier delivery, there will be no change to your delivery service. Post Office box service will be available from the community Post Office together with all other retail services except for permit mailings and postage meter settings, which will require new arrangements. How would you feel about replacing the current Post Office with a community Post Office?

☐ Better ☐ Just as Good ☐ No Opinion ☐ Worse

Please explain: _____

Exhibit 253.1 (p. 3)

Sample Postal Service Customer Questionnaire — Proposal for CPO (Office Not Suspended)

4. For which of the following do you leave your community? (Check all that apply.) Where do you go to obtain these services?

☐ Shopping	_____
☐ Personal needs	_____
☐ Banking needs	_____
☐ Employment	_____
☐ Social needs	_____

5. Do you currently use local businesses in the community?

☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, would you continue to use them if the Post Office is discontinued?

☐ Yes ☐ No

6. If a community Post Office is established in your community, would you be interested in bidding on the contract to operate it?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Name: _____
(please print your name)

Address: _____

Telephone number: _____ Date: _____

Please add any additional comments on a separate piece of paper and attach it to this form.
Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire.

Exhibit 253.2 (p. 1)

Sample Questionnaire Cover Letter — Proposal for CPO (Office Suspended)

<date>

Dear Postal Service Customer:

As you are aware, service was suspended at the <name> Post Office on <month/day/year>, due to <reason for suspension>. Since that time, you have been provided postal service through a contractor-operated community Post Office (CPO) located within your community.

As the Postal Service manager responsible for all Post Offices in your area, I would like your opinion concerning the service you received prior to the suspension, the service you now receive, and what effect permanently discontinuing the <name> Post Office would have on you and your community. The recommended change is tentative and will not lead to a formal proposal unless we conclude that it will provide a maximum degree of regular and effective service.

Briefly, we would like to establish a CPO within your community that will be administered by the <name> Post Office. The Postal Service will solicit offers from the public for operation of the facility. Award of the contract is based on evaluation of criteria including the annual monetary amount, contractor ability and background, and the quality and location of the facility. The successful offeror must be bonded and will be trained, administered, and supervised by the Postal Service. Your address and ZIP Code will remain the same.

I invite you to send us your thoughts about this proposed change by returning the enclosed questionnaire by <month/day/year>, using the preaddressed envelope provided. Please be aware that, if we formalize a proposal, your questionnaire will become part of an official record and will be available for public viewing.

If you prefer to discuss this form of service with us before drawing any conclusions, a Postal Service representative will be at <location>, on <month/day/year>, from <hours> to <hours>, to answer questions and provide information about our service. You may wish to discuss and submit your questionnaire at that time. The enclosure entitled "United States Postal Service Summary of Post Office Change Regulations" describes what is involved in making a formal proposal if a permanent change in postal service appears warranted.

If you have any questions, you may call <name of postal representative>, at <telephone number>.

Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

<name>
Manager, Post Office Operations
<Street Address>
<City, State, ZIP+4>

Enclosures: Questionnaire and return envelope
Summary of Post Office change regulations

Exhibit 253.2 (p. 2)

Sample Postal Service Customer Questionnaire — Proposal for CPO (Office Suspended)**Postal Service Customer Questionnaire**

1. Please check the appropriate box to indicate whether you used the <name> Post Office for each of the following:

Postal Services		Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Never
a.	Buying stamps	☐	☐	☐	☐
b.	Mailing letters	☐	☐	☐	☐
c.	Mailing parcels	☐	☐	☐	☐
d.	Picking up Post Office box mail	☐	☐	☐	☐
e.	Picking up general delivery mail	☐	☐	☐	☐
f.	Buying money orders	☐	☐	☐	☐
g.	Obtaining special services, including Certified Mail, Registered Mail, Insured Mail, Delivery Confirmation, or Signature Confirmation	☐	☐	☐	☐
h.	Sending Express Mail	☐	☐	☐	☐
i.	Buying stamp-collecting material	☐	☐	☐	☐

Other postal services:

- a. Entering permit mailings ☐ Yes ☐ No
- b. Resetting/using postage meter ☐ Yes ☐ No

Nonpostal Services

- a. Picking up government forms (such as tax forms) ☐ Yes ☐ No
- b. Using for school bus stop ☐ Yes ☐ No
- c. Assisting senior citizens, persons with disabilities, etc. ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, please explain: _____

- d. Using public bulletin board ☐ Yes ☐ No
- e. Other ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, please explain: _____

2. Do you pass another Post Office during business hours while traveling to or from work, or shopping, or for personal needs?

☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, which offices: _____

Exhibit 253.2 (p. 3)

Sample Postal Service Customer Questionnaire — Proposal for CPO (Office Suspended)

3. If you now receive carrier delivery, there will be no change to your delivery service. If you currently receive Post Office box service at the temporary CPO, services provided are the same as the suspended <name> Post Office provided, except permit mailings and postage meters will not be handled. How do you feel service at the CPO compares with the service formerly provided at the <name> Post Office?

☐ Better ☐ Just as Good ☐ No Opinion ☐ Worse

Please explain: _____

4. For which of the following do you leave your community? (Check all that apply.) Where do you go to obtain these services?

☐ Shopping _____

☐ Personal needs _____

☐ Banking _____

☐ Employment _____

☐ Social needs _____

5. Do you currently use local businesses in the community?

☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, would you continue to use them if the Post Office is discontinued?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Name: _____

(please print your name)

Address: _____

Telephone number: _____ Date: _____

Please add any additional comments on a separate piece of paper and attach it to this form.

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire.

Exhibit 253.3 (p. 1)

Sample Questionnaire Cover Letter — Rural Route/HCR Service to CBU/Roadside Box/Nonpersonnel Unit (Office Not Suspended)

<date>

Dear Postal Service Customer:

As the Postal Service manager responsible for all Post Offices in your area, I would like your opinion concerning a possible change in the way your postal service is provided. The recommended change is tentative and will not lead to a formal proposal unless we conclude that it will provide a maximum degree of regular and effective service.

The postmaster at the <name> Post Office retired on <date>. A review of the business activities of the Post Office revealed that the office workload had declined, and the office qualifies for service only four hours per day. Accordingly, the service hours were changed effective <date>, to <hours>, Monday through Saturday. Our office review revealed an average <number> daily retail window transactions. This reduced workload suggests that the maintenance of an independent office at <name of city> may not be warranted.

Briefly, we would like to provide pickup and delivery of your mail, as well as the sale of stamps and all other customary postal services, to <a cluster box unit/roadside mailbox/nonpersonnel unit>. This service would be performed by a <rural route/highway contract route carrier> and would involve closing our operation at the <name> Post Office.

We estimate that <rural route/highway contract route> carrier service would cost the Postal Service substantially less than maintaining the Post Office in your community and still provide regular and effective service. Enclosed is information about some of the services available from the carrier. Retail services are also available at the <name> Post Office, located <distance> miles away. Hours of service at this office are <hours>, Monday through Friday, and <hours> on Saturday. Post Office box service is available at this location at <the same fees you now pay/increased fees>. Post Office box access hours are <hours>.

If a change to carrier service is implemented, customers will continue to use the name <community name and ZIP Code> in their mailing address, and it will continue to be listed in Publication 65, *National Five-Digit ZIP Code and Post Office Directory*. If you would like to provide input into a decision to permanently change to (rural route/highway contract route) service, please return the enclosed questionnaire by <month/day/year>, using the pre-addressed envelope provided. Please be aware that, if we formalize a proposal, your questionnaire will become part of an official record and will be available for public viewing.

You may, of course, want to discuss this form of service with us before drawing any conclusions. A postal representative will be at <location> on <month/day/year> from <time> to <time> to answer questions and provide information about our service. You may wish to discuss and submit your questionnaire at that time or later. The enclosure entitled "United States Postal Service Summary of Post Office Change Regulations" describes what is involved in making a formal proposal if a permanent change in postal service appears warranted.

Exhibit 253.3 (p. 2)

**Sample Questionnaire Cover Letter — Rural Route/HCR Service to CBU/Roadside
Box/Nonpersonnel Unit (Office Not Suspended)**

If you have any questions, you may call <name of Postal Service representative> at <telephone number>.

Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

<name>

Manager, Post Office Operations

(Street Address)

(City, State, ZIP+4)

Enclosures: Questionnaire and return envelope
Summary of Post Office Change Regulations
Carrier delivery information
CBU information sheet (when appropriate)

Exhibit 253.3 (p. 3)

Sample Postal Service Customer Questionnaire — Rural Route/HCR Service to CBU/Roadside Box (Office Not Suspended)**Postal Service Customer Questionnaire**

1. Please check the appropriate box to indicate whether you use the <name> Post Office for each of the following:

Postal Services		Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Never
a.	Buying stamps	☐	☐	☐	☐
b.	Mailing letters	☐	☐	☐	☐
c.	Mailing parcels	☐	☐	☐	☐
d.	Picking up Post Office box mail	☐	☐	☐	☐
e.	Picking up general delivery mail	☐	☐	☐	☐
f.	Buying money orders	☐	☐	☐	☐
g.	Obtaining special services, including Certified Mail, Registered Mail, Insured Mail, Delivery Confirmation, or Signature Confirmation	☐	☐	☐	☐
h.	Sending Express Mail	☐	☐	☐	☐
i.	Buying stamp-collecting material	☐	☐	☐	☐

Other postal services:

- a. Entering permit mailings ☐ Yes ☐ No
- b. Resetting/using postage meter ☐ Yes ☐ No

Nonpostal Services

- a. Picking up government forms (such as tax forms) ☐ Yes ☐ No
- b. Using for school bus stop ☐ Yes ☐ No
- c. Assisting senior citizens, persons with disabilities, etc. ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, please explain: _____

- d. Using public bulletin board ☐ Yes ☐ No

- e. Other ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, please explain: _____

2. Do you pass another Post Office during business hours while traveling to or from work, or shopping, or for personal needs?

☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, which offices: _____

Exhibit 253.3 (p. 4)

Sample Postal Service Customer Questionnaire — Rural Route/HCR Service to CBU/Roadside Box (Office Not Suspended)

3. If you now receive carrier delivery, there will be no change to your delivery service — proceed to question 4. If you currently receive Post Office box service or general delivery service, complete this section.

- a. How do you think carrier route delivery service to cluster box units with individually locked mail compartments and parcel lockers would compare with present service?

☐ Better ☐ Just as Good ☐ No Opinion ☐ Worse

Please explain: _____

- b. How do you think carrier route delivery service to a rural mailbox near your home would compare with your present service?

☐ Better ☐ Just as Good ☐ No Opinion ☐ Worse

Please explain: _____

4. For which of the following do you leave your community? (Check all that apply.) Where do you go to obtain these services?

- ☐ Shopping _____
- ☐ Personal needs _____
- ☐ Banking _____
- ☐ Employment _____
- ☐ Social needs _____

5. Do you currently use local businesses in the community?

☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, would you continue to use them if the Post Office is discontinued?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Name: _____
(please print your name)

Address: _____

Telephone number: _____ Date: _____

Please add any additional comments on a separate piece of paper and attach it to this form.
Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire.

Exhibit 253.4 (p. 1)

Sample Questionnaire Cover Letter — Rural Route/HCR Service to CBU/Roadside Box/Nonpersonnel Unit (Office Suspended)

<date>

Dear Postal Service Customer:

As you are aware, service was suspended at the <name> Post Office on <month/day/year>, due to severe safety and health deficiencies, including exposed wiring, extensive damage from roof leaks and fire hazards. The lessor did not satisfactorily respond to our request(s) to correct these deficiencies, and no suitable alternate quarters are available in the community. Since that time, you have been provided postal service by a <rural route/highway contract route> carrier to a <cluster box unit/roadside mailbox/non-personnel unit>.

As the Postal Service manager responsible for all Post Offices in your area, I would like your opinion concerning the service you received prior to the suspension, the service you now receive, and what effect officially discontinuing the <name> Post Office may have on you and your community. The recommended change is tentative and will not lead to a formal proposal unless we conclude that it will provide a maximum degree of regular and effective service.

Briefly, we would like to continue to provide pickup and delivery of your mail, as well as the sale of stamps and all other customary postal services, to <a cluster box unit/roadside mailbox/nonpersonnel unit>. This service would continue to be provided by the <rural route/highway contract route carrier> who has provided your service since the time of suspension. Retail services are also available at the <name> Post Office, located (distance) miles away. Hours of service at this office are <hours>, Monday through Friday, and <hours> on Saturday. Post Office boxes are available at this location at <the same fees/increased fees>. Post Office box access hours are <hours>.

If a permanent change to carrier service is implemented, customers will continue to use the community name and ZIP Code in the mailing address, and it will continue to be listed in Publication 65, *National Five-Digit ZIP Code and Post Office Directory*. I invite you to think about a permanent change to <rural route/highway contract route> service. Please return the enclosed questionnaire by <month/day/year>, using the pre-addressed envelope provided. Please be aware that, if we formalize a proposal, your questionnaire will become part of an official record and will be available for public viewing.

If you would like an opportunity to discuss this form of service with us, a postal representative will be at <location> on <month/day/year> from <time> to <time> to answer questions and provide information about our service. You may want to discuss and submit your questionnaire at that time or later.

The enclosure entitled "United States Postal Service Summary of Post Office Change Regulations" describes what is involved in making a formal proposal if a permanent change in postal service appears warranted.

If you have any questions, you may call <name of postal representative> at <telephone number>.

Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

<name>
 Manager, Post Office Operations
 <Street Address>
 <City, State, ZIP+4>

Enclosures: Questionnaire and return envelope
 Carrier delivery information

Summary of Post Office Change Regulations
 CBU information sheet (when appropriate)

Exhibit 253.4 (p. 2)

Sample Postal Service Customer Questionnaire — Rural Route/HCR Service to CBU/Roadside Box (Office Suspended)**Postal Service Customer Questionnaire**

1. Please check the appropriate box to indicate whether you used the <name> Post Office for each of the following:

Postal Services	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Never
a. Buying stamps	☐	☐	☐	☐
b. Mailing letters	☐	☐	☐	☐
c. Mailing parcels	☐	☐	☐	☐
d. Picking up Post Office box mail	☐	☐	☐	☐
e. Picking up general delivery mail	☐	☐	☐	☐
f. Buying money orders	☐	☐	☐	☐
g. Obtaining special services, including Certified Mail, Registered Mail, Insured Mail, Delivery Confirmation, or Signature Confirmation	☐	☐	☐	☐
h. Sending Express Mail	☐	☐	☐	☐
i. Buying stamp-collecting material	☐	☐	☐	☐

Other postal services:

- a. Entering permit mailings ☐ Yes ☐ No
- b. Resetting/using postage meter ☐ Yes ☐ No

Nonpostal Services

- a. Picking up government forms (such as tax forms) ☐ Yes ☐ No
- b. Using for school bus stop ☐ Yes ☐ No
- c. Assisting senior citizens, persons with disabilities, etc. ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, please explain: _____

- d. Using public bulletin board ☐ Yes ☐ No
- e. Other ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, please explain: _____

2. Do you pass another Post Office during business hours while traveling to or from work, or shopping, or for personal needs?

☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, which offices: _____

Exhibit 253.4 (p. 3)

Sample Postal Service Customer Questionnaire — Rural Route/HCR Service to CBU/Roadside Box (Office Suspended)

3. If you previously received carrier delivery, there will be no change to your delivery service — proceed to question 4. If you previously received Post Office box service or general delivery service, complete this section. How do you think carrier route delivery service compares to your previous service?

☐ Better ☐ Just as Good ☐ No Opinion ☐ Worse

Please explain: _____

4. For which of the following do you leave your community? (Check all that apply.) Where do you go to obtain these services?

☐ Shopping _____

☐ Personal needs _____

☐ Banking _____

☐ Employment _____

☐ Social needs _____

5. Do you currently use local businesses in the community?

☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, would you continue to use them if the Post Office is discontinued?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Name: _____
(please print your name)

Address: _____

Telephone number: _____ Date: _____

Please add any additional comments on a separate piece of paper and attach it to this form.

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire.

Exhibit 254

Sample Postal Service Customer Questionnaire Analysis**Postal Service Customer Questionnaire Analysis**

Questionnaires were distributed to all delivery customers of the <name> Post Office on <date>. Additionally, during the survey period, questionnaires were available at the <name> Post Office to walk-in retail customers.

1. Number of Questionnaires

Total questionnaires distributed	_____
Favorable to proposal	_____
Unfavorable to proposal	_____
Expressing no opinion	_____
Total questionnaires received	_____

2. Postal Concerns

The following postal concerns were expressed:

- a. **Concern:**
Response:
- b. **Concern:**
Response:

3. Nonpostal Concerns

The following nonpostal concerns were expressed:

- a. **Concern:**
Response:
- b. **Concern:**
Response:

Exhibit 255

Sample Response to Postal Service Customer Questionnaire

<date>

<name of customer>

<street address>

<city>, <state> <ZIP+4>

Dear Postal Service Customer:

Thank you for returning your questionnaire concerning the proposed discontinuance of the <name> Post Office. Your comments, along with others received, will be included in the official record and considered carefully before further action is taken.

(This section is for response to specific customer questions or concerns)

If it is determined that a discontinuance of the <name> Post Office should be pursued, a formal proposal will be posted in the <name> Post Office(s) at a later date. If you have additional questions or comments, please feel free to contact <name and title> at <telephone number>.

Sincerely,

<name>

Manager, Post Office Operations

<Street Address>

<City, State, ZIP+4>

Exhibit 263

Sample Community Meeting Notification Letter

<date>

Dear Postal Service Customer:

As the Postal Service manager responsible for all Post Offices in your area, I would like your opinion concerning a possible change in the way postal services are provided. Our tentative plans will only lead to a formal proposal if we are satisfied that a maximum degree of regular and effective service can be provided.

<enter a brief paragraph on why Post Office is being reviewed for change>

If you would like an opportunity to discuss alternatives with us, a postal representative will be at <location> on <date> from <time> to <time> to answer questions and provide information about our service.

If you have any questions, you may contact <review coordinator name> at <telephone number>.

Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

<name>

Manager, Post Office Operations

Exhibit 264a (p. 1)

Public Affairs and Communication Address List

Area Public Affairs and Communications

MANAGER PUBLIC AFFAIRS AND COMMUNICATIONS
CAPITOL METRO US POSTAL SERVICE
16501 SHADY GROVE
GAITHERSBURG MD 20898-9998
OFFICE PHONE: 301-548-1465

MANAGER PUBLIC AFFAIRS AND COMMUNICATIONS
EASTERN AREA US POSTAL SERVICE
PO BOX 40593
PHILADELPHIA PA 19197-0593
OFFICE PHONE: 215-931-5054

MANAGER PUBLIC AFFAIRS AND COMMUNICATIONS
GREAT LAKES AREA US POSTAL SERVICE
244 KNOLLWOOD DR 4TH FL
BLOOMINGDALE IL 60117-2208
OFFICE PHONE: 630-539-6565

MANAGER PUBLIC AFFAIRS AND COMMUNICATIONS
NY METRO AREA US POSTAL SERVICE
421 EIGHTH AVE RM 5114
NEW YORK NY 10199-9681
OFFICE PHONE: 212-330-3167

MANAGER PUBLIC AFFAIRS AND COMMUNICATIONS
NORTHEAST AREA US POSTAL SERVICE
6 GRIFFIN RD N
WINDSOR CT 06006-9876
OFFICE PHONE: 860-285-7265

MANAGER PUBLIC AFFAIRS AND COMMUNICATIONS
PACIFIC AREA US POSTAL SERVICE
7001 S CENTRAL AVE RM 364A
LOS ANGELES CA 90052-9641
OFFICE PHONE: 323-586-1210

MANAGER PUBLIC AFFAIRS AND COMMUNICATIONS
SOUTHEAST AREA US POSTAL SERVICE
225 NORTH HUMPHREY BLVD
MEMPHIS TN 38166-0832
OFFICE PHONE: 404-915-5877

MANAGER PUBLIC AFFAIRS AND COMMUNICATIONS
SOUTHWEST AREA US POSTAL SERVICE
7800 N STEMMONS FREEWAY STE 450
DALLAS TX 75247-4220
OFFICE PHONE: 214-819-8717

Exhibit 264a (p. 2)

Public Affairs and Communication Address List

MANAGER PUBLIC AFFAIRS AND COMMUNICATIONS
WESTERN AREA US POSTAL SERVICE
1745 STOUT ST STE 1075
DENVER CO 80299-7500
OFFICE PHONE: 303-313-5125

Headquarters Public Affairs and Communications

MANAGER FIELD COMMUNICATIONS
PUBLIC AFFAIRS AND COMMUNICATIONS
475 L'ENFANT PLAZA SW RM 10343
WASHINGTON DC 20260-3100
OFFICE PHONE: 202-268-7650

Exhibit 264b
Community Meeting Roster

Community Meeting Roster

Postal Service Representatives (Names and Titles):

Date: _____

Time: _____

Total Number of Customers Present: _____ Place: _____

This document may become a part of the official record that will be available for public viewing.

Names of Customers Present:

Name	Mailing Address (optional)	ZIP Code	Phone Number

Exhibit 265

Sample Community Meeting Analysis**Community Meeting Analysis**

(Categorize customer concerns as postal or nonpostal and provide the Postal Service response for each.)

Postal Concerns

1. Concern:
Response:
2. Concern:
Response:
3. Concern:
Response:

Nonpostal Concerns

1. Concern:
Response:
2. Concern:
Response:
3. Concern:
Response:

Exhibit 335 (p. 1)

Sample Proposal Cover Sheet and Paragraphs

DATE OF POSTING: _____

DATE OF REMOVAL: _____

PROPOSAL TO CONSOLIDATE
THE <>, <> POST OFFICE
AND ESTABLISH
A <COMMUNITY POST OFFICE/CLASSIFIED BRANCH/CLASSIFIED STATION>

PROPOSAL TO CLOSE
THE <>, <> POST OFFICE
AND <ESTABLISH/EXTEND/CONTINUE TO PROVIDE>
<HIGHWAY CONTRACT ROUTE SERVICE/RURAL ROUTE SERVICE/NONPERSONNEL UNIT>

PROPOSAL TO CLOSE
THE <>, <> POST OFFICE
AND <ESTABLISH/EXTEND/CONTINUE TO PROVIDE>
CITY DELIVERY SERVICE

PROPOSAL TO CONSOLIDATE
THE SUSPENDED
<>, <> POST OFFICE
AND CONTINUE TO PROVIDE SERVICE THROUGH
A <COMMUNITY POST OFFICE/CLASSIFIED BRANCH/CLASSIFIED STATION>

PROPOSAL TO CLOSE
THE SUSPENDED
<>, <> POST OFFICE
AND CONTINUE TO PROVIDE
<HIGHWAY CONTRACT ROUTE SERVICE/RURAL ROUTE SERVICE/NONPERSONNEL UNIT/CITY DELIVERY
SERVICE>

DOCKET NUMBER <>

Exhibit 335 (p. 2)

Sample Proposal Cover Sheet and Paragraphs

I. RESPONSIVENESS TO COMMUNITY POSTAL NEEDS

Paragraph A

The Postal Service is proposing to consolidate the <>, <> Post Office and provide delivery and retail services by establishing a community Post Office (CPO) under the administrative responsibility of the <>, <> Post Office, located <> miles away.

The Postal Service is proposing to consolidate the <>, <> Post Office and provide delivery and retail services by establishing a classified station under the administrative responsibility of the <> Post Office, located <> miles away.

The Postal Service is proposing to consolidate the <>, <> Post Office and provide delivery and retail services by establishing a classified branch under the administrative responsibility of the <> Post Office, located <> miles away.

The Postal Service is proposing to close the <>, <> Post Office and provide delivery and retail services by a highway contract route (HCR) administered by the <> Post Office, located <> miles away. Customers will have the option of service to cluster box units (CBUs) or roadside mailboxes installed by customers on the carrier's line-of-travel.

The Postal Service is proposing to close the <>, <> Post Office and provide delivery and retail services by a rural route administered by the <> Post Office, located <> miles away. Service will be provided to roadside mailboxes installed by customers on the carrier's line-of-travel.

The Postal Service is proposing to close the <>, <> Post Office and provide city delivery service administered by the <> Post Office, located <> miles away. Service will be provided to cluster box units (CBUs) installed on the carrier's line-of-travel.

The Postal Service is proposing to close the <>, <> Post Office and provide delivery and retail services by establishing a nonpersonnel unit (NPU) under the administrative responsibility of the <> Post Office, located <> miles away.

Paragraph B

A CPO is established on a contractual basis. The Postal Service solicits bids from the public for the operation of a Postal Service facility. Award of the contract is based on evaluation of criteria including annual monetary amount, contractor ability and background, and the quality and location of the facility. The successful bidder must be bonded and will be trained, administered, and supervised by the Postal Service. A CPO provides the same services as an independent Post Office except permit mail acceptance and postage meter setting.

A classified station is operated by career Postal Service employees and provides the same services as an independent Post Office, including postage meter setting and acceptance of permit mail.

A classified branch is operated by career Postal Service employees and provides the same retail services as an independent Post Office, including postage meter setting and acceptance of permit mail.

A contract station is established on a contractual basis. The Postal Service solicits bids from the public for the operation of a Postal Service facility. Award of the contract is based on evaluation of criteria including annual monetary amount, contractor ability and background, and the quality and location of the facility. The successful bidder must be bonded and will be trained, administered, and supervised by the Postal Service. A contract station provides the same retail services as an independent Post Office except permit mail acceptance and postage meter setting.

A contract branch is established on a contractual basis. The Postal Service solicits bids from the public for the operation of a Postal Service facility. Award of the contract is based on evaluation of criteria including annual monetary amount, contractor ability and background, and the quality and location of the facility. The successful bidder must be bonded and will be trained, administered, and supervised by the Postal Service. A contract branch provides the same retail services as an independent Post Office except permit mail acceptance and postage meter setting.

Exhibit 335 (p. 3)

Sample Proposal Cover Sheet and Paragraphs

CBUs are secure free-standing units of individually locked mail compartments installed and maintained by the Postal Service at no cost to the customer. These units will be placed in the public right-of-way on the carrier's line-of-travel (LOT). Parcel lockers will also be installed for customer convenience.

CBUs are secure free-standing units of individually locked mail compartments installed and maintained by the Postal Service at no cost to the customer. These units have been placed in the public right-of-way on the carrier's line-of-travel (LOT). Parcel lockers were also installed for customer convenience.

A nonpersonnel unit (NPU) is a self-service unit which furnishes essential mail services, such as the collection and delivery of ordinary mail. Services such as the sale of stamps and money orders and the acceptance and delivery of Certified Mail, Insured Mail, Registered Mail, Delivery Confirmation, Signature Confirmation, collect on delivery, and Express Mail services are provided to the customers of NPUs by rural carriers at the time they service their units. Carriers are required to remain at the unit a minimum of 15 minutes each service day to provide these services.

Paragraph C

The postmaster <retired/was reassigned/was promoted/resigned> on <effective date>. (Give justification for closing/consolidating the office.)

A <career/noncareer> employee from a <local/neighboring> office was installed as the temporary officer-in-charge (OIC). (Give justification for closing/consolidating the office.)

Sample Justifications

The Postal Office facility was owned by the postmaster. The Postal Service was asked to vacate the facility. No suitable alternate quarters were available; therefore, service was suspended concurrent with the postmaster vacancy.

The Post Office facility had severe building deficiencies that included: <>. No suitable alternate quarters were available; therefore, service was suspended on <>.

Workload at the <> Post Office has remained constant, however, the small number of customers served and minimal number of daily transactions conducted indicate that rural route delivery will continue to provide a maximum degree of effective and regular service to the <> community.

Postmaster level and office service hours are determined by a workload analysis which includes the number of deliveries and revenue. A workload analysis conducted in <month> <year> indicated the office had declined from an EAS-<> to an EAS-<>, and hours were reduced to <> hours a week.

Postmaster level and office service hours are determined by a workload analysis which includes the number of deliveries and revenue. Although revenue at the <> Post Office has increased, a reduction in deliveries from <number> in <year> to <number> in <year> has caused the office level to decline from an EAS-<> to an EAS-<> level office.

Postmaster level and office service hours are determined by a workload analysis which includes the number of deliveries and revenue. A workload analysis conducted in <month> <year> indicated the office had declined from an EAS-<> to an EAS-<> level office. If the postmaster position were filled, it would be at the EAS-<> level, and the window service hours would be reduced from <> hours per week to <> hours per week.

The Postal Service was asked by the lessor to vacate the facility. No suitable alternate quarters were available; therefore, service was suspended on <>.

The Postal Service facility is in substandard condition. Building deficiencies include: <>. No suitable alternate quarters are available.

The Postal Service was unable to negotiate an acceptable lease with the lessor. No suitable alternate quarters were available; therefore, service was suspended on <>.

Exhibit 335 (p. 4)

Sample Proposal Cover Sheet and Paragraphs**Paragraph D**

The <> Post Office, an EAS-<> level office, provides service <> hours a week from <> to <>, Monday through Friday, and <> to <> on Saturday to <> Post Office box, <> general delivery, and <> intermediate <rural/HCR> customers. Retail services include the sale of stamps, stamped paper, and money orders; special services such as Registered Mail, Certified Mail, Insured Mail, Delivery Confirmation, Signature Confirmation, COD, and Express Mail services; and the acceptance and dispatch of all classes of mail. Daily retail window transactions average <>. Office receipts for the last 3 years were: <> (<> revenue units) in FY<year>; <> (<> revenue units) in FY <year>; and <> (<> revenue units) in FY <year>. There are <> permit mailers and <> postage meter customers. Administrative responsibility for the <permit/meter> customers <can/will be> transferred to the <name> Post Office, located <> miles away. <Note: If special arrangements have been made to accommodate meter or permit customers, please indicate in this section.>

The <>, <> Post Office, an EAS-<> level office, provided service <> hours a week from <> to <>, Monday through Friday, and <> to <> on Saturday to <> Post Office box, <> general delivery, and <> intermediate <rural/HCR> customers. Retail services included the sale of stamps, stamped paper, and money orders; special services such as Registered Mail, Certified Mail, Insured Mail, Delivery Confirmation, Signature Confirmation, COD, and Express Mail services; and the acceptance and dispatch of all classes of mail. Daily retail window transactions averaged <>. Office receipts for the last three years were: <> (<> revenue units) in FY <year>; <> (<> revenue units) in FY <year>; and <> (<> revenue units) in FY <year>. There were <> permit mailers and <> postage meter customers. Administrative responsibility for the <permit/meter> customers was transferred to the <name> Post Office, located <> miles away. <Note: If special arrangements have been made to accommodate meter or permit customers, please indicate in this section.>

The <> Post Office, an EAS-<> level, provides service <> hours a week from <> to <>, Monday through Saturday to <> Post Office box, <> general delivery, and <> intermediate <rural/HCR> customers. Retail services include the sale of stamps, stamped paper, and money orders; special services such as Registered Mail, Certified Mail, Insured Mail, Delivery Confirmation, Signature Confirmation, COD, and Express Mail services; and the acceptance and dispatch of all classes of mail. Daily retail window transactions average <>. Office receipts for the last three years were: <> (<> revenue units) in FY <year>; <> (<> revenue units) in FY <year>; and <> (<> revenue units) in FY <year>. There are <> permit mailers and <> postage meter customers. Administrative responsibility of the <permit/meter> customers <can/will be> transferred to the <name> Post Office, located <> miles away. <Note: If special arrangements have been made to accommodate meter or permit customers, please indicate in this section.>

The <>, <> Post Office, an EAS-<> level, provided service <> hours a week from <> to <>, Monday through Saturday to <> Post Office box, <> general delivery, and <> intermediate <rural/HCR> customers. Retail services included the sale of stamps, stamped paper, and money orders; special services such as Registered Mail, Certified Mail, Insured Mail, Delivery Confirmation, Signature Confirmation, COD, and Express Mail services; and the acceptance and dispatch of all classes of mail. Daily retail window transactions averaged <>. Office receipts for the last three years were: <> (<> revenue units) in FY <year>; <> (<> revenue units) in FY <year>; and <> (<> revenue units) in FY <year>. There were <> permit mailers and <> postage meter customers. Administrative responsibility of the <permit/meter> customers was transferred to the <name> Post Office, located <> miles away. <Note: If special arrangements have been made to accommodate meter or permit customers, please indicate in this section.>

Paragraph E

Since the suspension of service, customers have received service from a temporary CPO. The CPO provides at least the same number of window service hours and services as were provided by the Post Office except for permit mail acceptance and postage meter settings. Retail service is also available at the <> Post Office, an EAS-<> level office located <> miles away. Window service hours at <> are from <> to <>, Monday through Friday, and <> to <> on Saturday. There are <> Post Office boxes available. (If there are inadequate Post Office boxes available, please indicate in this section whether there is room for expansion.)

Exhibit 335 (p. 5)

Sample Proposal Cover Sheet and Paragraphs

The CPO will provide at least the same number of window service hours and services as the Post Office except for permit mail acceptance and postage meter settings. Retail service is also available at the <> Post Office, an EAS-<> level office located <> miles away. Window service hours at <> are from <> to <>, Monday through Friday, and <> to <> on Saturday. There are <> Post Office boxes available. (If there are inadequate Post Office boxes available, please indicate in this section whether there is room for expansion.)

Since the suspension of service, customers have received delivery and retail services from <type of delivery> delivery emanating from the <> Post Office, an EAS-<> level office located <> miles away. Window service hours are from <> to <>, Monday through Friday, and <> to <> on Saturday. There are <> Post Office boxes available. (If there are inadequate Post Office boxes available, please indicate in this section whether there is room for expansion.)

When this proposal is implemented, delivery and retail services will be provided by <type of delivery> delivery emanating from the <> Post Office, an EAS-<> level office. Window service hours at <> are from <> to <>, Monday through Friday, and <> to <> on Saturday. There are <> Post Office boxes available. (If there are inadequate Post Office boxes available, please indicate in this section whether there is room for expansion.)

Paragraph F

On <date>, representatives from the Postal Service were available at <> to answer questions and provide information to customers. <> customers attended the meeting.

Paragraph G

On <date>, <total number distributed> questionnaires were distributed to delivery customers of the <name> Post Office. Questionnaires were also available over the counter for retail customers at <name>. <total> questionnaires were returned. <> responses were favorable, <> unfavorable, and <> expressed no opinion regarding the proposed alternate service.

Paragraph H (If applicable)

Congressional inquiries were received on <>.

Paragraph I (If applicable)

A petition supporting the retention of the <> Post Office was received on <date> with <> signatures.

Paragraph J

There were no Postal Service concerns expressed on the returned questionnaires or at the community meeting.

The following postal concerns were expressed on the returned questionnaires, at the community meeting, from customer letters, on the <> petition, and from the <> congressional inquiries, <> inquiry:

Concern: Customers were concerned about obtaining services from the carrier.

Response: Retail services provided at the Post Office are available from the carrier. Most transactions do not require meeting the carrier at the mailbox. *Stamps by Mail* and *Money Order Application* forms are available for customer convenience. Listed below are some services available from the carrier and how to obtain them.

MAILING PACKAGES

Carriers will accept packages at the mailbox without a customer being present, provided the postage is fully prepaid, and the customer is known to reside or conduct business at that collection point. The package **MUST** have a matching return address that is the same as the collection point. If postage has not been applied, estimate the amount of postage needed and leave the money in the mailbox. If insurance is desired, the value of the contents must be specified. The carrier will take the package to the Post Office, and it will be weighed to determine the appropriate rate. The package will be mailed that same day. The carrier will leave the customer's change and insurance receipt, if appropriate, in the mailbox on the next delivery day.

Exhibit 335 (p. 6)

Sample Proposal Cover Sheet and Paragraphs

PURCHASING STAMPS BY MAIL

The Stamps by Mail program provides customers the opportunity to purchase stamps, envelopes, and postal cards by using PS Form 3227-R, *Stamp Purchase Order (Rural)*, available from the Post Office or the carrier. Commemorative stamps and stamp collecting products are also available. The customer addresses the postage paid order form envelope, encloses payment by personal check or postal money order made payable to the United States Postal Service, and mails the form (postage-free) or leaves it in the mailbox for the carrier to pick up. Most orders are processed overnight, and some immediately.

PURCHASING POSTAL MONEY ORDERS

Customers may purchase money orders by meeting the carrier at the mailbox, completing an application, and paying the carrier (in cash) the price of the money order, plus the fee. The carrier gives the customer a receipt for the application. The money order is completed when the carrier returns to the Post Office, and a money order receipt is left in the customer's mailbox on the next delivery day. Most customers provide the carrier with a stamped, self-addressed envelope in which the completed money order is mailed to its destination. If customers prefer, the completed money orders will be returned for verification on the next delivery day.

SPECIAL SERVICES

Special services such as Certified Mail, Registered Mail, Express Mail services, Delivery Confirmation, Signature Confirmation, and COD may be obtained from the carrier by leaving a note in the mailbox, along with the appropriate payment. The carrier will provide the services that day and leave a customer receipt in the mailbox on the next delivery day.

HOLDING MAIL

Customers who will be away for an extended time (e.g., on vacation) may request that their mail be held at the Post Office during their absence. Upon return the customer asks the Post Office to resume delivery.

Concern: Customers were concerned about mail security.

Response: Verification with the Postal Inspection Service revealed <no/very few> recent reports of mail theft or vandalism in the area. Customers may place a lock on their mailboxes. The mailbox must have a slot large enough to accommodate the customer's normal daily mail volume. The Postal Service does not open mailboxes which are locked and does not accept keys for this purpose.

Response: Verification with local law enforcement officials reveals <no/very few> recent reports of mail theft or vandalism in the area. Customers may place a lock on their mailboxes. The mailbox must have a slot large enough to accommodate the customer's normal daily mail volume. The Postal Service does not open mailboxes which are locked and does not accept keys for this purpose.

Response: Verification with the Postal Inspection Service and local law enforcement officials revealed <no/very few> recent reports of mail theft or vandalism in the area. Customers may place a lock on their mailboxes. The mailbox must have a slot large enough to accommodate the customer's normal daily mail volume. The Postal Service does not open mailboxes which are locked and does not accept keys for this purpose.

Response: The CPO will have Post Office box service and will continue to provide the security and sanctity of mail offered by an independent Post Office.

Response: CBUs provide the security of individually locked mail compartments. There have been <no/very few> recent reports of mail theft or vandalism in the area.

Concern: Customers were concerned about a change of address.

Response: There will be no change in customer addresses.

Exhibit 335 (p. 7)

Sample Proposal Cover Sheet and Paragraphs

Response: Customers will be assigned a carrier route address. The new address will continue to use the community name and ZIP Code. Mail will be forwarded in accordance with Postal Service regulations, and change-of-address forms are available from the Postal Service to assist customers in notifying correspondents of the change.

Response: Some customers will experience an address change. Mail will be forwarded in accordance with Postal Service regulations, and change-of-address forms are available from the Postal Service to assist customers in notifying correspondents of the change. An example of the change is shown below:

Present Address:	Proposed Address:
JOHN DOE	JOHN DOE
PO BOX I	100 MAIN ST
<>, <> <>	<>, <> <>

Concern: Customers expressed concern about misdelivered mail.

Response: The concern about misdelivery has been brought to the attention of the administrative postmaster. The Postal Service regrets any inconvenience that customers have experienced because of misdelivery. We consider misdelivered mail a very serious problem and appreciate when customers report this to us since it provides an opportunity to take corrective action.

Concern: Customers were concerned about the limited hours of operation at the Post Office.

Response: Postmaster level and office service hours are determined by a workload analysis which includes the number of deliveries and revenue. A workload analysis conducted in <month> <year> indicated the office had declined from an EAS-<> to an EAS-<> level office, qualifying for <> hours of service per week. Carrier service will provide 24-hour access to the mail.

Response: Postmaster level and office service hours are determined by a workload analysis which includes the number of deliveries and revenue. A workload analysis conducted in <month> <year> indicated the office had declined from an EAS-<> to and EAS-<> level office, qualifying for <> hours of service per week. The CPO will expand window service hours to <> per week.

Response: Postmaster level and office service hours are determined by a workload analysis which includes the number of deliveries and revenue. A workload analysis conducted in <month> <year> indicated the office had declined from an EAS-<> to an EAS-<> level office, qualifying for <> hours of service per week. The CPO will provide at least the same number of window service hours as the Post Office.

Concern: Customers were concerned about senior citizens.

Response: Carrier service is beneficial to many senior citizens and those who face special challenges because the carrier can provide delivery and retail services to <roadside mailboxes or CBUs>. Customers do not have to make a special trip to the Post Office for service. Special provisions are made for hardship cases or special customer needs. To request an exception for hardship delivery, customers may contact the <> postmaster for more information.

Response: The CPO will continue to provide the same services as an independent Post Office, except for permit mail acceptance and postage meter setting. The CPO operator will provide special assistance to senior citizens and those who face special challenges.

Concern: Customers Inquired about mailbox installation and maintenance.

Response: Customers are responsible for mailbox installation and maintenance. Mailboxes must be placed so that they may be safely and conveniently served by the carrier and must be located on the right-hand side of the road in the direction of the carrier's travel. Mailbox supports should conform to state laws and highway regulations. The Postal Service recommends that customers contact the administrative postmaster or carrier for advice on placement of mailboxes and mailbox height and supports.

Exhibit 335 (p. 8)

Sample Proposal Cover Sheet and Paragraphs

Response: Cluster box units are purchased, installed, and maintained by the Postal Service at no expense to customers.

Concern: Customers stated that the locks freeze on the CBUs when it snows.

Response: Locks can freeze during extreme cold weather conditions, but CBU maintenance can alleviate this problem. Customers are encouraged to contact the administrative postmaster if they are experiencing a problem with their locks.

Concern: Customers felt the cost of postage was increasing while service was decreasing.

Response: The Postal Reorganization Act requires the Postal Service to operate on a breakeven basis. Most revenue is generated by the sale of postage, so when operational costs cannot be met, the Postal Service requests a rate increase. One advantage of this proposal is a savings for the Postal Service, which contributes in the long run to stable postage rates and savings to customers.

Concern: Customers felt inclement weather and poor road conditions might impede delivery.

Response: Both inclement weather and heavy mail volume can cause deviations from the normal delivery schedule. However, the carrier is required to provide a vehicle of adequate size, equipped with necessary equipment (chains or snow tires, warning lights or signs, etc.) to serve the route safely, efficiently, and in accordance with federal, state, and local motor vehicle laws and regulations.

Concern: Customers were concerned about the mailboxes being damaged by snowplows.

Response: Customers may contact the <> postmaster to determine the proper mailbox location and installation method that would help alleviate this concern. Placing the mailbox on a long, swinging, horizontal pipe is one method often used to avoid damage by snowplows.

Concern: Customers questioned the economic savings of the proposed discontinuance. Concern was also expressed that too much money was spent in the larger cities.

Response: Carrier service can be and, in this case, is more cost-effective than maintaining a Postal Service facility and a postmaster position. The Postal Service estimates an annual savings of approximately <>. Additional funds are necessary in larger cities because of a greater workload. Larger cities often realize greater revenue which can offset their greater expenses.

Concern: Customers were concerned about a change of ZIP Code.

Response: The proposed change of the ZIP Code is necessary for <list reasons>.

Concern: Customers felt the route should emanate from <> because that office is closer.

Response: The delivery route has been carefully reviewed to ensure that the most cost-efficient service is provided. Although <> is closer for some customers, <> is closer for others.

Concern: Customers expressed a desire to rename the <> Post Office to <>.

Response: Administrative action will be taken to change the name of the <> Post Office to <> when the <> Post Office is officially discontinued.

Concern: A customer expressed a desire to relocate the <> Post Office to his home/restaurant.

Response: Existing Postal Service facilities in the vicinity of the suspended office will provide regular and effective service to the <> customers.

Concern: Customers felt the workload decline at <> was encouraged by the <> postmaster and rural carrier.

Exhibit 335 (p. 9)

Sample Proposal Cover Sheet and Paragraphs

Response: The <> rural route has served the <> community for many years, and customers have long had the option of applying for delivery service. Workload at the <> Post Office has <declined/remained constant>, resulting in a reduction in window service hours to <> hours a week. Some customers within the community have felt that rural delivery would be beneficial and have exercised the option to obtain delivery and retail services from the carrier. The postmaster and carrier are concerned about the regular and effective postal services to customers, whether by rural delivery or otherwise.

Concern: Customers stated problems occur when using the <> ZIP Code with the <> community name. Many companies are changing the community name, resulting in their loss of identity.

Response: This situation has occurred because no official ZIP Code change is made until an office is officially discontinued. This problem should be eliminated when alternate service is implemented. If the <> Post Office is closed, customers may continue to use the <> name in their mailing address. However, Publication 65, *National Five-Digit ZIP Code and Post Office Directory*, will be updated to change the ZIP Code to <>.

Concern: Customers inquired about building a new facility or a mobile unit.

Response: New construction or the placement of a mobile unit or trailer is not feasible when regular and effective service can be provided by more cost-effective alternatives, such as rural delivery.

Concern: Customers who had received door delivery at a former residence asked why this service was not available to <> customers.

Response: The growth of suburban areas and the shift of population from one geographic area to another have created new challenges for the Postal Service. To meet these challenges, delivery regulations were changed in 1978 to eliminate door delivery as an option for new residential areas. Current delivery options are roadside or centralized delivery provided by motorized carrier.

Concern: Customers wanted the Post Office to stay the same. Customers said the CPO would be a disservice to the community.

Response: The CPO will be contracted to provide at least the same hours as the present Post Office. Depending on the location, the CPO may provide extended lobby hours. A CPO provides the same services as the <> Post Office, except for permit mail acceptance and postage meter settings.

Concern: Customers expressed concern regarding the conclusion in the window transaction survey that the retail workload required only <> <minutes/hours> per day.

Response: The window transaction survey only accounts for retail window transactions and does not include mail distribution and administrative duties. These additional duties are counted as part of a postmaster's workload, but not as window transactions.

Concern: Customers expressed concern over the apparent lack of interest by the Postal Service for the needs of the community.

Concern: Customers expressed concern over a Postal Service representative not being customer oriented.

Response: The Postal Service is very interested in the service needs of the community and customer feedback is crucial to improving service. Concerns raised by the community will be investigated by the Postal Service and appropriate actions will be taken. The CPO will provide effective and regular service while avoiding detrimental impact upon the community. The CPO will offer the same service as a Post Office, except for permit mail acceptance and postage meter setting.

Response: The Postal Service is a customer-oriented organization that works hard to get its customers and employees to share that orientation. We appreciate hearing from customers on how successful those efforts have been. In this case, the concerns and opinions of the <name> customers are very important in determining the best alternate form of effective and regular service to offer the community.

Concern: Customers wanted to know why the customer lines were so long at the <> Post Office.

Exhibit 335 (p. 10)

Sample Proposal Cover Sheet and Paragraphs

Response: The <> Post Office serves a much larger community and has a heavier retail window workload. This concern has been brought to the attention of the <> postmaster so <he/she> can monitor window operations and ensure that customers do not have an unreasonable wait to obtain services. The carrier can provide retail services, alleviating the need for customers to go to the Post Office for service.

Concern: Customers were concerned about having to make an address change on their bank checks and stationery.

Response: Customers will be assigned a carrier route address. The new address will continue to use the community name and ZIP Code. Mail will be forwarded in accordance with Postal Service regulations, and change-of-address forms are available from the Postal Service to assist customers in notifying correspondents of the change. Customers may deplete their current supply of checks and stationery and make the address corrections when ordering new supplies.

Concern: Customers wanted a Post Office established.

Response: A Post Office is not warranted in this particular instance because effective and regular service can be provided by established forms of service, such as <rural/HCR/CPO> delivery. The <> workload and mail volume do not warrant a Post Office and ZIP Code at the present time. Growth and workload will be monitored to determine the future service needs of the area and changes will be made based on those needs.

Concern: Customers stated the <> Post Office had been closed without going through the formal discontinuance procedure.

Response: Operation of the <> Post Office was suspended because of an emergency but it has not been officially discontinued. An emergency suspension is a temporary change, not a permanent closing of the <> Post Office. A community meeting was held on <>, and questionnaires were sent to the <> community on <>. The proposal to <close/consolidate> the <> Post Office was posted for the 60-day mandatory posting period from <> to <>. Regulations require the posting of a final determination to <close/consolidate> a Post Office, which informs customers how to appeal that determination to the Postal Rate Commission.

Concern: Customers stated a month's notice of the impending suspension was not provided and that questionnaires should have been sent earlier.

Concern: Customers stated that there was not enough notice given for the community meeting.

Response: Loss of the facility together with the lack of any suitable alternative quarters triggered an emergency suspension of operations in the <> Post Office. A suspension is a temporary situation, and the <> Post Office has not been officially closed. The questionnaire assists the Postal Service in evaluating the Postal Service needs and concerns of the community. Once the questionnaires are returned and evaluated, the Postal Service can formally propose a permanent alternate form of service suited to the needs of the community. Any customer who has comments or concerns to express is urged to convey them to <> in writing.

Concern: Customers complained they had to wait for their mail at the CPO because the contractor had too many other things to do.

Response: The contract requires that during the window service hours of the CPO, service must be provided without delay. Any problems with CPO service should be reported to the <> postmaster.

Concern: Customers questioned why the <name> facility was inadequate for a Post Office but would be adequate for a CPO.

Response: Standards for contract offices are less restrictive than for Postal owned or newly leased facilities. The facility condition is but one of several factors considered in evaluating competing bids. New leases require running water and restroom facilities as well as handicap accessibility that conforms with federal guidelines.

Concern: Customers objected to the <> Post Office serving as the administrative office.

Exhibit 335 (p. 11)

Sample Proposal Cover Sheet and Paragraphs

Response: The identity of the administrative office has virtually no impact upon customers. The administering postmaster oversees the Postal Service operations performed by the CPO contractor to ensure that rules and regulations are followed.

Concern: Customers complained about the driveway and parking lot of the <> Post Office.

Response: The driveway and parking lot conditions at the <> Post Office were brought to the attention of Administrative Services at the <> District. <enter comments appropriate to the situation>

Concern: Customers expressed concern that monthly checks were delivered too late in the afternoon to deposit or cash at the bank.

Response: The Postal Service understands the desire to have the mail delivered early in the day. However, it is not possible to serve all our customers in the morning hours. Your location on a carrier's line-of-travel (LOT) determines the time of day you will receive your mail. Customers have the option of obtaining a Post Office box at the <> Post Office located <> miles away, if an earlier delivery time is required.

Response: The top priority of the Postal Service is to provide effective and regular mail service in the most efficient manner possible because all of our costs are reflected in the postage rates and fees customers must pay. Delivery costs are one of our biggest expenses, so you can be assured that careful attention is given to the structure of each route.

A customer's location on a carrier's line-of-travel determines the time of day mail is delivered. This, of course, precludes providing early delivery of mail to every customer because, no matter how we structure a route, somebody must be last. We do, however, carefully consider the volume of mail for each route so that we can deliver the greatest amount of mail at the earliest possible hour. To minimize vehicle and fuel expenses we must also pay special attention to energy conservation measures. When the price of gasoline goes up one cent per gallon, our total gasoline costs rise by more than \$1 million. Therefore, when structuring a route, we must balance our goal to deliver as much mail as possible as early as possible with the need to minimize the travel distance a route must cover.

We do regret the inconvenience to customers who would like, but cannot receive, early mail delivery. For those customers, we offer alternative delivery services, such as Post Office box service or window caller service, that provide access to their mail earlier and throughout the day.

Concern: A customer expressed concern that vacation or hold mail was not held at the Post Office for the period of time requested, but was delivered to the mailbox.

Response: The administrative postmaster was notified of the hold mail concern. The Postal Service apologizes for any inconvenience this may have caused customers. The administrative postmaster has taken action to assure that the carrier will verify the dates on hold notices and resume delivery as requested by the customer. We appreciate when customers report problems because this gives us an opportunity to improve our service.

Concern: Customers expressed concern over the dependability of rural route service.

Response: Rural letter carriers perform a vital function in the United States Postal Service serving thousands of families and businesses in rural and suburban areas while traveling millions of miles daily. Rural letter carriers are highly respected by the American public. This respect has been earned by many years of dedication to the Postal Service and to Postal Service customers. During national and local emergencies, including prolonged periods of extreme weather conditions, rural carriers have demonstrated great responsibility in providing mail service to Postal Service customers. Rural carriers are required to serve the route expeditiously and arrive at boxes at about the same time each day.

Concern: Customers expressed concern for those customers with disabilities who are not able to go to <> Post Office to pick up their mail.

Exhibit 335 (p. 12)

Sample Proposal Cover Sheet and Paragraphs

Response: Customers are not required to travel to another Post Office to receive mail or obtain retail services. These services will be provided by the carrier to a roadside mailbox located close to customers' residences. In hardship cases, delivery can be made to the home of a customer. Changes in the type of delivery are considered where service by existing methods would impose an extreme physical hardship for an individual customer. Any request for a change in delivery method must be submitted in writing to the <> postmaster.

Concern: Customers expressed concern regarding the availability of philatelic products and special issue stamps.

Response: The Postal Service offers customers a wide variety of philatelic and retail products as well as special issue stamps. If the local Post Office does not provide an adequate supply to meet the needs of customers, the Postal Service encourages them to contact their local postmaster. Additionally, customers may order philatelic products and stamps with a credit card through the Internet by visiting www.usps.com or by telephone by calling 1-800-STAMP24. Catalogs are also available by calling 1-800-STAMP24.

Concern: Customers expressed concern that Postal Service employees at the <> Post Office are rude.

Response: Employee courtesy is always a concern of Postal Service managers. Postal Service employees receive periodic instructions regarding employee courtesy. We do not condone our employees' execution of their duties in an unprofessional or discourteous manner. This concern will be conveyed to the postmaster by the manager, Post Office Operations.

Concern: Customers asked how they could remove their names from the national bulk business mail (BBM) lists.

Response: To request the removal of names from BBM mailing lists, write to: Mail Preference Service, Direct Marketing Association, Post Office Box 9008, Farmingdale, New York 11735-9008.

Concern: Customers were concerned about obtaining accountable mail and large parcels.

Response: If the customer lives less than ½ mile from the line-of-travel, the carrier will attempt delivery of accountable items and large parcels to the customer's residence. If the customer lives over ½ mile away or is not home when delivery is attempted, a notice will be left in the mailbox. Large parcels will be left outside the mailbox or at a location designated by the customer (if authorized by the customer), or a notice will be left in the mailbox. Attempted delivery items will be taken back to the <> Post Office. Customers may pick up the item at the Post Office, request redelivery on another day, or authorize delivery to another party.

Response: Accountable mail and parcels too large for the box will be available at the CPO.

Concern: Customers were concerned about permit mailing.

Response: Administrative responsibility for the permit account will be/has been transferred to the <> Post Office. Mailings must be submitted to that office for verification. Customers interested in obtaining a permit should contact the <> postmaster.

Response: Administrative responsibility for the permit account will be/has been transferred to the <> Post Office. The carrier can pick up the permit mailing and take it to the administrative office for verification and processing. Customers interested in obtaining a permit should contact the <> postmaster.

Concern: Customers were concerned about later delivery of mail.

Response: Mail delivery times will remain the same.

Exhibit 335 (p. 13)

Sample Proposal Cover Sheet and Paragraphs

Response: The top priority of the Postal Service is to provide mail service in the most efficient manner possible because all of our costs are reflected in postage rates customers must pay. Delivery costs are one of our biggest expenses, so you can be assured that careful thought is given to the structure of each route.

A customer's location on a carrier's line-of-travel determines the time of day mail is delivered. This, of course, precludes providing early delivery of mail to every customer because, no matter how we structure a route, somebody must be last. We do, however, carefully consider the volume of mail for each route so that we can deliver the greatest amount of mail at the earliest possible hour. To minimize vehicle and fuel expenses, we must also pay special attention to energy conservation measures. When the price of gasoline goes up one cent per gallon our total gasoline cost rises more than \$1 million. Therefore, when structuring a route, we must balance our goal to deliver as much mail as possible as early as possible with the need to minimize the travel distance a route must cover.

We do regret the inconvenience to customers who would like, but cannot receive, early mail delivery. For those customers, we offer alternative delivery services — such as Post Office box service or window caller service — that provide access to their mail earlier and throughout the day.

Concern: Customers expressed concern about collection of outgoing mail.

Response: Collection of mail and dispatch schedules will remain the same.

Response: Collection of mail will be made by the carrier when serving the route. The customer should raise the flag on the mailbox to alert the carrier that outgoing mail is to be collected from the mailbox.

Response: Collection of mail will be made by the carrier when serving the route. The CBU has a collection box for the deposit of outgoing mail.

Response: The collection box will be retained and its mail will continue to be picked up at <> p.m., Monday through Saturday. In addition, customers may place outgoing mail in their mailboxes to be collected and dispatched by the carrier.

Concern: Customers felt the community should have a Post Office and wanted a new facility provided.

Response: No suitable quarters are available in the community to house an independent Post Office. A new lease would require a building which meets federal guidelines. A Postal Service facility is not constructed when effective and regular service can be provided by a more cost-effective alternate service.

Concern: Customers questioned whether the facility was inadequate.

Response: A building inspection revealed serious deficiencies, and no suitable alternate quarters are available in the community. Deficiencies include <>.

Concern: Customers questioned the economic savings of the proposed discontinuance.

Response: Economic savings are only one of several factors considered. Economic savings have been calculated as required for discontinuance studies. The estimated cost of the CPO is based on price comparisons with other contracts providing similar services. A CPO is often located in an existing business and can operate more cost-effectively. The Postal Service estimates an annual savings of <>.

Response: Carrier service is more cost-effective than maintaining a Postal Service facility and postmaster position. The Postal Service estimates an annual savings of <>.

Concern: Customers inquired about the location of the CPO.

Response: The CPO will be located in the community. Convenience of location and accessibility will be considered in evaluating the bids and award of the contract.

Exhibit 335 (p. 14)

Sample Proposal Cover Sheet and Paragraphs

Concern: Customers were concerned about the quality of service, reliability, and integrity of the contractor.

Response: Award of the contract is based on evaluation of criteria including annual monetary amount, contractor ability and background, and the quality and location of the facility. The successful bidder must be bonded and will be trained, administered, and supervised by the Postal Service to ensure high standards of service.

Concern: Customers expressed interest in bidding on the contract.

Response: A bid solicitation package will be posted at the <> or <> Post Office with instructions on how to bid on the contract. Customers who request solicitation packages will receive them directly by mail.

Concern: Customers inquired about what hours and services would be provided by the CPO.

Response: The CPO will provide at least the same number of window service hours and services as the Post Office, except for permit mail acceptance and postage meter settings.

Response: The CPO will be contracted to provide at least the same hours as the present Post Office. Depending on the location, the CPO may provide expanded lobby hours. Services will be the same as provided at the Post Office, except for permit mail acceptance and postage meter settings.

Concern: Customers asked why their Post Office was being discontinued while others were retained.

Response: Post Offices are reviewed on a case-by-case basis. When there is a vacancy in a small office, it is customary to conduct a study of the business activity and investigate the feasibility of providing service by alternate means.

Concern: Customers were concerned about having to travel to another Post Office for service.

Response: Services provided at the Post Office will be available from the carrier, and customers will not have to travel to another Post Office for service. Most transactions do not require meeting the carrier at the mailbox. *Stamps by Mail* and *Money Order Application* forms are available for customer convenience.

Response: Services provided at the Post Office will be available from the CPO, except for permit mail acceptance and postage meter settings. Customers will not have to travel to another Post Office.

Concern: Customers were concerned that the CPO would later be closed.

Response: The Postal Service has every intention of maintaining a CPO in the <name> community. A CPO will remain in the <name> community as long as there are qualified offerors to continue operations of the contract unit and there is a need for the services. Additionally, a CPO cannot be closed without proper justification, and approval must be obtained from the vice president, Delivery and Retail, Postal Service Headquarters.

Concern: Customers stated that they would lose their appeal rights with a CPO.

Response: Customers have the right to appeal to the Postal Rate Commission any final determination to close or consolidate the <name> Post Office, and the fact that replacement service is, as in this case, to be provided by a CPO has no impact upon appeal rights. Once a final determination is implemented, our view is that customers have no right to appeal to the Postal Rate Commission any subsequent change in replacement service. The Postal Service has determined that replacement service via CPO will provide a maximum degree of regular and effective postal services to <name> customers. In rare circumstances, such as the absence of any qualified bidders and a near-total loss of customers, CPOs may need to be closed. Any decision to close a CPO must be made by the vice president, Delivery and Retail, who reviews — in addition to customer input (which is encouraged) — a request for discontinuance prepared by the district manager, Customer Service and Sales, documenting service alternatives, and the effects on postal services and the community.

Exhibit 335 (p. 15)

Sample Proposal Cover Sheet and Paragraphs

Concern: Customers said they would miss the special attention and assistance provided by the personnel at the <> Post Office.

Response: The CPO will continue to provide courteous and helpful service. Special assistance will be provided as needed.

Response: Courteous and helpful service will be provided by personnel at the <> Post Office and from the carrier. Special assistance will be provided as needed.

Paragraph K

Some advantages to a CPO proposal are:

1. Provides an opportunity for a local person to contract for the CPO service, which may add to the financial base of the community.
2. The hours can be established and adjusted to meet the changing needs of the community.
3. Customers will continue to use the same mailing address and ZIP Code. There will be no change in customers' addresses.
4. Provides the same retail services as an independent Post Office, except for permit mail acceptance and postage meter settings.
5. Savings for the Postal Service contribute in the long run to stable postage rates and savings for customers.

Some disadvantages to a CPO proposal are:

1. Loss of an independent Post Office and postmaster position.
2. The new location may be farther for some customers, but closer for others. However, the unit will be located in the community, and convenience of location will be one of the factors in selecting the contractor.
3. A CPO does not provide permit mail acceptance or postage meter settings. These services are available at the <> Post Office, located <> miles away. **<Note:** If special arrangements have been made with carrier to pickup permit mail at the CPO, please indicate in this section.>
4. While customers have the right to appeal to the Postal Rate Commission any final determination to consolidate the <name> Post Office, in the unlikely and unplanned event the CPO must be closed, approval must be obtained from the vice president, Delivery and Retail, at Postal Service Headquarters.

Some advantages of a NPU proposal are:

1. Maintains a Postal Service facility and retail outlet in the community.
2. Carrier provides delivery and retail services and is available for a designated period each day to provide special services.
3. Customers will continue to use the same mailing address and ZIP Code.
4. The unit continues to provide nonpostal services, a community gathering place, and an information center.
5. Savings for the Postal Service contribute in the long run to stable postage rates and savings for customers.

Some disadvantages of a NPU proposal are:

1. Loss of an independent Post Office and postmaster position.
2. Need to meet the carrier to transact business. However, it is not necessary to be present to conduct most Postal Service transactions.

Exhibit 335 (p. 16)

Sample Proposal Cover Sheet and Paragraphs

Some advantages of a carrier service proposal are:

1. Carrier delivery service is beneficial to some senior citizens, the handicapped, and working people since customers will no longer need to travel to the Post Office to pick up their mail.
2. The unit continues to provide nonpostal services, a community gathering place, and information center.
3. Provides the same retail service as an independent Post Office.
4. Savings for the Postal Service contribute in the long run to stable postage rates and savings for customers.
5. The carrier provides retail services, alleviating the need to go to the Post Office. *Stamps by Mail* order forms are provided for customer convenience.
6. Customers opting for carrier service will have 24-hour access to their mail.
7. Savings for the Postal Service contribute in the long run to stable postage rates and savings for customers.
8. Customers opting for carrier service will no longer have to pay Post Office box fees.
9. Saves time and energy for customers who drive to the Post Office to pick up mail.

Some disadvantages to a carrier service proposal are:

1. The loss of a retail outlet and a postmaster position in the community.
2. Need to meet the carrier at the mailbox to transact business. However, it is not necessary to be present to conduct most Postal Service transactions.
3. A change in mailing address. The community name and the ZIP Code will continue to be used in the new address.
4. Customers who want Post Office box service at the <> Post Office will experience a Post Office box fee increase. However, free service is available through carrier delivery.

Some advantages to a CBU proposal are:

1. The carrier provides retail services, alleviating the need to go to the Post Office. *Stamps by Mail* order forms are provided for customer convenience.
2. Customers opting for carrier service will have 24-hour access to their mail.
3. Savings for the Postal Service contribute in the long run to stable postage rates and savings for customers.
4. Offers secure, individually locked mail compartments. Parcel lockers provide convenient parcel delivery for customers.
5. Customers opting for carrier service will no longer have to pay Post Office box fees.
6. Saves time and energy for customers who drive to the Post Office to pick up mail.

Some disadvantages to a CBU proposal are:

1. The loss of a retail outlet and a postmaster position in the community. Retail services are provided by the carrier.
2. Meeting the carrier at the CBU to transact business. However, it is not necessary to be present to conduct most Postal Service transactions.
3. A change in mailing address. The community name and ZIP Code will continue to be used in the new address; however, a carrier route address will be assigned.

Exhibit 335 (p. 17)

Sample Proposal Cover Sheet and Paragraphs

4. Customers who want a Post Office box at the <> and/or <> Post Office will experience a Post Office box rental increase. Free service is available through carrier delivery.

Some advantages to a classified station or branch proposal are:

1. Maintains a Postal Service facility and retail outlet in the community.
2. Customers continue to use the same mailing address and ZIP Code. There will be no change to customers' addresses.
3. Customer service is enhanced by a <new facility/improved customer parking/vending equipment/expanded service hours, and will be handicapped accessible>.

Some disadvantages to a classified station or branch proposal are:

1. Loss of an independent Post Office in the community.
2. Loss of a postmaster position.

Some advantages to a contract unit proposal are:

1. Provides an opportunity for a local person to contract for the service which may add to the financial base of the community.
2. The hours can be established and adjusted to meet the changing needs of the community.
3. Provides the same retail service as an independent Post Office, except for permit mail acceptance and postage meter settings.
4. Savings for the Postal Service contribute in the long run to stable postage rates and savings for customers.
5. Customers will continue to use the same mailing address and ZIP Code. There will be no change in customers' addresses.
6. The unit will continue to provide nonpostal services, a community gathering place, and information center.
7. Customer service will be enhanced by a <new facility/improved customer parking/vending equipment/expanded window service hours, and handicap access>.

Some disadvantages to a contract unit proposal are:

1. The new location may be farther for some customers, but closer for others. However, the unit will be located in the community and convenience of location will be one of the factors in selecting the contractor.
2. A contract unit does not provide permit mail acceptance or postage meter settings. These services are available at the <> Post Office, located <> miles away.

Paragraph L

The proposal to <close/consolidate> the <> Post Office was posted with an invitation for public comment at the <> and <> Post Offices from <> through <>. <> comments were received: <> favorable, <> unfavorable, and <> expressed no opinion. The following additional concerns were expressed on customer comment forms and have not previously been identified in this proposal:

Paragraph M

Taking all available information into consideration, the Postal Service concludes this proposal will provide a maximum degree of effective and regular postal services to the community.

Exhibit 335 (p. 18)

Sample Proposal Cover Sheet and Paragraphs

II. EFFECT ON COMMUNITY

Paragraph A

<> is an unincorporated rural community located in <> County. The community is administered politically by the <>. Police protection is provided by <>, and fire protection is provided by <>. The community is comprised of <retired people, farmers, and those who commute to work at nearby communities and work in local businesses>.

<> is an incorporated rural community located in <> County. The community is administered politically by a <> form of government. Police protection is provided by <>. Fire protection is provided by <>. The community is comprised of <retired people, farmers, and those who commute to work at nearby communities and work in local businesses>.

<> is located in the incorporated city of <>. The area is administered politically by a <> form of government. Police and fire protection is provided by <>. The community is comprised of <> and those who commute to work at nearby communities and those who work in local businesses.

Paragraph B

There are no stores, banks, schools, religious institutions, businesses, or other public institutions located in <>. Residents travel to nearby communities for supplies and services.

There is/are <> religious institutions in the community. Businesses include: <list any and all businesses, including in-home businesses, local government offices, and service organizations>. Residents travel to nearby communities for other supplies and services.

Paragraph C

Nonpostal services provided at the <> Post Office will be available at the <CPO/station/branch/NPU>.

Nonpostal services provided at the <> Post Office will be available at the <> Post Office. Government forms normally provided by the Post Office will also be available at the <> Post Office or by contacting your local government agency.

Paragraph D

There were no nonpostal concerns expressed on the returned questionnaires or at the community meeting.

The following nonpostal concerns were expressed on the returned questionnaires, at the community meeting, on the petition, and on the congressional inquiry:

Concern: Customers were concerned about the loss of a gathering place and an information center.

Response: The CPO will maintain a facility in the community and will continue to serve as a convenient gathering place and an information center.

Response: Residents may continue to meet informally, socialize, and share information at the other businesses, churches, and residences in town.

Response: Meetings may be held at the <community center/city hall>. The <> can also provide a site for residents to gather, socialize, and share information.

Response: The local church can provide a site for the community to gather, socialize, and share information.

Concern: Customers were concerned about loss of employment in the community.

Response: A local person will have the opportunity to contract for the CPO, which may add to the financial base of the community.

Response: The OIC is a noncareer employee who was hired with the understanding the position would be temporary. The OIC will be separated from the Postal Service when the office is discontinued.

Exhibit 335 (p. 19)

Sample Proposal Cover Sheet and Paragraphs

Response: The noncareer OIC from the local office was separated from the Postal Service when the office was suspended.

Concern: Customers were concerned about growth in the community.

Response: The growth of a community does not depend on the location of a Post Office. Based on information obtained by the Postal Service, it was determined that there has been minimal growth in the area in recent years. Carrier service will be able to accommodate future growth.

Response: The CPO will maintain a postal presence in the community and will be able to accommodate future growth. A local resident will have the opportunity to contract for the CPO operation, which may add to the financial base of the community.

Response: The CPO will better accommodate future growth because it will offer expanded window service hours, and hours can be adjusted to meet the changing needs of the community.

Concern: Customers expressed concern for loss of community identity.

Response: A community's identity derives from the interest and vitality of its residents and their use of its name. The Postal Service is helping to preserve community identity by continuing the use of the <name> and ZIP Code in addresses and Publication 65, *National Five-Digit ZIP Code and Post Office Directory*.

Response: A community's identity derives from the interest and vitality of its residents and their use of its name. The Postal Service is helping to preserve community identity by continuing the use of the <name> in addresses and in Publication 65, *National Five-Digit ZIP Code and Post Office Directory*. However, to ensure effective and regular service, the ZIP Code will change to <>.

Concern: Customers felt the loss of a Post Office would have a detrimental effect on the business community.

Response: Businesses generally require regular and effective postal services, and these will always be provided to the <> community. Since the suspension of service, there has been no indication that the business community has been adversely affected. Questionnaire responses revealed that customers will continue to use local businesses if the Post Office is discontinued.

Response: Businesses generally require regular and effective postal services, and these will always be provided to the <> community. There is no indication that the business community will be adversely affected. Questionnaire responses revealed that customers will continue to use local businesses if the Post Office is discontinued.

Concern: Customers felt the Post Office should remain open since they paid taxes.

Response: The Postal Reorganization Act requires the Postal Service to operate on a breakeven basis. Most revenue is generated by the sale of postage, so when operational costs cannot be met, the Postal Service requests a rate increase. One advantage of this proposal is a savings for the Postal Service, which contributes in the long run to stable postage rates and savings for customers.

Concern: Customers felt the loss of the <> Post Office would discourage new businesses from coming to the community.

Response: Businesses generally require regular and effective postal services, and these will always be provided in the <> community. There is no indication that the business community will be adversely affected. Most new businesses moving to the community do not depend on the location of a Post Office, but on the provision of effective and regular postal services. Questionnaire responses indicate customers will continue to patronize local businesses. Carrier service will accommodate future growth.

Concern: Customers felt closing the <> Post Office would cause property values to decline.

Response: There is no evidence to indicate that property values decline when a Post Office is discontinued. There has been minimal growth in the area and carrier service can accommodate any future growth.

Exhibit 335 (p. 20)

Sample Proposal Cover Sheet and Paragraphs

Concern: Customers stated the town was incorporated and should have a postmaster.

Response: The incorporated status of a town has no bearing on its requirements for postal services. A CPO will give a member of the community an opportunity to bid on the CPO and will provide the same level of service to the community.

Paragraph E

Based on information the Postal Service obtained, it was determined that there has been minimal growth in the area in recent years. Carrier service is expected to be able to handle any future growth in the community.

Based on information the Postal Service obtained, it was determined that there has been minimal growth in the area in recent years. CPO service is expected to be able to handle any future growth in the community.

Paragraph F

To help preserve community identity, the community's name and ZIP Code will be retained in the mailing address. It will continue to be listed in Publication 65, *National Five-Digit ZIP Code and Post Office Directory*. No change of address will be required.

To help preserve community identity, the community's name and the ZIP Code will be retained in the mailing address. It will continue to be listed in Publication 65, *National Five-Digit ZIP Code and Post Office Directory*.

The name and ZIP Code of <> will be discontinued from Publication 65, *National Five-Digit ZIP Code and Post Office Directory*. Customer addresses will change. For example:

Present Address:	Proposed Address:
JOHN DOE	JOHN DOE
PO BOX I	100 MAIN ST
<>, <> <>	<>, <> <>

Paragraph G

Based on the information obtained in the course of this discontinuance study, the Postal Service concludes this proposal will not adversely affect the community.

Based on the information obtained in the course of this discontinuance study, the Postal Service concludes this proposal will not adversely affect the community. <Carrier/CPO> service has been in effect since the suspension of the <Post Office/Community Post Office/Classified Station/Classified Branch> on <>.

III. EFFECT ON EMPLOYEES

Paragraph A

The postmaster <retired/was reassigned/resigned/was promoted, etc.> on <date>. The noncareer OIC and noncareer postmaster relief (PMR) were separated from the Postal Service when the office was suspended. No other Postal Service employee will be adversely affected.

The postmaster <retired/resigned/was reassigned/was promoted> on <>. The career OIC <will return/has returned> to his regular position at a nearby Post Office when this proposal is implemented. The noncareer postmaster relief (PMR) <will be/was separated> from the Postal Service when this proposal is implemented. No other employee will be adversely affected.

The postmaster <retired/was reassigned/resigned/was promoted> on <>. The clerk will be reassigned to the <> Post Office and maintain bidding status within that office.

Exhibit 335 (p. 21)

Sample Proposal Cover Sheet and Paragraphs**IV. ECONOMIC SAVINGS****Paragraph A**

The Postal Service estimates an annual savings of <> with a breakdown as follows:

Clerk Salary (PS-5, Minimum, No COLA)	\$<>
Fringe Benefits @ 33.5%	<>
Rental Costs, Excluding Utilities	+<>
 Total Annual Costs	<>
Less Annual Cost of Replacement Service	-<>
Total Annual Savings	\$<>

The Postal Service estimates an annual savings of <> with a breakdown as follows:

Postmaster Salary (EAS-<>, Minimum)	\$<>
Fringe Benefits @ 33.5%	<>
Rental Costs, Excluding Utilities	+<>
 Total Annual Costs	<>
Less Annual Cost of Replacement Service	-<>
Total Annual Savings	\$<>

Paragraph B

A one-time expense of \$<> <was/will be> incurred for installation of <CBUs and parcel lockers>. <List all one-time expenses if different from above.>

V. OTHER FACTORS

The Postal Service has identified no other factors for consideration.

The Postal Service is proposing that replacement service via CPO will provide a maximum degree of regular and effective postal services to <> customers. The Postal Service fully intends to continue providing service via CPO. In rare circumstances, however, factors including those beyond the control of the Postal Service may require that consideration be given to closing a CPO. In the past, such circumstances have usually involved the absence of any qualified bidders and a near-total loss of customers. Any decision to discontinue a CPO must be made by the vice president, Delivery and Retail, who reviews — in addition to customer input (which is encouraged) — a request for discontinuance prepared by the district manager, Customer Service and Sales, documenting service alternatives and the effects on postal services and the community.

VI. SUMMARY**Paragraph A**

Use Paragraph A from Section 1

Exhibit 335 (p. 22)

Sample Proposal Cover Sheet and Paragraphs

Paragraph B

The postmaster <retired/was reassigned/was promoted/resigned> on <>. Operations were suspended at that time due to termination of the lease by the lessor. There were no suitable alternate quarters available. The noncareer <OIC/PMR> was separated from the Postal Service. No other employee was adversely affected.

The postmaster <retired/resigned/was reassigned/was promoted> on <>. Operations were suspended on <> due to severe safety and health deficiencies of the Postal Service facility. There were no suitable alternate quarters available. The noncareer <OIC/PMR> was separated from the Postal Service. No other employee was adversely affected.

The postmaster <retired/resigned/reassigned/promoted> on <>. The noncareer <OIC/PMR> will be separated from the Postal Service. The facility is in substandard condition and no suitable alternate quarters are available. No other employee will be adversely affected.

The postmaster <retired/resigned/was reassigned/was promoted> on <date>. The noncareer <OIC/PMR> will be separated from the Postal Service. No other employee will be adversely affected. Post Office workload has declined from an EAS-<> to an EAS-<> level office.

Paragraph C

The <> Post Office provides <> hours of window service per week to <> customers. Daily retail window transactions average <>. There are <> permit mailers and <> postage meter customers.

Paragraph D

A CPO will continue to provide the same services as an independent Post Office, except for permit mailings and postage meter settings. There will be a loss of the postmaster position. However, a local person will have the opportunity to contract for the CPO, which may add to the financial base of the community. To help preserve community identity, the community name and ZIP Code will be retained in the mailing address. Customers will experience no change in address. The Postal Service will save an estimated \$<> annually. The CPO will be administered and supervised by the Postal Service to ensure that high standards of service are maintained.

Carrier service will continue to provide effective and regular service to the community. There will no longer be a retail outlet in the community. However, delivery and retail services will be available from the carrier, alleviating the need to travel to a Post Office for service. Customers opting for carrier delivery will have 24-hour access to their mail. To help preserve community identity, the community name and the ZIP Code will be retained in the mailing address. The Postal Service will save an estimated \$<> annually. A disadvantage to some may be in meeting the carrier to transact business. However, it is not necessary to be present to conduct most Postal Service transactions.

Paragraph E

Taking all available information into consideration, the Postal Service has determined that the advantages outweigh the disadvantages and this proposal is warranted.

VII. NOTICES

- A. **Support Materials.** Copies of all materials upon which this proposal is based are available for public inspection at the <> and <> Post Offices during normal office hours.
- B. **This is a proposal.** It is not a final determination to <close/consolidate> this Post Office. If a final determination is made to <close/consolidate> this Post Office, after public comments on this proposal are received and taken into account, a notice of that final determination will be posted in this office.

Exhibit 335 (p. 23)

Sample Proposal Cover Sheet and Paragraphs

The final determination will contain instructions on how affected customers may appeal that decision to the Postal Rate Commission. Any such appeal must be received by the commission within 30 days of the posting of the final determination.

Manager, Post Office Operations

Date

Exhibit 336 (p. 1)

Sample Proposal to Close Post Office and Extend Rural Route Service

DATE OF POSTING: _____

DATE OF REMOVAL: _____

PROPOSAL TO CLOSE
THE SUSPENDED
<>, <> POST OFFICE
AND CONTINUE TO PROVIDE
RURAL ROUTE SERVICE

DOCKET NUMBER <>

Exhibit 336 (p. 2)

Sample Proposal to Close Post Office and Extend Rural Route Service

I. RESPONSIVENESS TO COMMUNITY POSTAL NEEDS

The Postal Service is proposing to close the suspended <>, <>, Post Office and provide delivery and retail services by a rural route administered by the Iron <>, <>, Post Office, located <> miles away. Service will be provided to cluster box units (CBUs) installed on the carrier's line-of-travel.

CBUs are secure free-standing units of individually locked mail compartments installed and maintained by the Postal Service at no cost to the customer. CBUs have been placed in the public right-of-way on the carrier's line-of-travel. A parcel locker was also installed for customer convenience.

The postmaster was reassigned on <>. The Post Office facility had severe building deficiencies that included: <>. The lessor issued an eviction notice in lieu of making necessary repairs. No suitable alternate quarters were available therefore, service was suspended on <>.

The <> Post Office, an EAS-<> level, provided service <> hours a week from <> a.m. to <> p.m., <> through <>, to <> Post Office box and <> intermediate rural customers. Retail services included the sale of stamps, stamped paper, and money orders; special services such as Registered Mail, Certified Mail, Insured Mail, COD Mail, and Express Mail services; and the acceptance and dispatch of all classes of mail. Daily retail window transactions averaged <>. Office receipts for the last 3 years were: \$<> (<> revenue units) in FY <>; \$<> (<> revenue units) in FY1999; and \$<> (<> revenue units) in FY <>. There were no permit mailers or postage meter customers.

Since the suspension of service, customers have received delivery and retail services from rural delivery emanating from the <> Post Office, an EAS-<> level office located <> miles away. Window service hours are from <> a.m. to <> p.m., Monday through Friday, and <> to <> on Saturday. There are <> Post Office boxes available.

On <>, representatives from the Postal Service were available at the <> to answer questions and provide information to customers. <> customers attended the meeting.

A petition supporting the retention of the <> Post Office was received on <>, with <> signatures.

On <>, questionnaires were distributed to delivery customers of the <> Post Office. Questionnaires were also available over the counter for retail customers at <>. <> questionnaires were returned. <> responses were favorable, <> unfavorable, and <> expressed no opinion regarding the proposed alternate service.

One congressional inquiry was received on <>.

The following concerns were expressed on the returned questionnaires, at the community meeting, from customer letters, on the petition, and from the congressional inquiry:

1. **Concern:** A customer wanted to have the Post Office in her home.

Response: No suitable quarters are available in the community to house an independent Post Office. A new lease would require a building which meets federal guidelines.

2. **Concern:** Customers were concerned about a change of address.

Response: Customers will experience an address change. Mail will be forwarded in accordance with Postal Service regulations, and change-of-address forms are available from the Postal Service to assist customers in notifying correspondents of the change. An example of the change is shown below:

Present Address:	Proposed Address:
JOHN DOE	JOHN DOE
PO BOX I	100 MAIN ST
LAKEVIEW WY 88888	LAKEVIEW WY 88888

Exhibit 336 (p. 3)

Sample Proposal to Close Post Office and Extend Rural Route Service

3. **Concern:** Customers inquired about where the cluster box units would be located.
Response: By general agreement with the community center, it was decided that the cluster box units would be installed in front of the <>.
4. **Concern:** Customers inquired about cluster box installation, maintenance, and snow removal.
Response: Cluster box units are purchased, installed, and maintained by the Postal Service at no expense to customers. At the community meeting, it was agreed that the community center would provide snow removal service.
5. **Concern:** Customers inquired about building a new facility or a mobile unit.
Response: New construction or the placement of a mobile unit or trailer is not feasible when regular and effective service can be provided by more cost-effective alternatives, such as rural delivery.
6. **Concern:** Customers were concerned about having to make an address change on their bank checks and stationery.
Response: Customers will be assigned a carrier route address. The new address will continue to use the community name and ZIP Code. Mail will be forwarded in accordance with Postal Service regulations, and change-of-address forms are available from the Postal Service to assist customers in notifying correspondents of the change. Customers may deplete their current supply of checks and stationery and make the address corrections when ordering new supplies.
7. **Concern:** Customers were concerned about later delivery of mail.
Response: The top priority of the Postal Service is to provide mail service in the most efficient manner possible because all of our costs are reflected in postage rates customers must pay. Delivery costs are one of our biggest expenses, so you can be assured that careful thought is given to the structure of each route.

A customer's location on a carrier's line-of-travel determines the time of day mail is delivered. This, of course, precludes providing early delivery of mail to every customer because, no matter how we structure a route, somebody must be last. We do, however, carefully consider the volume of mail for each route so that we can deliver the greatest amount of mail at the earliest possible hour. To minimize vehicle and fuel expenses we must also pay special attention to energy conservation measures. When the price of gasoline goes up one cent per gallon, our total gasoline cost rises more than \$1 million. Therefore, when structuring a route, we must balance our goal to deliver as much mail as possible as early as possible with the need to minimize the travel distance a route must cover.

We do regret the inconvenience to customers who would like, but cannot receive, early mail delivery. For those customers, we offer alternative delivery services, such as Post Office box service or window caller service, that provide access to their mail earlier and throughout the day.
8. **Concern:** Customers questioned whether the facility was inadequate.
Response: A building inspection revealed serious deficiencies, and no suitable alternate quarters are available in the community. Deficiencies included a leaking roof, substandard wiring, structurally unsound foundation, a chemical toilet, and no running water. The lessor refused to make repairs and issued an eviction notice.
9. **Concern:** Customers asked why their Post Office was being discontinued while others were retained.
Response: Post Offices are reviewed on a case-by-case basis. When there is an emergency suspension in a small office, it is customary to conduct a study of the business activity and investigate the feasibility of providing service by alternate means.

Exhibit 336 (p. 4)

Sample Proposal to Close Post Office and Extend Rural Route Service

10. **Concern:** Customers were concerned about mail security.
Response: Verification with the Postal Inspection Service and local law enforcement officials revealed only <> reports of vandalism in the area in <>. CBUs provide the security of individually locked mail compartments.
11. **Concern:** Customers were concerned about having to travel to another Post Office for service.
Response: Services provided at the Post Office will be available from the carrier, and customers will not have to travel to another Post Office for service. Most transactions do not require meeting the carrier at the mailbox. *Stamps by Mail* and *Money Order Application* forms are available for customer convenience.
12. **Concern:** Customers were concerned about senior citizens.
Response: Carrier service is beneficial to many senior citizens and those who face special challenges because the carrier can provide delivery and retail services to CBUs. Customers do not have to make a special trip to the Post Office for service. Special provisions are made for hardship cases or special customer needs. To request an exception for hardship delivery, customers may contact the <> postmaster for more information.
13. **Concern:** Customers were concerned about the limited hours of operation at the Post Office.
Response: Postmaster level and office service hours are determined by a workload analysis which includes the number of deliveries and revenue. A workload analysis of <> indicated the office qualified for <> hours of service per week. Carrier service will provide <>-hour access to the mail.
14. **Concern:** Customers felt that the decision to close the <> Post Office had already been made and that the questionnaires were a waste of money.
Response: Operation of the <> Post Office was suspended because of an emergency but it has not been officially discontinued. An emergency suspension is a temporary change, not a permanent closing of the <> Post Office. If it is determined that a discontinuance of the <> Post Office should be pursued, a formal proposal will be posted in the <> Post Office at a later date.
15. **Concern:** Customers said they would miss the special attention and assistance provided by the personnel at the <> Post Office.
Response: Courteous and helpful service will be provided by personnel at the <> Post Office and from the carrier. Special assistance will be provided as needed.

Some advantages of the proposal are:

1. The carrier provides retail services, alleviating the need to go to the Post Office. *Stamps by Mail* order forms are provided for customer convenience.
2. Customers opting for carrier service will have 24-hour access to their mail.
3. Savings for the Postal Service contribute in the long run to stable postage rates and savings for customers.
4. CBUs offer the security of individually locked mail compartments. Parcel lockers provide convenient parcel delivery for customers.
5. Customers opting for carrier service will not have to pay Post Office box fees.
6. Saves time and energy for customers who drive to the Post Office to pick up mail.

Exhibit 336 (p. 5)

Sample Proposal to Close Post Office and Extend Rural Route Service

Some disadvantages to the proposal are:

1. The loss of a retail outlet and a postmaster position in the community. Retail services are provided by the carrier.
2. Meeting the carrier at the CBUs to transact business. However, it is not necessary to be present to conduct most Postal Service transactions.
3. A change in mailing address. The community name and the ZIP Code will continue to be used in the new address. However, a carrier route address will be assigned.

Taking all available information into consideration, the Postal Service concludes this proposal will provide a maximum degree of effective and regular postal services to the community.

II. EFFECT ON COMMUNITY

<> is an incorporated rural community located in <> County. The community is administered politically by a town council. Police protection is provided by the <>. Fire protection is provided by the <>. The community is comprised of retired people, ranchers, and those who commute to work at nearby communities and work in local businesses.

There is <> religious institution in the community. Businesses and organizations include: <>. Residents travel to nearby communities for other supplies and services.

Nonpostal services provided at the <> Post Office will be available at the <> Post Office. Government forms normally provided by the Post Office will also be available at the <> Post Office or by contacting your local government agency.

The following nonpostal concerns were expressed on the returned questionnaires, at the community meeting, on the petition, and on the congressional inquiry:

1. **Concern:** Customers were concerned about the loss of a gathering place and an information center.
Response: Residents may continue to meet informally, socialize, and share information at the <>, the church, other businesses, and residences in town. Nonpostal services provided at the <> Post Office will be available at the <> Post Office. Government forms normally provided by the Post Office will also be available at the <> Post Office or by contacting your local government agency.
2. **Concern:** Customers were concerned about loss of employment in the community.
Response: The <> postmaster has been reassigned to the <> Post Office located <> miles away. The PMR is a noncareer employee who was hired with the understanding the position would be temporary. The noncareer PMR from the local office was separated from the Postal Service when the office was suspended.
3. **Concern:** Customers expressed concern for loss of community identity.
Response: A community's identity derives from the interest and vitality of its residents and their use of its name. The Postal Service is helping to preserve community identity by continuing the use of the <> name and ZIP Code in addresses and in Publication 65, *National Five-Digit ZIP Code and Post Office Directory*.
4. **Concern:** Customers felt the Post Office should remain open since they paid taxes.
Response: The Postal Reorganization Act requires the Postal Service to operate on a breakeven basis. Most revenue is generated by the sale of postage, so when operational costs cannot be met, the Postal Service requests a rate increase. One advantage of this proposal is a savings for the Postal Service, which contributes in the long run to stable postage rates and savings for customers.

Exhibit 336 (p. 6)

Sample Proposal to Close Post Office and Extend Rural Route Service

Based on information the Postal Service obtained, it was determined that there has been minimal growth in the area in recent years. Carrier service is expected to be able to handle any future growth in the community.

Based on the information obtained in the course of this discontinuance study, the Postal Service concludes this proposal will not adversely affect the community. Carrier service has been in effect since the suspension of the <> Post Office on <>.

III. EFFECT ON EMPLOYEES

The postmaster was reassigned to the <> Post Office, located <> miles away, on <>. The noncareer postmaster relief (PMR) was separated from the Postal Service when the office was suspended. No other Postal Service employee will be adversely affected.

IV. ECONOMIC SAVINGS

The Postal Service estimates an annual savings of \$<> with a breakdown as follows:

Postmaster Salary (EAS-<>, Minimum, No COLA)	\$<>
Fringe Benefits @ 33.5%	\$<>
Rental Costs, Excluding Utilities	+ \$<>
 Total Annual Costs	 \$<>
Less Annual Cost of Replacement Service	- \$<>
 Total Annual Savings	 \$<>

A one-time expense of \$<> was incurred for installation of CBUs and one parcel locker.

V. OTHER FACTORS

The Postal Service has identified no other factors for consideration.

VI. SUMMARY

The Postal Service is proposing to close the suspended <> Post Office and provide delivery and retail services by a rural route administered by the <> Post Office, located <> miles away. Service will be provided to cluster box units installed on the carrier's line-of-travel.

The postmaster was reassigned on <>. Operations were suspended on <>, due to termination of the lease by the lessor. There were no suitable alternate quarters available. The noncareer PMR was separated from the Postal Service. No other employee was adversely affected.

The <> Post Office provided <> hours of window service per week to <> customers. Daily retail window transactions averaged <>. There were no permit mailers or postage meter customers.

Carrier service will continue to provide effective and regular service to the community. There will no longer be a retail outlet in the community. However, delivery and retail services will be available from the carrier, alleviating the need to travel to a Post Office for service. Customers opting for carrier delivery will have 24-hour access to their mail. To help preserve community identity, the community name and the ZIP Code will be retained in the mailing address. The Postal Service will save an estimated \$<> annually. A disadvantage to some may be in meeting the carrier to transact business. However, it is not necessary to be present to conduct most Postal Service transactions.

Taking all available information into consideration, the Postal Service has determined that the advantages outweigh the disadvantages and this proposal is warranted.

Exhibit 336 (p. 7)

Sample Proposal to Close Post Office and Extend Rural Route Service

VII. NOTICES

- A. **Support Materials.** Copies of all materials upon which this proposal is based are available for public inspection at the <> Post Office during normal office hours.
- B. **This is a proposal.** It is not a final determination to close this Post Office. If a final determination is made to close this Post Office, after public comments on this proposal are received and taken into account, a notice of that final determination will be posted in this office.

The final determination will contain instructions on how affected customers may appeal that decision to the Postal Rate Commission. Any such appeal must be received by the commission within 30 days of the posting of the final determination.

Thomas Dixon
Manager, Post Office Operations

Date

Exhibit 341.1 (p. 1)
Proposal Checklist

PROPOSAL CHECKLIST

Section I

Responsiveness to Community Postal Needs

- _____ Tell what we are doing and why.
- _____ Is reason for discontinuance justified and documented in the record?
- _____ If suspended, what type of alternate service customers are now receiving?
- _____ Reason for vacancy and information on postmaster/OIC.
- _____ Number of customers and type of service they received and will receive.
- _____ Hours of service, daily window transaction average, number of permit mailers, and postage meter users.
- _____ Last three fiscal years of revenue and revenue units.
- _____ Decline in service workload/reduction in EAS level, if appropriate.
- _____ Nearest Post Office, office level, miles away, hours of service, number of Post Office boxes available.
- _____ Administrative/emanating office — office level, miles away, hours of service, number of Post Office boxes available.
- _____ If the nearby/administrative Post Office has a different Post Office box fee schedule, this is stated in the proposal.
- _____ Preproposal activities — questionnaires: number of favorable, unfavorable and no opinion responses must equal the total number of questionnaires returned. List customer concerns and Postal Service responses.
- _____ Community meeting. Number of customers who attended, customer concerns, and Postal Service responses.
- _____ Information on petitions and congressional inquiries included with Postal Service responses.
- _____ Revised proposal states dates and locations the proposal was posted for 60 days. Number of comments received, customer concerns and Postal Service responses.
- _____ Advantages and disadvantages of proposed alternate service.
- _____ Any other pertinent information concerning Postal Service needs.

Section II

Effect on the Community

- _____ Brief background of area, community government, population, etc.
- _____ Number of businesses, religious institutions, schools, local government offices, social organizations, etc.
- _____ Was Post Office used as meeting place?
- _____ Was Post Office a shelter for a bus stop?
- _____ Did the Post Office have a public bulletin board?
- _____ Were government forms available at the Post Office?
- _____ Did the Post Office provide assistance to senior citizens, persons with disabilities, etc.?
- _____ What is the historical value of the office?
- _____ Is an address change necessary?
- _____ Will the community identity be preserved?
- _____ What are the growth trends (flat, up, down)?
- _____ Were any other nonpostal items identified?

Exhibit 341.1 (p. 2)

Proposal Checklist**Section III Effect on Employees**

Paragraph explaining about postmaster vacancy/OIC/other career and noncareer employees of the office. If a postmaster or other employees are reassigned this must be explained and tell whether the reassignments are voluntary.

Section IV Economic Savings

A statement of annual savings includes a breakdown as follows:

Postmaster salary (EAS-____, Minimum, no COLA)	\$ _____
Fringe benefits 33.5%	_____
Rental costs, excluding utilities	_____
Total annual costs	\$ _____
Less estimated cost of replacement service	- _____
Total annual savings	\$ _____

A one-time expense of \$ _____ will be/was incurred for installation of CBUs and parcel lockers.

Is postmaster salary based on the minimum salary without COLA?

Does postmaster salary reflect the current office evaluation?

Section V Other Factors

The Postal Service has identified no other factors for consideration (if appropriate).

List other factors as appropriate.

Other factors when replacement service is a CPO.

Section VI Summary

The proposal must include a brief summary that explains why the closing or consolidation is necessary and an assessment of how those factors supporting the need for change outweigh any negative factors. In taking competing considerations into account, the need to provide a maximum degree of effective and regular service must be paramount.

Section VII Notices

Appropriate notice is made that this is a proposal and not a final determination. If a final determination is made to discontinue the office, information on the appeal process will be provided at that time.

Checklist Completed By:

Investigative Coordinator

_____ Date

Reviewed and Certified By:

District Post Office Review Coordinator

_____ Date

Exhibit 341.2

Sample Notification to Government Relations of Proposal Posting

<date>

SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT
GOVERNMENT RELATIONS AND PUBLIC POLICY
475 L'ENFANT PLAZA SW RM 10804
WASHINGTON DC 20260-3500

SUBJECT: Posting of the Proposal to <Close/Consolidate>
the <name> Post Office
Docket No. <ZIP Code>

This is to advise you that on <date>, I will post for public comment a proposal to close/consolidate the <name> Post Office in <name of county>, Congressional District No. <district no.>.

If you have any questions, please call <review coordinator name and title> at <telephone number> or <name and title of postal operations manager> at <telephone number>.

<name>
District Manager
Customer Service and Sales
<name> District

cc: Manager, Customer Service Operations
Area Manager, Public Affairs and Communications

Enclosures: PS Form 4920
Proposal

Exhibit 342.2

Sample Proposal Posting Instructions to Postmaster

<date>

OFFICER-IN-CHARGE/POSTMASTER

SUBJECT: Letter of Instructions Regarding Posting of
the <name and state of Post Office> Proposal
Docket No. <ZIP Code>

Please post the enclosed proposal to <close/consolidate> the <name> Post Office in the lobby. The proposal must be posted in a prominent place from <date> through close of business on <date>. The posting must last at least 60 days and the first day does not count.

Round-date stamp the cover of the proposal on the date of posting and on the date of removal. Also, post the "Invitation for Comments" next to the proposal and round-date stamp it in the same manner.

Additional copies of the proposal and comment forms are enclosed. Provide them to customers upon request.

Also enclosed is the official record on which this proposal is based. Customers may read it; however, they may not remove it from your office. When a customer requests a copy of the record, provide it upon payment of any fees prescribed in *Administrative Support Manual*, Section 352.6. If you do not have photocopy equipment, take the customer's name, address, and telephone number and contact the district for a copy of the record.

At the expiration of the posting period, further instructions will be provided. If there are any questions, please contact me at <telephone number>.

<name of review coordinator>
Post Office Review Coordinator
<> District

Enclosures: Proposal
Invitation for Comments
Comment Forms
Official Record

Exhibit 342.3

Sample Invitation for Customer Comments

Date of Posting: _____

Date of Removal: _____

UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE**Invitation for Comments on the Proposal to <Close/Consolidate>****the <name> Post Office****and Establish <CPO/HCR/Rural Route> Service**

To the customers of the <name> Post Office:

The Postal Service is considering the <closing/consolidation> of the <name> Post Office for reasons stated in the accompanying proposal.

During the 60-day posting period from <date> through <date> you are invited to provide written comments. Comments will be most helpful if they offer specific opinions and information — favorable or unfavorable — regarding the potential effect of the proposed change on postal services and on the community. Your comments will be carefully considered and will be incorporated into the official record, which will be made public if the proposal is finalized.

Copies of the proposal and optional comment forms are available upon request at the <name> Post Office(s). If you choose to use the optional comment form and need additional space, please attach additional sheets of paper.

Please return the comment form to:

<name of Postal Service representative>
<Street Address>
<City>, <State> <ZIP+4>

For more information, you may call <name and title of postal representative> at <telephone number> or write to the above address.

Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Manager, Post Office Operations
<Street Address>
<City>, <State> <ZIP+4>

Exhibit 343.1

Sample Letter of Instructions – Removal of Proposal and Invitation for Comments

<date>

OFFICER-IN-CHARGE/POSTMASTER

SUBJECT: Instructions for Posting the "Notice of Taking Proposal and Comments Under Internal Consideration"

At the close of business on <date> take down the "Proposal" and the "Invitation for Comments" from the lobby. Round-date stamp them upon removal and verify that the mandatory 60-day posting period was observed. The proposal and invitation for comments must be posted for at least 60 days, and the first day does not count.

On the same day, prominently post in the lobby the enclosed "Notice of Taking Proposal and Comments Under Internal Consideration." The notice should remain posted until you receive further notice from this office.

Please return the posted "Proposal," "Invitation for Comments," the official record, and any related discontinuance materials to this office.

Thank you for your assistance.

Post Office Review Coordinator

<Street Address>

<City>, <State> <ZIP+4>

Enclosure

Exhibit 343.2

Sample Notice of Taking Proposal and Comments Under Internal Consideration**NOTICE OF TAKING PROPOSAL AND COMMENTS
UNDER INTERNAL CONSIDERATION**

Date: _____

Postal Customers of the <name> Post Office:

The Postal Service appreciates receiving the views of those of you who submitted comments on the proposal to <close/consolidate> the <name> Post Office, which was posted <date> through <date>. These comments will be considered carefully as the matter is reviewed further in my office and at higher levels within the Postal Service.

When a final decision is made by the Postal Service, that decision will be posted in place of this notice. If the decision is to approve the proposal, any customer of the <name> Post Office who disagrees will have the right to appeal that decision to the Postal Rate Commission in Washington, DC.

Sincerely,

<name>
Manager, Post Office Operations
<Street Address>
<City>, <State>, <ZIP+4>

Exhibit 343.3 (p. 1)

Sample Analysis of 60-Day Posting Comments**Analysis of 60-Day Posting Comments**

1. Number of comments returned:
Favorable comments: _____
Unfavorable comments: _____
No opinion expressed: _____
Total comments returned: _____
2. The following postal concerns were expressed:
 - a. **Concern:**
Response:
 - b. **Concern:**
Response:
3. The following nonpostal concerns were expressed:
 - a. **Concern:**
Response:
 - b. **Concern:**
Response:

Exhibit 343.3 (p.2)

Sample Analysis of 60-Day Posting Comments

<date>

MEMO TO THE RECORD

SUBJECT: <Name> Post Office
Docket Number <ZIP Code>

The proposal to <close/consolidate> the <name> Post Office was posted with an "Invitation for Comments," at the <name> and <name> Post Offices from <date> through <date>. No comments were received. There is no change to the original proposal. Accordingly, there is no need to modify the proposal to address comments.

Post Office Review Coordinator
<Street Address>
<City>, <State> <ZIP+4>

Exhibit 343.4

Sample Response Letter to Customer Comments

<date>

<Customer Name>

<Customer Address>

<City>, <State>, <ZIP+4>

Dear <customer name>:

Thank you for taking the time to submit your comments on the proposal to <close/consolidate> the <name> Post Office. Your comments are appreciated and will be carefully considered, along with the comments of other customers, as the matter is reviewed further in my office and at higher levels of the Postal Service.

<This section is for response to specific customer concerns and Postal Service response to those concerns.>

I realize that with change there is always concern. However, we are confident that <CPO/rural/HCR service> will continue to provide you with effective and regular service. If you have questions or further comments concerning this change in service, please feel free to contact <name and title> of my staff. <He/She> can be reached at <area code and telephone number>.

Sincerely,

Manager, Post Office Operations

<Street Address>

<City>, <State>, <ZIP+4>

Exhibit 352.1 (p. 1)

Sample Revised Proposal to Close Post Office and Continue to Provide Rural Route Service

DATE OF POSTING: _____

DATE OF REMOVAL: _____

REVISED PROPOSAL TO CLOSE
THE SUSPENDED
<>, <> POST OFFICE
AND CONTINUE TO PROVIDE
RURAL ROUTE SERVICE

DOCKET NUMBER <>

Exhibit 352.1 (p. 2)

Sample Revised Proposal to Close Post Office and Continue to Provide Rural Route Service

I. RESPONSIVENESS TO COMMUNITY POSTAL NEEDS

The Postal Service is proposing to close the suspended <>, <>, Post Office and provide delivery and retail services by a rural route administered by the <>, <>, Post Office, located <> miles away. Service will be provided to cluster box units (CBUs) installed on the carrier's line-of-travel.

CBUs are secure free-standing units of individually locked mail compartments installed and maintained by the Postal Service at no cost to the customer. CBUs have been placed in the public right-of-way on the carrier's line-of-travel. A parcel locker was also installed for customer convenience.

The postmaster was reassigned on <>. The Post Office facility had severe building deficiencies that included: <>. The lessor issued an eviction notice in lieu of making necessary repairs. No suitable alternate quarters were available; therefore, service was suspended on <>.

The <> Post Office, an EAS-<> level, provided service <> hours a week from <> a.m. to <> p.m., <> through <> to <> Post Office box and <> intermediate rural customers. Retail services included the sale of stamps, stamped paper, and money orders; special services such as Registered Mail, Certified Mail, Insured Mail, COD Mail, and Express Mail services; and the acceptance and dispatch of all classes of mail. Daily retail window transactions averaged <>. Office receipts for the last 3 years were: \$<> (<> revenue units) in FY <>; \$<> (<> revenue units) in FY <>; and \$<> (<> revenue units) in FY <>. There were no permit mailers or postage meter customers.

Since the suspension of service, customers have received delivery and retail services from rural delivery emanating from the <> Post Office, an EAS-<> level office located <> miles away. Window service hours are from <> a.m. to <> p.m., Monday through Friday, and <> to <> on Saturday. There are <> Post Office boxes available.

On <>, representatives from the Postal Service were available at the <> to answer questions and provide information to customers. <> customers attended the meeting.

A petition supporting the retention of the <> Post Office was received on <>, with <> signatures.

On <>, <> questionnaires were distributed to delivery customers of the <> Post Office. Questionnaires were also available over the counter for retail customers at <>. <> questionnaires were returned. <> responses were favorable, <> unfavorable, and <> expressed no opinion regarding the proposed alternate service.

One congressional inquiry was received on <>.

The following concerns were expressed on the returned questionnaires, at the community meeting, from customer letters, on the petition, and from the congressional inquiry:

1. **Concern:** A customer wanted to have the Post Office in her home.

Response: No suitable quarters are available in the community to house an independent Post Office. A new lease would require a building which meets federal guidelines.

2. **Concern:** Customers were concerned about a change of address.

Response: Customers will experience an address change. Mail will be forwarded in accordance with Postal Service regulations, and change-of-address forms are available from the Postal Service to assist customers in notifying correspondents of the change. An example of the change is shown below.

Present Address:	Proposed Address:
JOHN DOE	JOHN DOE
PO BOX I	100 MAIN ST
LAKEVIEW WY 88888	LAKEVIEW WY 88888

Exhibit 352.1 (p. 3)

Sample Revised Proposal to Close Post Office and Continue to Provide Rural Route Service

3. **Concern:** Customers inquired about where cluster box units would be located.
Response: By general agreement with the community, it was decided that the cluster box units would be installed in front of the <>.
4. **Concern:** Customers inquired about cluster box installation, maintenance, and snow removal.
Response: Cluster box units are purchased, installed, and maintained by the Postal Service at no expense to customers. At the community meeting, it was agreed that the community center would provide snow removal service.
5. **Concern:** Customers inquired about building a new facility or a mobile unit.
Response: New construction or the placement of a mobile unit or trailer is not feasible when regular and effective service can be provided by more cost-effective alternatives, such as rural delivery.
6. **Concern:** Customers were concerned about having to make an address change on their bank checks and stationery.
Response: Customers will be assigned a carrier route address. The new address will continue to use the community name and ZIP Code. Mail will be forwarded in accordance with Postal Service regulations, and change-of-address forms are available from the Postal Service to assist customers in notifying correspondents of the change. Customers may deplete their current supply of checks and stationery and make the address corrections when ordering new supplies.
7. **Concern:** Customers were concerned about later delivery of mail.
Response: The top priority of the Postal Service is to provide mail service in the most efficient manner possible because all of our costs are reflected in postage rates customers must pay. Delivery costs are one of our biggest expenses, so you can be assured that careful thought is given to the structure of each route.

A customer's location on a carrier's line-of-travel determines the time of day mail is delivered. This, of course, precludes providing early delivery of mail to every customer because, no matter how we structure a route, somebody must be last. We do, however, carefully consider the volume of mail for each route so that we can deliver the greatest amount of mail at the earliest possible hour. To minimize vehicle and fuel expenses we must also pay special attention to energy conservation measures. When the price of gasoline goes up one cent per gallon, our total gasoline cost rises more than \$1 million. Therefore, when structuring a route, we must balance our goal to deliver as much mail as possible as early as possible with the need to minimize the travel distance a route must cover.

We do regret the inconvenience to customers who would like, but cannot receive, early mail delivery. For those customers we offer alternative delivery services, such as Post Office box service or window caller service, that provide access to their mail earlier and throughout the day.
8. **Concern:** Customers questioned whether the facility was inadequate.
Response: A building inspection revealed serious deficiencies, and no suitable alternate quarters are available in the community. Deficiencies included <>. Lessor refused to make repairs and issued an eviction notice.
9. **Concern:** Customers asked why their Post Office was being discontinued while others were retained.
Response: Post Offices are reviewed on a case-by-case basis. When there is an emergency suspension in a small office, it is customary to conduct a study of the business activity and investigate the feasibility of providing service by alternate means.

Exhibit 352.1 (p. 4)

Sample Revised Proposal to Close Post Office and Continue to Provide Rural Route Service

10. **Concern:** Customers were concerned about mail security.

Response: Verification with the Postal Inspection Service and local law enforcement officials revealed <> reports of vandalism in the area in <>. CBUs provide the security of individually locked mail compartments.

11. **Concern:** Customers were concerned about having to travel to another Post Office for service.

Response: Services provided at the Post Office will be available from the carrier, and customers will not have to travel to another Post Office for service. Most transactions do not require meeting the carrier at the mailbox. *Stamps by Mail* and *Money Order Application* forms are available for customer convenience.

12. **Concern:** Customers were concerned about senior citizens.

Response: Carrier service is beneficial to many senior citizens and those who face special challenges because the carrier can provide delivery and retail services to CBUs. Customers do not have to make a special trip to the Post Office for service. Special provisions are made for hardship cases or special customer needs. To request an exception for hardship delivery, customers may contact the <> postmaster for more information.

13. **Concern:** Customers were concerned about the limited hours of operation at the Post Office.

Response: Postmaster level and office service hours are determined by a workload analysis which includes the number of deliveries and revenue. A workload analysis of <> indicated the office qualified for 36 hours of service per week. Carrier service will provide 24-hour access to the mail.

14. **Concern:** Customers felt that the decision to close the <> Post Office had already been made and that the questionnaires were a waste of money.

Response: Operation of the <> Post Office was suspended because of an emergency but it has not been officially discontinued. An emergency suspension is a temporary change, not a permanent closing of the <> Post Office. If it is determined that a discontinuance of the <> Post Office should be pursued, a formal proposal will be posted in the <> Post Office at a later date.

15. **Concern:** Customers said they would miss the special attention and assistance provided by the personnel at the <> Post Office.

Response: Courteous and helpful service will be provided by personnel at the <> Post Office and from the carrier. Special assistance will be provided as needed.

Some advantages of the proposal are:

1. The carrier provides retail services, alleviating the need to go to the Post Office. *Stamps by Mail* order forms are provided for customer convenience.
2. Customers opting for carrier service will have 24-hour access to their mail.
3. Savings for the Postal Service contribute in the long run to stable postage rates and savings for customers.
4. CBUs offer the security of individually locked mail compartments. Parcel lockers provide convenient parcel delivery for customers.
5. Customers opting for carrier service will not have to pay Post Office box fees.
6. Saves time and energy for customers who drive to the Post Office to pick up mail.

Exhibit 352.1 (p. 5)

Sample Revised Proposal to Close Post Office and Continue to Provide Rural Route Service

Some disadvantages to the proposal are:

1. The loss of a retail outlet and a postmaster position in the community. Retail services are provided by the carrier.
2. Meeting the carrier at the CBUs to transact business. However, it is not necessary to be present to conduct most Postal Service transactions.
3. A change in mailing address. The community name and the ZIP Code will continue to be used in the new address. However, a carrier route address will be assigned.

The proposal to close the <> Post Office was posted with an invitation for public comment at the <> Post Office from <>, through <>. <> unfavorable comment was received. The following concern was expressed on a customer comment form:

1. **Concern:** One customer stated the closure of the Post Office would destroy the community.

Response: A community's identity derives from the interest and vitality of its residents and their use of its name. The Postal Service is helping to preserve community identity by continuing the use of the <> name and ZIP Code in addresses and in Publication 65, *National Five-Digit ZIP Code and Post Office Directory*.

Taking all available information into consideration, the Postal Service concludes this proposal will provide a maximum degree of effective and regular postal services to the community.

II. EFFECT ON COMMUNITY

<> is an incorporated rural community located in <> County. The community is administered politically by a town council. Police protection is provided by the <>. Fire protection is provided by the <>. The community is comprised of retired people, ranchers, and those who commute to work at nearby communities and work in local businesses.

There is <> religious institution in the community. Businesses and organizations include: <>. Residents travel to nearby communities for other supplies and services.

Nonpostal services provided at the <> Post Office will be available at the <> Post Office. Government forms normally provided by the Post Office will also be available at the <> Post Office or by contacting your local government agency.

The following nonpostal concerns were expressed on the returned questionnaires, at the community meeting, on the petition, and on the congressional inquiry:

1. **Concern:** Customers were concerned about the loss of a gathering place and an information center.

Response: Residents may continue to meet informally, socialize, and share information at the <>, the church, other businesses, and residences in town. Nonpostal services provided at the <> Post Office will be available at the <> Post Office. Government forms normally provided by the Post Office will also be available at the <> Post Office or by contacting your local government agency.

2. **Concern:** Customers were concerned about loss of employment in the community.

Response: The <> postmaster has been reassigned to the <> Post Office located <> miles away. The postmaster relief (PMR) is a noncareer employee who was hired with the understanding the position would be temporary. The noncareer PMR from the local office was separated from the Postal Service when the office was suspended.

Exhibit 352.1 (p. 6)

Sample Revised Proposal to Close Post Office and Continue to Provide Rural Route Service

3. **Concern:** Customers expressed concern for loss of community identity.

Response: A community's identity derives from the interest and vitality of its residents and their use of its name. The Postal Service is helping to preserve community identity by continuing the use of the <> name and ZIP Code in addresses and in Publication 65, *National Five-Digit ZIP Code and Post Office Directory*.

4. **Concern:** Customers felt the Post Office should remain open since they paid taxes.

Response: The Postal Reorganization Act requires the Postal Service to operate on a breakeven basis. Most revenue is generated by the sale of postage, so when operational costs cannot be met, the Postal Service requests a rate increase. One advantage of this proposal is a savings for the Postal Service, which contributes in the long run to stable postage rates and savings for customers.

Based on information the Postal Service obtained, it was determined that there has been minimal growth in the area in recent years. Carrier service is expected to be able to handle any future growth in the community.

Based on the information obtained in the course of this discontinuance study, the Postal Service concludes this proposal will not adversely affect the community. Carrier service has been in effect since the suspension of the <> Post Office on <>.

III. EFFECT ON EMPLOYEES

The postmaster was reassigned to the <> Post Office, located <> miles away, on <>. The PMR was separated from the Postal Service when the office was suspended. No other postal employee will be adversely affected.

IV. ECONOMIC SAVINGS

The Postal Service estimates an annual savings of \$<> with a breakdown as follows:

Postmaster Salary (EAS-<>, Minimum, No COLA)	\$<>
Fringe Benefits @ 33.5%	\$<>
Rental Costs, Excluding Utilities	<u>+ \$<></u>
 Total Annual Costs	 \$<>
Less Annual Cost of Replacement Service	<u>- \$<></u>
 Total Annual Savings	 \$<>

A one-time expense of \$<> was incurred for installation of CBUs and one parcel locker.

V. OTHER FACTORS

The Postal Service has identified no other factors for consideration.

Exhibit 352.1 (p. 7)

Sample Revised Proposal to Close Post Office and Continue to Provide Rural Route Service

VI. SUMMARY

The Postal Service is proposing to close the suspended <> Post Office and provide delivery and retail services by a rural route administered by the <> Post Office, located <> miles away. Service will be provided to CBUs installed on the carrier's line-of-travel.

The postmaster was reassigned on <>. Operations were suspended on <>, due to termination of the lease by the lessor. There were no suitable alternate quarters available. The noncareer PMR was separated from the Postal Service. No other employee was adversely affected.

The <> Post Office provided <> hours of window service per week to <> customers. Daily retail window transactions averaged <>. There were no permit mailers or postage meter customers.

Carrier service will continue to provide effective and regular service to the community. There will no longer be a retail outlet in the community. However, delivery and retail services will be available from the carrier, alleviating the need to travel to a Post Office for service. Customers opting for carrier delivery will have 24-hour access to their mail. To help preserve community identity, the community name and the ZIP Code will be retained in the mailing address. The Postal Service will save an estimated \$<> annually. A disadvantage to some may be in meeting the carrier to transact business. However, it is not necessary to be present to conduct most Postal Service transactions.

Taking all available information into consideration, the Postal Service has determined that the advantages outweigh the disadvantages and this proposal is warranted.

VII. NOTICES

- A. **Support Materials.** Copies of all materials upon which this proposal is based are available for public inspection at the <> Post Office during normal office hours.
- B. **This is a proposal.** It is not a final determination to close this Post Office. If a final determination is made to close this Post Office, after public comments on this proposal are received and taken into account, a notice of that final determination will be posted in this office.

The final determination will contain instructions on how affected customers may appeal that decision to the Postal Rate Commission. Any such appeal must be received by the commission within 30 days of the posting of the final determination.

Thomas Dixon
Manager, Post Office Operations

Date

Exhibit 412

Sample Certification of the Record

<date>

MEMO TO THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Certification of the Record
 <name> Post Office
 Docket Number <ZIP Code>

This certifies that all comments and documents enclosed in the attached record are originals, or true and correct copies of the originals.

District Manager, Customer Service and Sales

Exhibit 413

Sample Record Transmittal Letter from Post Office Operations Manager to District Manager

<date>

District Manager, Customer Service and Sales

SUBJECT: Official Record

<Name> Post Office

Docket Number <ZIP Code>

Enclosed is the original and one copy of the official record concerning the <closing/consolidation> of the <name> Post Office.

Following your review, please retain the original record for district files and forward the copy with original photographs to the vice president, Delivery and Retail, at Headquarters with the attached cover memo.

A completed proposal checklist is included in the record.

Manager, Post Office Operations

Enclosures

Exhibit 422 (p. 1)

Log of Post Office Discontinuance Actions**LOG OF POST OFFICE DISCONTINUANCE ACTIONS**

Office Name, State, ZIP Code: _____

EAS Level: _____

District: _____

County: _____

Congressional District: _____

Proposal: ☐ Close ☐ Consolidate

Reason For Proposal: _____

Alternate Service Proposed: _____

Customers Affected: _____

Post Office box: _____

General Delivery: _____

Rural Route: _____

Highway Contract Route (HCR): _____

City Route: _____

Intermediate Rural: _____

Intermediate HCR: _____

Total number of customers: _____

Date:	Action:
	Office suspended. Reason suspended: _____
	Suspension notice sent to Headquarters. _____
	Postmaster vacancy occurred. Reason: _____
	OIC: Career: _____ Noncareer: _____ Other Employees: _____
	District manager authorization to study. _____
	Questionnaires sent to customers. Number sent: _____ Number Returned: _____
	Analysis: Favorable _____ Unfavorable _____ No Opinion _____
	Community meeting. Number attended: _____
	Petition received. Number of signatures: _____
	Concerns expressed: _____
	Congressional inquiry received: _____
	Concerns expressed: _____
	Proposal and checklist sent to district for review. _____
	Government Relations and Retail Operations notified by district 10 days before the 60-day posting (PS Form 4920 attached). _____

Exhibit 422 (p. 2)

Log of Post Office Discontinuance Actions

Date:	Action:
	Proposal and invitation for comments posted and round-dated.
	Proposal and invitation for comments removed and round-dated.
	Comment analysis: Favorable _____ Unfavorable _____ No Opinion _____ Total _____
	Revised proposal posting (if necessary).
	Revised proposal removal (if necessary).
	Comment analysis: Favorable _____ Unfavorable _____ No Opinion _____ Total _____
	Premature PRC appeal received.
	Concerns expressed:
	Coordinator verified CPO offeror(s) is still interested.
	Updated PS Form 4920 completed (if necessary).
	Certification of the official record.
	District transmittal of official record to vice president, Delivery and Retail, and copy of transmittal letter to vice president, Area Operations.
	Headquarters logged in official record (option entry).
	Record returned to district for additional consideration.
	Record returned to vice president, Delivery and Retail, after district additional consideration.
	Record returned as not warranted.
	Final determination posted at affected office(s) and round-dated.
	Final determination removed and round-dated.
	Postal Bulletin Post Office Change Announcement form sent to Headquarters.
	No appeals letter received from Headquarters.
	Appeal to PRC received.
	PRC opinion received on appeal: Affirmed: _____ Remanded: _____ USPS Withdrawn: _____
	Address management systems notified to updated AMS report.
	Discontinuance announced in Postal Bulletin No.: _____ Effective date: _____

Review Coordinator/person most familiar with the case:

_____	_____
Name/Title	Telephone Number
_____	_____
District Post Office Review Coordinator	Telephone Number

Exhibit 423

Sample Record Transmittal Letter from District to Headquarters

<date>

VICE PRESIDENT, DELIVERY AND RETAIL
UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE
475 L'ENFANT PLAZA ROOM 5621
WASHINGTON DC 20260-5621

SUBJECT: OFFICIAL RECORD

Enclosed for your review and approval is the official record to discontinue the <name> Post Office.

All appropriate actions have been taken, and we have considered the concerns/comments of affected customers. The record has been thoroughly reviewed, and all necessary documentation is included. All documents in the record are numbered and contain docket and item numbers on each page and a chronological index of all documents in the record is included. Effective and regular service will be provided to community residents by permanently implementing the alternative service proposed.

Refer questions about this Post Office discontinuance to <name of Postal Service representative>, Post Office Review Coordinator, at <telephone number> or <name and title> at <telephone number>.

<name>
District Manager
Customer Service and Sales

Enclosures: One copy of record
Headquarters' acknowledgment of receipt of official record (optional)
Self-addressed envelope

cc: Vice President, <name> Area (no enclosures)

Exhibit 424

Sample Headquarters Acknowledgment of Receipt of Official Record

Headquarters Acknowledgment of Receipt of Official Record

The official record to (close/consolidate) the _____ Post Office was received by Headquarters on _____.

Please contact the Headquarters coordinator at (202) 268-5083 or the address below for additional information regarding its status.

475 L'ENFANT PLAZA SW ROOM 5621
WASHINGTON DC 20260-5621

Enclosure: (self-addressed envelope)

***Note:** The acknowledgment form is optional and to be used at the district's discretion. Please provide the following memorandum **and a self-addressed return envelope** if you wish to receive an acknowledgment of Headquarters receipt of the record.

Exhibit 432.1

Sample Returned for Further Consideration Letter

<date>

DISTRICT MANAGER
CUSTOMER SERVICE AND SALES
<DISTRICT NAME>
<DISTRICT ADDRESS>

ATTENTION: Post Office Review Coordinator

SUBJECT: Final Determination
<POST OFFICE NAME, STATE, ZIP+4>

The proposal to discontinue the subject office is being returned for additional consideration. The following discrepancies were noted in the official record. The record should be thoroughly reviewed and necessary action taken prior to resubmission to Headquarters.

<List of Discrepancies>

Enter this memorandum into the official record.

If you have any questions, please contact Kim Matalik at (202) 268-5083.

Thank you for your assistance.

Frederick J. Hintenach
Manager, Customer Service Operations

Enclosure: Official Record

cc: Vice President, Area Operations, <area name> Area
Headquarters Library
Headquarters Historian

Exhibit 432.2a

Sample Proposal Not Warranted Letter

<date>

DISTRICT MANAGER
CUSTOMER SERVICE AND SALES
<DISTRICT NAME>
<DISTRICT ADDRESS>

ATTENTION: Post Office Review Coordinator
SUBJECT: Final Determination
<POST OFFICE NAME, STATE, ZIP+4>

The final determination to discontinue the subject Post Office has been determined not warranted. Specific discrepancies disclosed in the official record are listed below.

<List of Discrepancies>

Enter this memorandum into the official record.

If you have any questions, please contact Kim Matalik at (202) 268-5083.

Frederick J. Hintenach
Manager, Customer Service Operations

Enclosure: Official Record

cc: Vice President, Area Operations, <area name> Area
Headquarters Library
Headquarters Historian

Exhibit 432.2b

Sample Notice to Customers – Proposal to Discontinue Withdrawn

<date>

Dear Postal Customer:

As you are aware, the <name> Post Office has been under consideration for possible discontinuance and a change in service. I wish to thank you for your cooperation and patience during this investigative process. Your participation through questionnaires, the community meeting, and comments to the proposal have been most helpful to us in making our final decision.

The Postal Service has determined that a change in service is not warranted. The <name> Post Office will remain open. The proposal to close the office has been withdrawn, and no service changes will occur at this time.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact <name and title of Postal Service representative> at <telephone number> or <name and title> at <telephone number>.

Sincerely,

<name>
Manager, Post Office Operations

cc: District Manager, Customer Service and Sales
Post Office Review Coordinator

Exhibit 432.31 (p. 1)

Sample Final Determination Transmittal Letter

<date>

DISTRICT MANAGER
CUSTOMER SERVICE AND SALES
<DISTRICT NAME>
<DISTRICT ADDRESS>

ATTENTION: Post Office Review Coordinator
SUBJECT: Final Determination
<POST OFFICE NAME, STATE, ZIP+4>

The final determination to discontinue the subject Post Office is enclosed, along with a *Postal Bulletin* announcement form to be completed and returned to this office through the district.

Please provide public notice by prominently posting a copy of the final determination in the appropriate Post Office. Make a copy of the completed record available for public inspection during normal working hours at the Post Office during the mandatory 30-day posting period. Please note that the first day of the actual 30-day posting period begins at day "zero".

POSTAL BULLETIN – POST OFFICE CHANGE ANNOUNCEMENT

Complete the enclosed *Postal Bulletin Post Office Change Announcement* form in its entirety and send it to this office (in triplicate) on the day the final determination is removed. One form will be used to document the official record, one sent to the Accounting Systems Development office, and the third copy will be forwarded to the Headquarters Address Management. Please note that Headquarters Address Management will not announce any Post Office closing or consolidation except when requested in writing by this office. Announcement form mailing instructions are provided at the bottom of the form.

APPEAL

Providing there are no appeals to the Postal Rate Commission, the office will be officially discontinued the first Saturday that falls 90 days after posting the final determination. If the final determination is appealed, we will furnish you with appropriate instructions. Please contact this office if a different date is needed for the official discontinuance. It must be noted, however, that the law prohibits discontinuance sooner than 60 days after the date the final determination was posted.

NATIONAL FIVE-DIGIT ZIP CODE AND POST OFFICE DIRECTORY UPDATE

Please coordinate with your Address Management System (AMS) unit to make sure that the AMS database is updated according to existing Headquarters Address Management instructions. That request, however, shall not be made until this office has notified you in writing that no appeals are pending.

OFFICIAL RECORD

Chronologically file this memorandum in your copy of the official record. All final determination postings must be added to the record at the end of the 30-day public posting period. Do not send them to Headquarters. The official record should be archived at the district by the Post Office discontinuance coordinator after the appeal decision is rendered and/or the Post Office change announcement has appeared in the *Postal Bulletin*.

Exhibit 432.31 (p. 2)

Sample Final Determination Transmittal Letter

If you have any questions, please contact Kim Matalik at (202) 268-5083.

Thank you for your assistance.

Vice President
Delivery and Retail

Enclosures (2)

cc: Vice President, Area Operations, <area name> Area
Headquarters Library
Headquarters Historian

Exhibit 432.31 (p. 3)

Sample Final Determination Transmittal Letter

DATE OF POSTING: _____

DATE OF REMOVAL: _____

FINAL DETERMINATION TO CLOSE
THE SUSPENDED
<>, <> POST OFFICE
AND CONTINUE TO PROVIDE
RURAL ROUTE SERVICE

DOCKET NUMBER <>

Exhibit 432.31 (p. 4)

Sample Final Determination Transmittal Letter

I. RESPONSIVENESS TO COMMUNITY POSTAL NEEDS

The Postal Service has determined to close the <>, <>, Post Office and provide delivery and retail services by a rural route administered by the <>, <>, Post Office, located <> miles away. Service will be provided to cluster box units (CBUs) installed on the carrier's line-of-travel.

CBUs are secure free-standing units of individually locked mail compartments installed and maintained by the Postal Service at no cost to the customer. These units have been placed in the public right-of-way on the carrier's line-of-travel. Parcel lockers were also installed for customer convenience.

The postmaster was reassigned on <>. The Post Office facility had severe building deficiencies that included: <>. The lessor issued an eviction notice in lieu of making necessary repairs. No suitable alternate quarters were available therefore, service was suspended on <>.

The <> Post Office, an EAS-<> level, provided service <> hours per week from <> a.m. to <> p.m., Monday through Saturday, to <> Post Office box and <> intermediate rural customers. Retail services included the sale of stamps, stamped paper, and money orders; special services such as Registered Mail, Certified Mail, Insured Mail, COD Mail, and Express Mail services; and the acceptance and dispatch of all classes of mail. Daily retail window transactions averaged <>. Office receipts for the last 3 years were: \$<> (<> revenue units) in FY <>; \$<> (<> revenue units) in FY <>; and \$<> (<> revenue units) in FY <>. There were no permit mailers or postage meter customers.

Since the suspension of service, customers have received delivery and retail services from rural route delivery emanating from the <> Post Office, an EAS-<> level office located <> miles away. Window service hours at <> are from <> a.m. to <> p.m., Monday through Friday, and <> to <> on Saturday. There are <> Post Office boxes available.

On <>, representatives from the Postal Service were available at the <> to answer questions and provide information to customers. <> customers attended the meeting.

A petition supporting the retention of the <> Post Office was received on <>, with <> signatures.

On <>, <> questionnaires were distributed to delivery customers of the <> Post Office. Questionnaires were also available over the counter for retail customers at <>. <> questionnaires were returned. <> responses were favorable, <> unfavorable, and <> expressed no opinion regarding the proposed alternate service.

A congressional inquiry was received on <>.

The following Postal Service concerns were expressed on the returned questionnaires, at the community meeting, from customer letters, on the petition, and from the congressional inquiry:

1. **Concern:** A customer wanted to have the Post Office in her home.

Response: No suitable quarters are available in the community to house an independent Post Office. A new lease would require a building which meets federal guidelines.

2. **Concern:** Customers were concerned about a change of address.

Response: Customers will experience an address change. Mail will be forwarded in accordance with Postal Service regulations, and change-of-address forms are available from the Postal Service to assist customers in notifying correspondents of the change. An example of the change is shown below.

Present Address:	Proposed Address:
JOHN DOE	JOHN DOE
PO BOX I	100 MAIN ST
LAKEVIEW WY 88888	LAKEVIEW WY 88888

Exhibit 432.31 (p. 5)

Sample Final Determination Transmittal Letter

3. **Concern:** Customers inquired about where cluster box units would be located.
Response: By general agreement with the community, it was decided that the cluster box units would be installed in front of the <>.
4. **Concern:** Customers inquired about cluster box installation, maintenance, and snow removal.
Response: Cluster box units are purchased, installed, and maintained by the Postal Service at no expense to customers. At the community meeting, it was agreed that the community center would provide snow removal service.
5. **Concern:** Customers inquired about building a new facility or a mobile unit.
Response: New construction or the placement of a mobile unit or trailer is not feasible when regular and effective service can be provided by more cost-effective alternatives, such as rural delivery.
6. **Concern:** Customers were concerned about having to make an address change on their bank checks and stationery.
Response: Customers will be assigned a carrier route address. The new address will continue to use the community name and ZIP Code. Mail will be forwarded in accordance with Postal Service regulations, and change-of-address forms are available from the Postal Service to assist customers in notifying correspondents of the change. Customers may deplete their current supply of checks and stationery and make the address corrections when ordering new supplies.
7. **Concern:** Customers were concerned about later delivery of mail.
Response: The top priority of the Postal Service is to provide mail service in the most efficient manner possible because all of our costs are reflected in postage rates customers must pay. Delivery costs are one of our biggest expenses, so you can be assured that careful thought is given to the structure of each route.

A customer's location on a carrier's line-of-travel determines the time of day mail is delivered. This, of course, precludes providing early delivery of mail to every customer because, no matter how we structure a route, somebody must be last. We do, however, carefully consider the volume of mail for each route so that we can deliver the greatest amount of mail at the earliest possible hour. To minimize vehicle and fuel expenses we must also pay special attention to energy conservation measures. When the price of gasoline goes up one cent per gallon, our total gasoline cost rises more than \$1 million. Therefore, when structuring a route, we must balance our goal to deliver as much mail as possible as early as possible with the need to minimize the travel distance a route must cover.

We do regret the inconvenience to customers who would like, but cannot receive, early mail delivery. For those customers we offer alternative delivery services, such as Post Office box service or window caller service, that provide access to their mail earlier and throughout the day.
8. **Concern:** Customers questioned whether the facility was inadequate.
Response: A building inspection revealed serious deficiencies, and no suitable alternate quarters are available in the community. Deficiencies included <>. Lessor refused to make repairs and issued an eviction notice.
9. **Concern:** Customers asked why their Post Office was being discontinued while others were retained.
Response: Post Offices are reviewed on a case-by-case basis. When there is an emergency suspension in a small office, it is customary to conduct a study of the business activity and investigate the feasibility of providing service by alternate means.

Exhibit 432.31 (p. 6)

Sample Final Determination Transmittal Letter

10. **Concern:** Customers were concerned about mail security.

Response: Verification with the Postal Inspection Service and local law enforcement officials revealed <> reports of vandalism in the area in <>. CBUs provide the security of individually locked mail compartments.

11. **Concern:** Customers were concerned about having to travel to another Post Office for service.

Response: Services provided at the Post Office will be available from the carrier, and customers will not have to travel to another Post Office for service. Most transactions do not require meeting the carrier at the mailbox. *Stamps by Mail* and *Money Order Application* forms are available for customer convenience.

12. **Concern:** Customers were concerned about senior citizens.

Response: Carrier service is beneficial to many senior citizens and those who face special challenges because the carrier can provide delivery and retail services to CBUs. Customers do not have to make a special trip to the Post Office for service. Special provisions are made for hardship cases or special customer needs. To request an exception for hardship delivery, customers may contact the <> postmaster for more information.

13. **Concern:** Customers were concerned about the limited hours of operation at the Post Office.

Response: Postmaster level and office service hours are determined by a workload analysis which includes the number of deliveries and revenue. A workload analysis of <> indicated the office qualified for <> hours of service per week. Carrier service will provide 24-hour access to the mail.

14. **Concern:** Customers felt that the decision to close the <> Post Office had already been made and that the questionnaires were a waste of money.

Response: Operation of the <> Post Office was suspended because of an emergency but it has not been officially discontinued. An emergency suspension is a temporary change, not a permanent closing of the <> Post Office. If it is determined that a discontinuance of the <> Post Office should be pursued, a formal proposal will be posted in the <> Post Office at a later date.

15. **Concern:** Customers said they would miss the special attention and assistance provided by the personnel at the <> Post Office.

Response: Courteous and helpful service will be provided by personnel at the <> Post Office and from the carrier. Special assistance will be provided as needed.

Some advantages to the final determination are:

1. The carrier provides retail services, alleviating the need to go to the Post Office. *Stamps by Mail* order forms are provided for customer convenience.
2. Customers opting for carrier service will have 24-hour access to their mail.
3. Savings for the Postal Service contribute in the long run to stable postage rates and savings for customers.
4. CBUs offer the security of individually locked mail compartments. Parcel lockers provide convenient parcel delivery for customers.
5. Customers opting for carrier service will not have to pay Post Office box fees.
6. Saves time and energy for customers who drive to the Post Office to pick up mail.

Exhibit 432.31 (p. 7)

Sample Final Determination Transmittal Letter

Some disadvantages to the final determination are:

1. The loss of a retail outlet and a postmaster position in the community. Retail services are provided by the carrier.
2. Meeting the carrier at the CBUs to transact business. However, it is not necessary to be present to conduct most Postal Service transactions.
3. A change in mailing address. The community name and the ZIP Code will continue to be used in the new address. However, a carrier route address will be assigned.

The proposal to close the <>, <>, Post Office was posted with an invitation for public comment at the <> Post Office from <>, through <>. One unfavorable comment was received. The following additional concern was expressed on a customer comment form and has not previously been identified in this final determination:

1. **Concern:** One customer stated the closure of the Post Office would destroy the community.

Response: A community's identity derives from the interest and vitality of its residents and their use of its name. The Postal Service is helping to preserve community identity by continuing the use of the <> name and ZIP Code in addresses and in Publication 65, *National Five Digit ZIP Code and Post Office Directory*.

Taking all available information into consideration, the Postal Service concludes this final determination will provide a maximum degree of effective and regular postal services to the community.

II. EFFECT ON COMMUNITY

<> is an incorporated rural community located in <> County. The community is administered politically by a town council. Police protection is provided by the <>. The <> provides fire protection. The community is comprised of retired people, farmers, and those who commute to work at nearby communities and work in local businesses.

There is <> religious institution in the community. Businesses and organizations include: <>. Residents travel to nearby communities for other supplies and services.

Nonpostal services provided at the <> Post Office will be available at the <> Post Office. Government forms normally provided by the Post Office will also be available at the <> Post Office or by contacting your local government agency.

The following nonpostal concerns were expressed on the returned questionnaires and at the community meeting:

1. **Concern:** Customers were concerned about the loss of a gathering place and an information center.
Response: Residents may continue to meet informally, socialize, and share information at the <>, the church, other businesses and residences in town. Nonpostal services provided at the <> Post Office will be available at the <> Post Office. Government forms normally provided by the Post Office will also be available at the <> Post Office or by contacting your local government agency.
2. **Concern:** Customers were concerned about loss of employment in the community.
Response: The <> postmaster has been reassigned to the <> Post Office located three miles away. The postmaster relief (PMR) was a noncareer employee who was hired with the understanding the position would be temporary. The noncareer PMR from the local office was separated from the Postal Service when the office was suspended.

Exhibit 432.31 (p. 8)

Sample Final Determination Transmittal Letter

3. **Concern:** Customers expressed concern for loss of community identity.

Response: A community's identity derives from the interest and vitality of its residents and their use of its name. The Postal Service is helping to preserve community identity by continuing the use of the <> name and ZIP Code in addresses and in Publication 65, *National Five-Digit ZIP Code and Post Office Directory*.

4. **Concern:** Customers felt the Post Office should remain open since they paid taxes.

Response: The Postal Service is not supported by tax dollars and must meet expenses by revenue it generates. Operational savings for the Postal Service contributes in the long run to stable postage rates and savings for customers.

Based on information the Postal Service obtained, it was determined that there has been minimal growth in the area in recent years. Carrier service is expected to be able to handle any future growth in the community.

Based on information obtained in the course of this discontinuance study, the Postal Service concludes this final determination will not adversely affect the community. Carrier service has been in effect since the suspension of the <> Post Office on <>.

III. EFFECT ON EMPLOYEES

The Postmaster was reassigned to the <> Post Office, located <> miles away, on <>. The noncareer PMR was separated from the Postal Service when the office was suspended. No other Postal Service employee will be adversely affected.

IV. ECONOMIC SAVINGS

The Postal Service estimates an annual savings of \$<> with a breakdown as follows:

Postmaster Salary (EAS-<>, Step I, No COLA)	\$<>
Fringe Benefits @ 33.5%	\$<>
Rental Costs, Excluding Utilities	<u>+ \$<></u>
Total Annual Costs	\$<>
Less Cost of Replacement Service	<u>- \$<></u>
Total Annual Savings	\$<>

A one-time expense of \$<> was incurred for installation of CBUs and one parcel locker.

V. OTHER FACTORS

The Postal Service has identified no other factors for consideration.

VI. SUMMARY

The Postal Service has decided to close the <> Post Office and provide delivery and retail services by rural delivery administered by the <> Post Office, located <> miles away. Service will be provided to CBUs installed on the carrier's line-of-travel.

The postmaster was reassigned on <>. Operations were suspended at that time due to termination of the lease by the lessor. There were no suitable alternate quarters available. The noncareer PMR was separated from the Postal Service. No other employee was adversely affected.

The <> Post Office provides <> hours of window service per week to <> customers. Daily retail window transactions averaged <>. There are no permit mailers or postage meter customers.

Exhibit 432.31 (p. 9)

Sample Final Determination Transmittal Letter

Carrier service will continue to provide effective and regular service to the community. There will no longer be a retail outlet in the community. However, delivery and retail services will be available from the carrier, alleviating the need to travel to a Post Office for service. Customers opting for carrier delivery will have 24-hour access to their mail. To help preserve community identity, the community name and ZIP Code will be retained in the mailing address. The Postal Service will save an estimated \$<> annually. A disadvantage to some may be in meeting the carrier to transact business. However, it is not necessary to be present to conduct most Postal Service transactions.

Taking all available information into consideration, the Postal Service has determined that the advantages outweigh the disadvantages and this final determination is warranted.

VII. NOTICES

- A. **Support Materials.** Copies of all materials upon which this final determination is based are available for public inspection at the <> Post Office during normal office hours.
- B. **Appeal Rights.** This final determination to close the <> Post Office may be appealed by any person served by that office to the Postal Rate Commission at 1333 H Street NW, Suite 300, Washington DC 20268-0001. Appeals must be received by the Commission within 30 days of the date this final determination is posted. If an appeal is filed, copies of appeal documents prepared by the Postal Rate Commission or the parties to the appeal will be made available for public inspection at the <> Post Office during normal office hours.

Henry A. Pankey
Vice President, Delivery and Retail

Date

Exhibit 432.32

Sample Letter of Instructions for Posting the Final Determination

<date>

<POSTMASTER/OFFICIER IN CHARGE>

<ADDRESS>

<CITY, STATE, ZIP+4>

SUBJECT: Letter of Instructions Regarding Posting of the <Post Office Name, ZIP> Final Determination
Docket No. <ZIP>

Please post in the lobby the enclosed final determination to close the <> Post Office. The final determination must be posted in a prominent place from <date> through close of business on <date>. It must be posted for at least 30 days and the first day does not count. Additionally, please take down the posted "Notice of Taking Proposal and Comments under Internal Consideration" and return to this office.

Round-date stamp the cover of the final determination on the date of posting and on the date of removal. Please send the final determination to me by close of business on <date>.

Additional copies of the final determination are enclosed. Provide them to customers upon request.

Also enclosed is the official record upon which this final determination is based. Customers may read it; however, they may not remove it from your office. When a customer requests a copy of the record, provide it upon payment of any fees prescribed in *Administrative Support Manual*, section 352.6. If you do not have photocopy equipment, take the customer's name, address and telephone number and contact the district for needed copies.

If there are any questions, please contact me at <telephone number>.

<name>

Post Office Review Coordinator

<district name> District

Enclosures: Final Determination
Official Record

Exhibit 432.33

Postal Bulletin Post Office Change Announcement Form**Postal Bulletin Post Office Change Announcement Form
Final Determination 30-Day Posting Dates****Post Office Final Determination Posting Dates***

Date posted: _____

Actual discontinuance date: _____

Date removed: _____

Official discontinuance date: _____

No. of days posted: _____

(Headquarters entry): _____

Note: Unless otherwise stated, the official discontinuance date listed in the *Postal Bulletin* is the first Saturday that falls 90 days after the final determination is posted. For a community Post Office, classified station, or classified branch, the discontinuance date is 90 days after the Headquarters approval date.

**BEFORE CHANGE
POST OFFICE INFORMATION**Post Office
Name and State: _____

ZIP Code: _____ Finance no.: _____

County/Parish: _____

Type of discontinuance:
Consolidate () Close ()**AFTER CHANGE
POST OFFICE INFORMATION**Administrative
Post Office: _____

ZIP Code: _____ Finance No.: _____

County/Parish: _____

Original name retained? Yes () No ()
New last line of customer address is:
_____**Type of discontinued facility**Post Office ()
Classified Station () Branch ()
Community Post Office (CPO) ()**Type of replacement service**Post Office () Route ()
Classified Station () Branch ()
Contract Unit () Community Post Office (CPO) ()

Coordinator name and title: _____

Date: _____

Telephone: _____

(Location) District: _____

Mailing instructions for independent Post Office discontinuance. When the final determination is removed, send the round-dated front cover showing the posting dates and three copies of this *Postal Bulletin Post Office Change Announcement* form to:

RETAIL OPERATIONS
UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE
475 L'ENFANT PLAZA SW ROOM 5621
WASHINGTON DC 20260-5621

The announcement cannot be made in the *Postal Bulletin* unless this form is submitted to the above address. Do not send directly to Address Management, Postal Service Headquarters.

Mailing instructions for CPO/classified station/classified branch discontinuance. Immediately submit three copies of this announcement form to the above address. For nonsuspended offices, enclose a copy of the letter sent to customers notifying them of the discontinuance.

For more information, call (202) 268-5083.

Headquarters entry: () KM () HS

*Final determination posting is not required for CPO, classified station, or classified branch discontinuance. Final determination for an independent Post Office must be posted for at least 30 days.

Exhibit 432.35

Sample Letter of Instruction to AMS

<date>

ADDRESS MANAGEMENT

SUBJECT: Notice of Discontinuance

<name> Post Office

Docket No. <ZIP Code>

Attached is a copy of the *Postal Bulletin Post Office Change Announcement* form that was submitted to Headquarters for announcement in the *Postal Bulletin*. Please update your Address Management System files accordingly. The <name> Post Office will be officially discontinued on <date>.

Post Office Review Coordinator

Attachment

Exhibit 433.1

Sample Notification Letter to District Personnel

<date>

Manager, Human Resources
 Manager, Finance
 Manager, Administrative Services
 Manager, Maintenance
 Manager, Transportation & Networks
 Manager, SDO
 Postmaster <affected offices>
 Manager, Consumer Affairs

Manager, Post Office Operations
 Manager, Marketing
 Manager, Operations Programs
 Manager, Address Management Systems
 Manager, In-Plant Processing
 Postal Inspection Service
 Postmaster, <administrative office>
 Manager, Facilities Service Office

SUBJECT: Post Office Discontinuance
 <name>, <state>-9998

Effective close of business <date>, service will be discontinued at the <name> Post Office.

Delivery and retail services will be provided to the community by a <type of alternate service> administered by the <> Post Office. Processing and Distribution will continue to label and pouch the <> mail as in the past; however, the mail will be dispatched to the <> Post Office. The <> carrier will case and deliver all mail for the <> customers to <roadside mailboxes/cluster box units> and will provide collection of outgoing mail. The collection requirement of the HCR <> will be eliminated effective <date>.

The finance manager must schedule the Internal Control Group Analyst to arrange the transfer of accountability. Human Resources will need to separate <>, the noncareer OIC and <>, the noncareer PMR, effective <date>.

Please take appropriate action regarding this change. Please ensure that appropriate staff members are notified and information shared. If you need further information, please contact <>, Post Office Review Coordinator, at <telephone number>.

District Manager
 Customer Service and Sales

Exhibit 433.2 (p. 1)

Sample Notification Letter to Customers

<date>

POSTMASTER

SUBJECT: NOTICE OF DISCONTINUANCE OF THE <NAME> POST OFFICE

Please post the enclosed notice in the lobby for 30 days to notify customers of the <name> Post Office that the office will be officially closed on <date>.

<name>
Post Office Review Coordinator
<name> District

Enclosure

Exhibit 433.2 (p. 2)

Sample Notification Letter to Customers

<date>

Dear Postal Customer:

This is to advise you that the <name> Post Office will be officially <closed/consolidated> on <date>.

Effective <date>, delivery and retail services will be provided by <type of delivery>. Customers will be required to change their addresses. Mail will be forwarded in accordance with Postal Service regulations, and change-of-address forms are available from the Postal Service to assist customers in notifying correspondents of the change. Your new address is shown below.

Present Address:	New Address:
JOHN DOE	JOHN DOE
PO BOX I	100 MAIN ST
<>, <> <>	<>, <> <>

Thank you for your input in helping the Postal Service determine the best form of mail service to meet the needs of the community. Retail and delivery services from the <name> Post Office will ensure effective and regular services to the <name> community.

We appreciate all comments and concerns that were expressed in the process and we will continue to provide the best mail service to our customers.

Sincerely,

<name>
Manager, Post Office Operations

Exhibit 514a

Sample No Appeals Letter

<date>

DISTRICT MANAGER
CUSTOMER SERVICE AND SALES
<DISTRICT NAME> DISTRICT
<ADDRESS>
<CITY, STATE, ZIP+4>

ATTENTION: Post Office Review Coordinator
SUBJECT: Post Office Discontinuance
<Post Office Name, ZIP+4>

This is to inform you that no appeals have been filed against the discontinuance of the subject Post Office. You may proceed with the administrative action required for discontinuance.

Please remember to notify your local Address Management Systems Office of the Post Office change status so that Publication 65, *National Five-Digit ZIP Code and Post Office Directory*, may be updated.

This office will provide information to Headquarters Address Management for the *Postal Bulletin*. A copy of that announcement must be added to your copy of the official record before it is archived at the district by the district Post Office review coordinator.

This memorandum must be filed in the official record.

If you have any questions, please contact Kim Matalik at (202) 268-5083.

Frederick J. Hintenach
Manager, Retail Operations

cc: Vice President, Area Operations, <area name> Area

Exhibit 514b
Sample Appeal Filed Letter



<date>

DISTRICT MANAGER
CUSTOMER SERVICE AND SALES
<NAME OF DISTRICT> DISTRICT

ATTENTION: POST OFFICE REVIEW COORDINATOR
SUBJECT: Announcement of Appeal to the Discontinuance of the
<Office Name, State> Post Office, Docket No. <ZIP Code>

This is to advise you that an appeal to the final determination to discontinue the <office name, state> Post Office has been filed with the Postal Rate Commission. The Headquarters managing counsel, legal policy and ratemaking office, will provide you with copies of all pleadings, notices, orders, briefs, and opinions filed in the appeal proceeding.

In accordance with the *Postal Operations Manual*, please ensure that a copy of these documents, as well as the final determination, are prominently displayed and made available for inspection by the public at the affected Post Offices until the Commission has issued its final order and opinion. The Postal Rate commission has up to 120 days (four months) to consider the appeal and issue its decision.

No final action may be taken until the final decision has been made and you have received written notification of that decision along with appropriate instructions.

If you have any questions, please contact Kim Matalik at (202) 268-5083.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Frederick J. Hintenach
Manager, Customer Service Operations

cc: Vice President, Area Operations, <area name> Area
Government Relations and Public Policy

Exhibit 531 (p. 1)

Sample Determination Affirmed Notice and PRC Opinion

<date>

DISTRICT MANAGER
CUSTOMER SERVICE AND SALES
<DISTRICT NAME> DISTRICT
<ADDRESS>
<CITY, STATE, ZIP+4>

ATTENTION: POST OFFICE REVIEW COORDINATOR
SUBJECT: Post Office Discontinuance
<Office Name, State, ZIP+4>

On <date>, the Postal Rate Commission (PRC) affirmed the Final Determination to discontinue the <office name, state> Post Office (copy attached). Please post the PRC decision for 30 days at each office where the Final Determination was posted. If you need additional copies, you may photocopy the attached Postal Rate Commission decision.

The official discontinuance date is the first Saturday that falls 90 days after the PRC's decision. Please complete the enclosed *Postal Bulletin Post Office Change Announcement* form in its entirety and send it to this office (in triplicate). One form will be used to document the official record, one sent to the Accounting Systems Development, and the third copy will be forwarded to Headquarters Address Management for the Post Office change announcement. Please note that Headquarters Address Management will not announce any Post Office closing or consolidation except when requested in writing by this office. Announcement form mailing instructions are provided at the bottom of the form.

The final discontinuance procedures for the <office name, state> Post Office may now begin.

Frederick J. Hintenach
Manager, Customer Service Operations

Attachment

cc: Vice President, Area Operations, <area name> Area

Exhibit 531 (p. 2)

Sample Determination Affirmed Notice and PRC Opinion**DOCKET SECTION**

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
POSTAL RATE COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20268-0001

RECEIVED
APR 21 12 00 PM '98
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20530

Before

Chairman Gleiman, Vice Chairman Haley
Commissioners Goldway, LeBlanc and Omas

In the Matter of:

Docket No. A98-1

Nassau, Minnesota 56272
(Verene Putzier, Petitioner)



COMMISSION OPINION AFFIRMING DECISION
UNDER 39 U.S.C. § 404(b)

Washington, D.C. 20268-0001
April 21, 1998

Exhibit 531 (p. 3)

Sample Determination Affirmed Notice and PRC Opinion

Docket No. A98-1

1

I. Introduction

This opinion is issued pursuant to section 404(b) of the Postal Reorganization Act (39 U.S.C. § 404(b)). The Commission affirms the Postal Service's decision to close the Nassau, Minnesota post office and provide service to the residents of Nassau by rural route delivery. As explained in greater detail below, the Commission finds, after considering section 404(b) of the Act and the applicable regulations, that the administrative record shows the Postal Service acted within the statutory guidelines in reaching its decision.

On December 22, 1997, the Commission received a letter from James Schmeichel, the current officer-in-charge of the Nassau, Minnesota post office. Construing Mr. Schmeichel's letter as a petition for review pursuant to section 404(b) of the Postal Reorganization Act (39 U.S.C. § 404(b)), the Commission, on December 23, 1997, established Docket No. A98-1 to consider the appeal. Subsequently, on January 15, 1998, the Commission received separate letters in opposition to the closing of the Nassau post office from Verene Putzier, Linda Wildung and Margaret Davis. Ms. Wildung, the Mayor of Nassau, enclosed a petition bearing the signatures of 83 individuals.

On January 28, 1998, the Postal Service filed a motion to dismiss the appeal on the grounds that (1) Mr. Schmeichel's letter dated December 18, 1997, did not constitute a valid appeal under section 404(b) of title 39, United States Code, and section 111(a) of the Commission's Rules of Practice because he is not a "person served" by the Nassau post office, as required by section 404(b), and his letter did not indicate an intent to appeal, as required by section 111(a); and (2) the customers' letters received by the Commission on January 15, 1998, were not received within 30 days after the posting of the Postal Service's Final Determination on December 15, 1997.

On February 13, 1998, the Commission received a second letter from James Schmeichel, the officer-in-charge of the Nassau post office, stating that

Exhibit 531 (p. 4)

Sample Determination Affirmed Notice and PRC Opinion

Docket No. A98-1

2

he did not intend for his initial letter to the Commission to be construed as an appeal and requesting that such letter not be considered as an appeal.

On March 5, 1998, the Commission issued Order No. 1209 denying the Postal Service's motion to dismiss on the grounds that the actions of the Postal Service prejudiced Ms. Putzier's ability to comply with the 30-day filing requirement.¹

On February 9, 1998, the Commission received Participant Statements (PRC Form 61) filed by Verene Putzier, Margaret Davis and Linda Wildung. All of the letters and Participant Statements received by the Commission have been consolidated into this docket. The Postal Service filed its "Comments" regarding the Nassau appeal on March 16, 1998.

II. Summary of the Postal Service's Determination**Background**

Nassau is an incorporated rural community located in Lac Qui Parle County. Situated close to the South Dakota border, it is approximately 45 miles northwest of Montevideo, Minnesota. Most of Nassau's residents are farmers, retired people and individuals who commute to work at nearby communities or work in local businesses. Nassau is in Minnesota's second Congressional district. Record Items 7 and 16. There are six businesses, two organizations and two churches located within the community. There is no school. Businesses include Wildung Implement, Nassau Farmers' Elevator, Bucky's Bar, Wildung Trucking, Horvik Manufacturing and a hairdresser. Nassau is administered politically by a mayor and city council. Police protection is provided by the Lac Qui Parle County Sheriff's Department, and fire protection is provided

¹ A total of 10 days elapsed between the date the appeal letter was mailed by Ms. Putzier and the date it was received by the Commission. PRC Order No. 1209 at 3.

Exhibit 531 (p. 5)

Sample Determination Affirmed Notice and PRC Opinion

Docket No. A98-1

3

by the Nassau Volunteer Fire Department. Record Items 7 and 16 and Final Determination (FD) at 6.

On September 3, 1994, the Nassau postmaster was promoted to a position at another postal installation, and pursuant to Postal Service policy, the vacancy in the Nassau position prompted a review of Nassau's service needs. Record Item 5. During the review process, a career employee from a nearby post office was installed as the temporary officer-in-charge. FD at 1.

The Nassau post office occupies a leased building which is in good condition and is accessible to the handicapped. The lease expires on April 30, 2002. Record Items 4 and 6.

The Nassau post office workload is rated at the EAS-C level. The post office is open 24 hours a week: 9:30 a.m. to 1:54 p.m., Monday through Friday, and 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. on Saturday. On average, there are 10 retail window transactions daily. Daily receipts average 176 mail pieces, and dispatches average 87 mail pieces. Record Items 11, 12, 13 and 16. The post office provides service to 41 post office box customers. There is one postage meter customer and no permit mailers. Record Items 16 and 35.

Revenues for the Nassau post office in Fiscal Years 1994, 1995 and 1996 were \$13,054, \$9,610 and \$10,415, respectively. FD at 1. The post office's estimated annual operating costs are \$25,044, including \$14,340 for an EAS-C postmaster's salary, \$4,804 for fringe benefits and \$5,900 for rental costs. The annual cost of providing rural route service to Nassau customers is estimated by the Postal Service to be \$3,035. Therefore, estimated annual savings are \$22,009. A one-time expense of \$1,267 will be incurred for the installation of cluster box units (CBU's) and parcel lockers. FD at 7.

In lieu of service from the Nassau post office, delivery and retail services would be provided by a rural route administered by the Marietta post office, located five miles from Nassau. Customers would have the option of service to roadside mailboxes, installed by customers on the carrier's line of travel, or to cluster box units, installed and maintained by the Postal Service at no expense

Exhibit 531 (p. 6)

Sample Determination Affirmed Notice and PRC Opinion

Docket No. A98-1

4

to the customer. Parcel lockers also would be installed for customers' convenience. Administrative responsibility for the one postage meter would be transferred to the Marietta post office. FD at 1 and Record Item 35. The Marietta post office, an EAS-11 level post office, is open 33 hours a week and has 56 post office boxes available for rent. FD at 1. While the community's name would continue to be used in customers' mailing addresses, the Zip Code would be changed to 56257. "Nassau" would continue to be listed in the *National Five-Digit Zip Code and Post Office Directory*. FD at 6 and 7.

Postal Service Procedures

The procedural requirements for providing adequate notice of the Postal Service's intention to close a post office and an opportunity for public comment are found at section 404(b) of the Act, as well as 39 *Code of Federal Regulations* § 241.3. In this case, the Postal Service commenced its decision-making process by sending the affected customers a letter and questionnaire. By letters distributed on November 14, 1995, the Postal Service solicited community opinion concerning its proposal to close the Nassau post office and provide rural route delivery service to either a cluster box unit or a roadside mailbox. Record Item 14. Questionnaires also were made available over the counter to retail customers of the Nassau post office. FD at 1. Thirty-seven questionnaires were returned. According to the administrative record, 10 customers favored delivery to roadside boxes, six opposed this option and 21 expressed no opinion. With respect to delivery to cluster box units, the record shows that 10 customers favored the option, eight opposed it and 19 expressed no opinion. Record Items 20A through 20KK.

The following concerns regarding the proposed closing were among those expressed by Nassau customers on the returned questionnaire forms: that it would be more difficult to mail and receive packages and obtain other retail services; that roadside boxes are subject to vandalism; and that customers' addresses would be changed. Record Items 20A through 20KK.

Exhibit 531 (p. 7)

Sample Determination Affirmed Notice and PRC Opinion

Docket No. A98-1

5

In the November 14, 1995, cover letter to the customer questionnaire, the Postal Service announced that postal representatives would meet with interested parties at the Nassau City Hall and Senior Center on December 11, 1995, at 7:00 p.m. to answer questions and address customers' concerns about the proposed change in service. Record Item 14. Fifteen customers attended the meeting. Record Item 18. The following concerns were among those expressed at the community meeting: that the community would lose its Zip Code; that it would be more difficult to purchase stamps and mail large packages; that customers deserved a post office since they paid taxes; would the HCR carrier accept parcels that were not prepared in time for the rural carrier's collection; would the rural carrier pick up parts mailed by the implement dealer; and where would the cluster box units be located. Record Item 19.

In compliance with the 60-day notice requirement of the Act (section 404(b)(1) of title 39, United States Code), the Postal Service posted the "Proposal to Close the Nassau, MN. Post Office and Continue to Provide Rural Route Service," with "Invitation for Comments," from March 4 through May 3, 1996, at the Nassau and Marietta post offices. Record Items 35A through 35D. The Postal Service received comments from three customers during the posting period, expressing the following additional concern: that senior citizens and handicapped individuals would be adversely affected by the closing of the post office. Record Items 36 and 37.

The proposal to close the Nassau post office and all supporting documents were certified on May 31, 1996. On October 30, 1997, the Postal Service issued its "Final Determination to Close the Nassau, MN Post Office and Extend to Provide [sic] Rural Route Service." The Final Determination was posted on December 15, 1997, at both the Nassau and Marietta post offices. The Commission received the administrative record for Docket No. A98-1, Nassau, Minnesota on March 6, 1998.

Exhibit 531 (p. 8)

Sample Determination Affirmed Notice and PRC Opinion

Docket No. A98-1

6

III. Commission Review of the Record

Under section 404(b) of title 39, United States Code, the Postal Service must afford patrons the opportunity to present their concerns regarding a proposal to close or consolidate a post office within their community. Additionally, the law requires the Postal Service to consider the following four specific factors: the effect on the community; the effect on Postal Service employees; whether a maximum degree of effective and regular postal services will be provided; and the economic savings to the Postal Service.

In its Final Determination, "Comments Regarding Appeal" and letters to residents of Nassau, the Postal Service addressed the following concerns brought to its attention through the customer questionnaires, the community meeting, the posting of the proposal and the letters to the Commission on appeal:

Delivery and retail services - The Postal Service explained to Nassau customers that carrier service would enable them to conduct virtually all transactions directly with the carrier or by leaving the necessary forms and money in their mailboxes; that there would be no need, in most cases, to travel to another post office for service; that most transactions do not require meeting the carrier at the mailbox; and that they would have access to their mail 24 hours a day. The Postal Service explained that rural carriers are able to provide the same retail services that are provided by the post office. These services include purchasing stamps, mailing packages, purchasing money orders, and obtaining special services such as certified, registered, COD and Express Mail. With respect to mailing packages, the Postal Service explained that rural carriers will accept packages at the mailbox without a customer being present, provided the package weighs less than one pound and the postage is fully prepaid. The customer should estimate the amount of postage needed and leave the money in the mailbox. The carrier will take the package to the post office for weighing, and it will be mailed that same day. FD at 1, 2 and 5.

Exhibit 531 (p. 9)

Sample Determination Affirmed Notice and PRC Opinion

Docket No. A98-1

7

Mail security - The Postal Service advised customers that the Postal Inspection Service and local law enforcement officials had identified no recent reports of mail theft or vandalism in the Nassau area. Customers were advised that they could place locks on their mailboxes if the boxes have slots large enough to accommodate a customer's normal daily mail volume. Also, customers will have the option of delivery to cluster box units which provide the security of individually locked mail compartments. FD at 2.

Senior citizens and the handicapped - The Postal Service explained that carrier service is often more beneficial to senior citizens and the handicapped because customers do not have to travel to a post office to receive mail or obtain retail services. The Postal Service assured customers that special provisions would be made for hardship cases or special customer needs. In hardship cases, delivery can be made to the home of the customer. The Postal Service advised customers that any request for a change in delivery method must be submitted in writing to the Marietta postmaster. FD at 4 and "Comments" at 4.

Large parcels and accountable mail - With respect to the delivery of large parcels and accountable mail, the Postal Service explained that such items will be delivered to the customer's residence if the customer lives less than one-half mile from the carrier's line of travel. If the customer lives farther, or is not at home, a notice will be left in the mailbox. Attempted delivery items will be taken back to the Marietta post office. Customers may pick up the items at the post office, request delivery on another day or authorize delivery to another party. Large parcels may be left in a secure location outside the mailbox if authorized by the customer. FD at 3.

Change of address - The Postal Service explained that customers would be assigned carrier route addresses. While the community name would be retained in customers' addresses, the Zip Code would be changed to ensure expeditious delivery of the mail. Mail would be forwarded in accordance with postal regulations, and change of address forms would be available from the

Exhibit 531 (p. 10)

Sample Determination Affirmed Notice and PRC Opinion

Docket No. A98-1

8

Postal Service to assist customers in notifying correspondents of the change. Nassau would continue to be listed in the *National Five-Digit Zip Code and Post Office Directory*. FD at 3 and 6 and "Comments" at 4.

Location of CBUs - In response to customers who were concerned about the location of the cluster box units, the Postal Service advised that the CBU's would be located within the community. The convenience of location and accessibility would be important factors in evaluating possible CBU locations. FD at 5.

Other concerns - In response to customers who questioned why their post office was being closed while others remained open, the Postal Service explained that post offices are reviewed on a case-by-case basis. When a vacancy occurs in a small office it is customary to conduct a study of the business activity of the office and examine the feasibility of providing service by alternate means. FD at 3. In response to customers who expressed the view that their post office should remain open since they paid taxes, the Postal Service explained that it is not supported by tax dollars and must meet expenses by generating revenue. FD at 3. In response to customers who questioned whether the HCR carrier would pick up parcels that were not mailed in time for pickup by the rural carrier, the Postal Service explained that HCR carriers do not perform mail delivery or retail services under the terms of their contracts. FD at 5. In response to the local implement dealer who asked whether the rural carrier would be able to pick up the company's parts for mailing, the Postal Service stated that the carrier will pick up the parts if they meet all mailing requirements, including those relating to weight and girth. The Postal Service offered to provide the company with a rate chart and scale to assist the dealer in determining the correct amount of postage. FD at 5 and Record Item 35 at 5.

Exhibit 531 (p. 11)

Sample Determination Affirmed Notice and PRC Opinion

Docket No. A98-1

9

IV. Commission Findings

Pursuant to the Commission's review of the administrative record in Docket No. A98-1, the proposal to close the post office in Nassau, Minnesota, the Commission finds that the Postal Service adequately addressed the concerns of the residents of Nassau. The Commission finds that the administrative record is accurate and complete and that the applicable procedural requirements have been satisfied.

V. Conclusion

The Commission concludes, based on its review of the administrative record, that the determination of the Postal Service to close the Nassau, Minnesota post office meets the standards prescribed in section 404(b) of title 39, United States Code, and, therefore, is affirmed.

By the Commission.

(SEAL)



Margaret P. Crenshaw

Secretary

Exhibit 532.1 (p. 1)

Sample PRC Opinion Remanding Determination

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
POSTAL RATE COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20268-0001

RECEIVED
SEP 23 9 59 AM '97
POSTAL RATE COMMISSION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

Before

Chairman Gleiman, Vice Chairman Haley
Commissioners LeBlanc, Quick and Ormas

In the Matter of:

Docket No. A97-20

Popejoy, Iowa 50227
(Thelma Stewart, Petitioner)



COMMISSION OPINION REMANDING DECISION
UNDER 39 U.S.C. § 404(b)

Washington, D.C. 20268-0001
September 23, 1997

Exhibit 532.1 (p. 2)

Sample PRC Opinion Remanding Determination

Docket No. A97-20

1

I. Introduction

This opinion is issued pursuant to section 404(b) of the Postal Reorganization Act (39 U.S.C. § 404(b)). The Commission remands the Postal Service's decision to close the Popejoy, Iowa post office and provide service to the residents of Popejoy by rural route delivery. As explained in greater detail below, the Commission finds, after considering section 404(b) of the Act and the applicable regulations, that the Postal Service did not act within the statutory guidelines in reaching its decision.

On May 27, 1997, the Commission received an appeal letter from Thelma Stewart (Petitioner) objecting to the Final Determination of the Postal Service to close the Popejoy post office and establish rural route service. On May 30, 1997, the Commission established Docket No. A97-20 for review of the Postal Service's administrative record.

Subsequently, additional letters objecting to the closing of the Popejoy post office were received from Alma McElvania (on June 2), Bryce and Dora Collins (on June 4), Carol Ellingson (on June 4), Minnie Kielman (on June 4), Ruth Johnson (on June 5), Dina Baor (on June 5), Tracy Nohrenberg (on June 5), Glennason Parrott (on June 6), Robert L. Kramer (on June 9), Julie A. Hook (on June 10), Bryce Collins, Mayor of Popejoy (on June 18) and Dora Collins (on August 26). Also on June 5, 1997, the Commission received a petition containing the signatures of 51 individuals opposed to the closing of the Popejoy post office, and on June 18, 1997, the Commission received a Participant Statement (PRC Form 61) filed by Petitioner Thelma Stewart.

The letters, petition and Participant Statement received by the Commission have been consolidated into this docket. The Postal Service filed its "Comments" regarding the Popejoy appeal on July 22, 1997.

Exhibit 532.1 (p. 3)

Sample PRC Opinion Remanding Determination

Docket No. A97-20

2

II. Summary of the Postal Service's Determination**Background**

Popejoy is an incorporated rural community located in Franklin County, Iowa. It is situated approximately 10 miles northwest of Iowa Falls and five miles east of Interstate 35. Most of Popejoy's residents are farmers, retired people and individuals who commute to work at nearby communities or work in local businesses. Popejoy is in Iowa's fifth Congressional district. Record Items 12 and 22. There are six businesses and one church located within the community.¹ There is a town hall and a senior citizen center, but there is no school. Businesses include Soil Concepts, Chestmore Welding, Latimer Grain Service, Farmers' State Bank, Gardalen Hardware and Popejoy Café. Popejoy is administered politically by a mayor and town council. Police protection is provided by the Franklin County Sheriff's Department, and fire protection is provided by the Popejoy Volunteer Fire Department. Record Items 12 and 30 and Final Determination (FD) at 5.

On October 2, 1992, the Popejoy postmaster retired, and pursuant to Postal Service policy, the vacancy in that position prompted a review of Popejoy's service needs. Record Item 1. During the review process, a career employee from a neighboring office was installed as the temporary officer-in-charge. FD at 1.

The Popejoy post office is housed in a Postal Service-owned modular unit that is located on leased property. The facility is accessible to the handicapped, and the lease has a 30-day cancellation clause. Record Items 11 and 30. The post office workload is rated at the EAS-C level. A workload analysis conducted in September, 1992 disclosed that the workload had declined from an EAS-11 level to an EAS-C level. Record Item 2 and FD at 1. The post office is open 24 hours a week: 8:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., Monday

¹ While the Final Determination identifies six business establishments within Popejoy, several residents of Popejoy, including the Mayor, claim there now are as many as 11 businesses within the community.

Exhibit 532.1 (p. 4)

Sample PRC Opinion Remanding Determination

Docket No. A97-20

3

through Thursday, 8:00 a.m. to noon on Friday, and 8:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. on Saturday. On average, there are eight retail window transactions daily. Daily receipts average 140 mail pieces, and dispatches average 74 mail pieces. Record Items 5, 6, 7 and 30. The post office provides service to 41 post office box customers. There are no permit mailers or postage meter customers. Record Item 30 and FD at 1.

Revenues for the Popejoy post office in Fiscal Years 1993, 1994 and 1995 were \$5,461, \$5,275 and \$4,433, respectively. The post office's estimated annual operating costs are \$19,424, including \$14,340 for an EAS-C postmaster's salary, \$4,804 for fringe benefits and \$280 for rental costs. The annual cost of providing rural route service to Popejoy customers is estimated by the Postal Service to be \$3,404. Therefore, estimated annual savings are \$16,020. FD at 1 and 6.

In lieu of service from the Popejoy post office, delivery and retail services would be provided by a rural route administered by the Dows post office, located seven miles from Popejoy. Service would be provided to roadside mailboxes installed by customers on the carrier's line of travel. FD at 1. The Dows post office, an EAS-13 level post office, is open 39.25 hours a week and has 60 post office boxes available for rent. Record Item 30 and FD at 1. While the community's name would continue to be used in customers' addresses, the Zip Code would be changed to 50071. "Popejoy" would continue to be listed in the *National Five-Digit Zip Code and Post Office Directory*. FD at 6.

Postal Service Procedures

The procedural requirements for providing adequate notice of the Postal Service's intention to close a post office and an opportunity for public comment are found at section 404(b) of the Act, as well as 39 *Code of Federal Regulations* § 241.3. In this case, the Postal Service commenced its decision-making process by sending the affected customers a letter and questionnaire. By letters distributed on May 26, 1993, the Postal Service solicited community opinion concerning its proposal to close the

Exhibit 532.1 (p. 5)

Sample PRC Opinion Remanding Determination

Docket No. A97-20

4

Popejoy post office and provide rural route delivery to roadside mailboxes. Record Item 15. Nineteen questionnaires were returned. According to the Postal Service, two customers favored the proposal, four opposed it and 13 expressed no opinion. FD at 1.

The following concerns regarding the proposed closing were among those expressed by Popejoy customers on the returned questionnaire forms: that it would be more difficult to obtain retail services; that roadside mailboxes are subject to vandalism and theft; that customers' mail would be delivered later in the day; that senior citizens would be adversely affected by the closing; and that the community would lose its gathering place and information center. Record Items 18 through 18-73.

In the May 26, 1993, cover letter to the customer questionnaire, the Postal Service announced that postal representatives would meet with interested parties at the Popejoy Café on June 7, 1993, from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. to answer questions and address customers' concerns about the proposed change in service. Record Item 15. Sixteen individuals attended the meeting. Record Item 16. The following concerns were expressed at the community meeting: that the establishment of a community post office should be considered; that rural mailboxes are subject to vandalism; that customers would receive their mail later in the day; that the community would lose its gathering place; that the Popejoy post office is being closed while others remained open; and that the community would lose its identity. Record Item 17.

The administrative record contains date-stamped cover pages showing that the "Proposal to Close the Popejoy Post Office and Establish Rural Route Service" and "Invitation for Comments" were posted from November 14, 1994, through January 17, 1995, at the Popejoy post office and from November 14, 1994, through January 19, 1995, at the Dows post office. Record Item 28. The Postal Service received no comments from customers during the posting period. Record Item 31.

The proposal to close the Popejoy post office and all supporting documents were transmitted to Postal Service headquarters in Washington, D.C. on June 3, 1996. On April 24, 1997, the Postal Service issued its "Final Determination to Close the Popejoy,

Exhibit 532.1 (p. 6)

Sample PRC Opinion Remanding Determination

Docket No. A97-20

5

IA Post Office and Establish Rural Route Service." The Final Determination was posted at both the Popejoy and Dows post offices on May 19, 1997. The Commission received the administrative record for Docket No. A97-20, Popejoy, Iowa on June 12, 1997.

III. Commission Review of Record and Findings

Under section 404(b) of title 39, United States Code, the Postal Service must afford postal patrons the opportunity to present their concerns regarding a proposal to close or consolidate a post office within their community. Additionally, the law requires the Postal Service to consider the following four specific factors: the effect on the community; the effect on Postal Service employees; whether a maximum degree of effective and regular postal services will be provided; and the economic savings to the Postal Service.

The Commission's responsibility under the law is to review the Postal Service's determination to close or consolidate a post office "on the basis of the record before the Postal Service in the making of such determination." 39 U.S.C. § 404(b)(5). The Commission is obliged to set aside any determination, findings and conclusions found to be arbitrary, capricious, an abuse of discretion or otherwise not in accordance with the law; without observance of procedure required by law; or unsupported by substantial evidence on the record. 39 U.S.C. § 404(b)(5). Where it makes such findings, the Commission can return the matter for further consideration, but it may not modify the determination of the Postal Service.

In correspondence to the Commission pursuant to the appeal, several customers of the Popejoy post office asserted that they and other customers of the post office were not aware of the posting of the Proposal and the Invitation for Comments because the documents were not visibly displayed in the Popejoy post office. Letters from Bryce and Dora Collins, Carol B. Ellingson and Ruth Johnson. Other customers complained

Exhibit 532.1 (p. 7)

Sample PRC Opinion Remanding Determination

Docket No. A97-20

6

that they had not received sufficient notice of the closing. Letters from Dina Baor and Tracy Nohrenberg. In its "Comments Regarding Appeal," the Postal Service replies that questionnaires were distributed to all box holders of the Popejoy post office and that the Proposal and Invitation for Comments were posted at both the Popejoy and Dows post offices for the required 60-day period. "Comments" at 3.

Section 404(b) of title 39, United States Code, requires the Postal Service to provide adequate notice of its intention to close or consolidate a post office at least 60 days prior to the proposed date of the change in order to ensure that customers of the post office will have an opportunity to present their views. The implementing regulations of the Postal Service provide that a copy of the written proposal and invitation for comments must be posted *prominently* in each affected post office. 39 CFR § 241.3(d)(1).

As discussed under part II of this opinion, the administrative record contains evidence that the Proposal and Invitation for Comments were posted at both the Popejoy and Dows post offices for the requisite 60-day period. Record Item 28. However, there is reason to believe, as alleged by Popejoy customers, that the Proposal was not *prominently* displayed in the Popejoy post office in accordance with Postal Service regulations. The record shows that the Postal Service received no written comments from customers of the Popejoy post office in response to the posting of the Proposal and Invitation for Comments. Record Item 31. The Commission finds this lack of customer response to be telling, given the high level of interest and participation in this matter otherwise displayed by customers of the Popejoy post office. In that regard, the Commission notes that 16 customers attended the community meeting, 19 customers returned questionnaire forms, 12 customers submitted letters to the Commission pursuant to the appeal and 51 customers signed the petition which was submitted to the Commission.

The assertions of Popejoy residents in their letters to the Commission together with the lack of customer response to the posting of the Proposal constitute sufficient

Exhibit 532.1 (p. 8)

Sample PRC Opinion Remanding Determination

Docket No. A97-20

7

evidence that the Proposal to close the Popejoy post office was not prominently displayed in the Popejoy post office. The Commission finds, therefore, that the Postal Service did not provide adequate notice of its intention to close the post office, as required by section 404(b) of the Act, and, accordingly, remands the matter to the Postal Service for further consideration in accordance with applicable law and regulations.

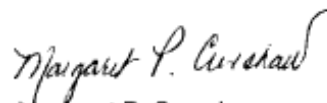
With respect to such further consideration, the Commission urges the Postal Service to reconcile the discrepancies regarding the number and identities of business establishments within the Popejoy community and to update the Popejoy post office workload statistics, which were last compiled in 1992 (Record Items 5, 6 and 7).

IV. Conclusion

The Commission concludes, based on its review of the administrative record and its "Findings," as set forth above, that the determination of the Postal Service to close the Popejoy, Iowa post office fails to meet the standards prescribed in section 404(b) of title 39, United States Code, and, therefore, the determination is remanded to the Postal Service.

By the Commission.

(SEAL)



Margaret P. Crenshaw

Secretary

Exhibit 532.2

Sample PRC Appeal Remanded Notice Determined Not Warranted

<date>

DISTRICT MANAGER
CUSTOMER SERVICE AND SALES
<DISTRICT NAME> DISTRICT
<ADDRESS>
<CITY, STATE, ZIP+4>

ATTENTION: POST OFFICE REVIEW COORDINATOR
SUBJECT: Appeal Remanded Notice — Determined Not Warranted
<Office Name, State, ZIP+4>

On <date>, the Postal Rate Commission (PRC) remanded the final determination to discontinue the <name> Post Office (copy enclosed). The enclosed <name> Post Office record is being returned. Further consideration of the proposal to discontinue the <name> Post Office has been determined not warranted based on the PRC opinion.

Please post the PRC decision for 30 days at each office where the final determination was posted. If you need additional copies, you may photocopy the enclosed decision. Prominently post a notice in the affected Post Office(s) stating that the final determination to close the <name> Post Office has been withdrawn, that the Post Office will remain open, and that no service changes will occur at this time.

Include this memorandum in your copy of the official record.

<name>
Vice President, Delivery and Retail
475 L'ENFANT PLAZA SW
WASHINGTON DC 20260-1400

Enclosures: PRC Decision
Official Record

cc: Vice President, Area Operations, <name> Area

Exhibit 532.3

Sample PRC Appeal Remanded Notice Returned for Further Consideration

<date>

DISTRICT MANAGER
CUSTOMER SERVICE AND SALES
<DISTRICT NAME> DISTRICT
<ADDRESS>
<CITY, STATE, ZIP+4>

ATTENTION: POST OFFICE REVIEW COORDINATOR
SUBJECT: Post Office Discontinuance
<Office Name, State, ZIP+4>

On <date>, the Postal Rate Commission (PRC) remanded the final determination to discontinue the <name> Post Office (copy enclosed).

The proposal to discontinue the <name> Post Office is being returned for further consideration in accordance with the *Postal Operations Manual*. Any further action on this matter should begin with an investigation of the situation and the preparation of a proposal in accordance with the *Postal Operations Manual*.

Please post the PRC decision for 30 days at each office where the final determination was posted. If you need additional copies, you may photocopy the attached Postal Rate Commission decision. Prominently post a notice in the affected Post Office(s) stating that the final determination to close the <name> Post Office has been withdrawn, that the Post Office will remain open, and that no service change will occur at this time.

Include this memorandum in your copy of the official record.

<name>
Vice President, Delivery and Retail
475 L'ENFANT PLAZA SW
WASHINGTON DC 20260-1400

Enclosures: PRC Decision
Official Record

cc: Vice President, Area Operations, <name> Area

Exhibit 613.1 (p. 1)

Notice of Post Office Emergency Suspension**NOTICE OF POST OFFICE EMERGENCY SUSPENSION****A. Suspended Office**

Name: _____ State: _____ ZIP Code: _____
 Area: _____ District: _____
 Congressional District: _____ County: _____
 Post Office ☐ EAS Grade: _____ Finance Number: _____
 Classified Station ☐ Classified Branch ☐ CPO ☐ Date CPO Established: _____

Effective date of suspension: _____

Justification (specific reason(s) for suspension):

Alternate Service Provided (i.e., rural delivery to roadside mailboxes, CBUs, etc.):

Effect on Employees (Include Career/Noncareer Employees):

Hours of Operation:

Retail: Saturday: _____ Monday – Friday: _____
 (Include lunch break)
 Lobby: Saturday: _____ Monday – Friday: _____

Number of Customers Served:

_____ General Delivery
 _____ Post Office Box
 _____ City Delivery
 _____ Rural Route
 _____ Highway Contract Route (HCR)
 _____ Intermediate Rural Route
 _____ Intermediate HCR
 _____ Total Customers

B. Administrative Office

Name: _____ State: _____ ZIP Code: _____
 EAS Grade: _____ Finance Number: _____ Miles Away: _____
 PO Boxes Available: _____

Hours of Operation

Retail: Saturday: _____ Monday – Friday: _____
 (Include lunch break)
 Lobby: Saturday: _____ Monday – Friday: _____

Exhibit 613.1 (p. 2)

Notice of Post Office Emergency Suspension**C. Nearest Office**

Name: _____ State: _____ ZIP Code: _____

EAS Grade: _____ Finance Number: _____ Miles Away: _____

PO Boxes Available: _____

Hours of OperationRetail: Saturday: _____ Monday – Friday: _____
(Include lunch break)

Lobby: Saturday: _____ Monday – Friday: _____

D. Postmaster Organization Notification:Notified: Yes ☐ No ☐

Date of Notification: _____

E. Plan of Action (HQ must be notified within 90 days):_____

Prepared by: _____ Date: _____

Title: _____

Telephone No.: _____ Fax No.: _____

F. FedEx Drop Box

Is there a FedEx Drop Box at this location?

Yes ☐ No ☐

If Yes, notify District FedEx Coordinator

Approved By:

Date: _____

District Manager, Customer Service and Sales

Telephone No.: _____

Fax No.: _____

FAX TO:

FREDERICK J. HINTENACH
MANAGER CUSTOMER SERVICE OPERATIONS
DELIVERY AND RETAIL
UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE HEADQUARTERS
475 L'ENFANT PLAZA SW ROOM 5621
WASHINGTON DC 20260-5621
FAX: (202) 268-5102

cc: Area PO Review Coordinator
District PO Review Coordinator
Manager, Facilities Service Office
National League of Postmasters
National Association of Postmasters of the United States

Exhibit 613.2

Sample Notice to Local Officials of Post Office Emergency Suspension

<date>

Manager, Human Resources
 Manager, Finance
 Manager, Administrative Services
 Manager, Maintenance
 Manager, Transportation & Networks
 Manager, SDO
 Postmaster <affected office>
 Manager, Consumer Affairs

Manager, Post Office Operations
 Manager, Marketing
 Manager, Operations Programs
 Manager, Address Management Systems
 Manager, In-Plant Processing
 Postal Inspection Service
 Postmaster, <administrative office>
 Manager, Facilities Service Office

SUBJECT: Post Office Discontinuance
 <name>, <state>-9998

Effective close of business <date>, services will be suspended at the <name> Post Office. <state reason for suspension>

Delivery and retail services will be provided to the community by a <type of alternate service> administered by the <> Post Office. Processing and distribution will continue to label and pouch the <> mail as in the past; however, the mail will be dispatched to the <> Post Office. The <> carrier will case and deliver all mail for the <> customers to <roadside mailboxes/cluster box units> and will provide collection of outgoing mail. The collection requirement of the HCR <> will be eliminated effective <date>.

The finance manager must schedule the Internal Control Group Analyst to arrange the transfer of accountability. Human Resources will need to separate <>, the noncareer OIC, and <>, the noncareer PMR, effective <date>.

Please take appropriate action regarding this change. Please ensure that appropriate staff members are notified and information shared. If you need further information, please contact <>, Post Office Review Coordinator, at <telephone number>.

<name>
 District Manager
 Customer Service and Sales

Exhibit 613.3 (p. 1)

Sample Notice to Customers of Post Office Emergency Suspension

<date>

Dear Postal Customer:

The <name> postmaster <retired/was promoted/was reassigned/resigned> on <date>. A noncareer clerk from the office has served as the officer-in-charge since that time. <enter specific reason for suspension.> Therefore, it will be necessary to suspend services at the <name> Post Office at the close of business on <date>. This change is tentative and will not lead to a formal proposal unless we conclude that it will provide a maximum degree of regular and effective postal services. A community meeting will be held in the near future.

Effective <date>, delivery and retail services will be provided by a rural carrier to roadside mailboxes installed by customers while the office is suspended. Please contact the postmaster of the <name> Post Office for advice regarding the placement of mailboxes. Customers presently receiving rural delivery will not experience a change in service, with the possible exceptions of picking up parcels and accountable mail at the <name> Post Office that the carrier was unable to deliver.

Rural delivery is particularly beneficial to senior citizens, people with disabilities, and working people because no one has to pick up the mail from the Post Office. You will have 24-hour access to your mail. In addition, the rural carrier can provide all the retail services provided at the <name> Post Office. Enclosed is information about some of the services available from the carrier. Most transactions do not require meeting a carrier at the mailbox. *Stamps by Mail* order envelopes and *Money Order Application* forms are available for your convenience; or you may place a note in the mailbox, with payment, and the carrier will provide the requested services. When an accountable item requiring a signature, such as a certified letter, cannot be delivered on the first day, the carrier will return the item to the <name> Post Office. You may pick up the article at the <name> Post Office, request redelivery on another day convenient for you, or authorize the carrier to deliver the item to another person. If appropriate, Post Office box refunds will be provided by the <name> postmaster.

Customers who wish to obtain Post Office box service may do so at the <name> Post Office, located <> miles away. The <name> Post Office has 24-hour lobby access and stamp vending equipment for customer convenience. Window service hours at <name> are <hours> a.m. to <hours> p.m., Monday through Friday, and <hours> a.m. to <hours> p.m. on Saturday. Post Office boxes are available at this location at <the same fees/increased fees>.

Retail services are also available at <name> Post Office, located <number of> miles away. Window service hours at <name> are from <hours> to <hours>, Monday through Friday, and <hours> to <hours> on Saturday. Post Office box lobby hours are <hours>.

If you have any questions concerning the placement of rural mailboxes or the services available to you through the rural carrier, please contact the <name> postmaster at <telephone number>.

Exhibit 613.3 (p. 2)

Sample Notice to Customers of Post Office Emergency Suspension

I realize with change there is always concern. No final decision to permanently discontinue the Post Office has been made. In the near future we will be contacting you to explain our plans and solicit your comments concerning possible alternate means of providing postal and other services. In the interim, we are confident that carrier delivery will continue to provide <name> customers with effective and regular postal services.

Sincerely,

<name>
Manager, Post Office Operations
<street address>
<city>, <state> <ZIP+4>

Enclosures (1)

bcc: Postmaster/OIC <affected office>
Postmaster <gaining office>,
Post Office Review Coordinator

Exhibit 616b

Sample Notification to District Manager of Suspension Review Team Onsite Visit

<date>

DISTRICT MANAGER, CUSTOMER SERVICE AND SALES

SUBJECT: Emergency Suspension of <name> Post Office

On <date>, we conducted an onsite visit of the <city> Post Office. It is our recommendation to (suspend or not suspend) based on the following:

(list reasons)

<name>

Post Office Review Coordinator

cc: Manager, Customer Services Operations (HQ)
President, State and National, League and NAPUS
Area Post Office Review Coordinator

CONCURRENCE:

LEAGUE REPRESENTATIVE

NAPUS REPRESENTATIVE

Exhibit 618

Notice of Restoration of Service from Area to Headquarters**Notice of Restoration of Service
from District to Headquarters**

Area: _____ Date of Notice: _____

District: _____ Prepared by: _____

Title: _____ Telephone: _____

1. Name of Office: _____

City, State, ZIP+4: _____

2. EAS Grade: _____ CAG: _____

3. Service suspension date: _____

4. Restoration date: _____

5. Reason for restoration: _____

A. Staffing: _____

B. Services: _____

Exhibit 642.2

Sample ZIP Code Elimination Request Letter

<date>

VICE PRESIDENT, AREA OPERATIONS <> AREA

SUBJECT: Request ZIP Code Elimination

The Postal Service is currently conducting an investigation concerning the possible discontinuance of the <name> Post Office, <ZIP+4>. We request permission to eliminate the ZIP Code for the following significant operational reasons:

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Please return your decision in the enclosed envelope. You may use the bottom of this form to indicate your decision, accompanied by your signature, title, and date.

Thank you for your assistance in this matter.

<name>
DISTRICT MANAGER
CUSTOMER SERVICE AND SALES

Enclosure: Return Envelope

- ☐ APPROVED
☐ DISAPPROVED

Signature: _____ Title: _____

Date: _____

Exhibit 721 (p. 1)

Classified Station/Branch or Community Post Office Discontinuance Checklist**Classified Station/Branch or Community Post Office Discontinuance Checklist**

District: _____

District Contact: _____ Telephone Number: _____

Office Name, State, ZIP Code: _____

County: _____ Congressional District: _____

Date Office Established: _____

Reason for Discontinuance: _____

When does the lease or contract expire? _____

Is there a 30-day cancellation clause? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Are there suitable alternate quarters of contractors available? ☐ Yes ☐ No

How many customers are affected: _____

Post Office box customers: _____

General Delivery: _____

Rural Route: _____

Highway Contract Route (HCR): _____

City Route: _____

Intermediate Rural: _____

Intermediate HCR: _____

Total number of customers: _____

Number of customers receiving duplicate delivery service: _____

Window Service Hours
Monday – Friday: _____ Sat.: _____

Lobby Hours
Monday – Friday: _____ Sat.: _____

Exhibit 721 (p. 2)

Classified Station/Branch or Community Post Office Discontinuance Checklist**Classified Station/Branch or Community Post Office Discontinuance Checklist**

Names of schools, religious institutions, organizations, and business in service area:

Indicate the number of permit and postage meter customers and the provisions that will be made for them.

How many career employees will be affected and what accommodations will be made for them?

How many handicapped or other special provision customers will be affected and what accommodations will be made for them?

Office receipts for the last three fiscal years were:

\$ _____ Revenue units in FY <year>

\$ _____ Revenue units in FY <year>

\$ _____ Revenue units in FY <year>

Expenses for last FY:

Salaries (excluding COLA): _____

Fringe benefits 33.5%: _____

Rental costs (excluding utilities): _____

Total expenses: _____

Alternate service to be provided:

Cost of proposed alternate service: _____

Total savings: _____

One-time CBU cost: _____

Exhibit 721 (p. 3)

Classified Station/Branch or Community Post Office Discontinuance Checklist**Classified Station/Branch or Community Post Office Discontinuance Checklist****Administrative Office**

Name, State & ZIP: _____ EAS level: _____ Miles away: _____

Window Service Hours: M-F: _____ Sat.: _____

Lobby Hours: M-F: _____ Sat.: _____

Number of PO Boxes Available: _____ Finance Number: _____

Nearest Post Office *(if different from above):*

Name, State & ZIP: _____ EAS level: _____ Miles away: _____

Window Service Hours: M-F: _____ Sat.: _____

Lobby Hours: M-F: _____ Sat.: _____

Number of PO Boxes Available: _____

(You may wish to attach a highlighted map.)

Community meeting: Date: _____ Number of customers attended: _____

Questionnaire: Date: _____ Number returned: _____

Favorable: _____ # Unfavorable: _____ No opinion: _____

Attach postal and nonpostal concerns of affected customers with Postal Service responses

Prepared By: _____ Title: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Telephone Number: _____ (remember to include your area code)

Appendix A

Glossary of Terms

Administrative Office	A Post Office that has administrative control or responsibility of a contract postal unit or classified station or branch.
Affirmed	An appeal decision in which the Postal Rate Commission (PRC) agrees with the Postal Service decision to discontinue. The PRC's final order and opinion must be posted for 30 days.
Appeal	After a final determination is posted, an action that is filed by anyone opposing a closing or consolidation decision. The appeal must be filed with the Postal Rate Commission in Washington, DC within 30 days. The commission then has 120 days in which to consider the appeal and issue its opinion.
Classified Branch	A unit that is operated by Postal Service personnel under the administration of an independent Post Office. The branch name is generally used in the last line of the address.
Classified Station	A unit that is operated by Postal Service personnel under the administration of an independent Post Office. The name of the station is generally <i>not</i> used as the city name in the last line of the address.
Closing	An action in which Post Office operations are permanently discontinued without providing a replacement facility in the community. Replacement services are provided by a neighboring Post Office, highway contract route, rural delivery, or city delivery.
Cluster Box Unit (CBU)	A secure free-standing unit of individually locked mail compartments that are installed and maintained by the Postal Service at no cost to the customer. These units are placed on the public right of way adjacent to the existing Post Office carrier's line-of-travel. Parcel lockers may also be installed for customer convenience.
Community	A general term that denotes a group of individuals with common interests living in a particular area. These common interests may arise from social, business, religious, governmental, scholastic, or recreational associations and may involve consideration of shared institutions, traditions, and public services that help bind the people of the community together. Institutions, services, and associations do not always have clear centers or geographic boundaries. A community, therefore, is not necessarily formally organized or confined within corporate limits.

Community Post Office (CPO)	Contract postal units, usually located in small rural communities that provide service where a Postal Service facility has been discontinued or otherwise considered impractical. A CPO generally retains the name of the Post Office. A CPO is operated by a Postal Service-trained contractor who reports to an administrative Post Office.
Consolidation	An action that converts a Postal Service facility into a contracted CPO, classified station, contract station, or branch. The CPO contractor, station manager, or branch manager reports to an administrative office.
Contract Branch	A contract postal unit (CPU) that operates under the administration of an independent Post Office. The name of the branch is generally used in the last line of the address.
Contract Postal Unit (CPU)	A facility that provides selected postal services to the public according to a contract with the Postal Service. It is under the jurisdiction of the administrative Post Office (Handbook AS-707-F, <i>Contracting for Contract Postal Units</i>).
Contract Station	A contract postal unit (CPU) that operates under the administration of an independent Post Office. The name of the station is generally <i>not</i> used as the city name in the last line of the address.
Discontinuance	An action in which a Post Office, classified station/branch, or contracted community Post Office is permanently closed or consolidated.
Docket Number	A number assigned to the proposal that is the ZIP Code of the office proposed for closing or consolidation. The docket number must be on the top right corner of each page in the official record.
Duplicate Delivery	A situation in which a customer receives more than one type of delivery service. (e.g., customer receives delivery by both rural delivery and a Post Office box.)
Emanating Office	A Post Office from which a rural route/highway contract route carrier originates.
Emergency Suspension	An action in which a district manager, Customer Service and Sales, suspends operations of any Post Office in his/her jurisdiction because an emergency or other condition requires such action. Circumstances that may justify a suspension include, but are not limited to, a natural disaster, the termination of a lease when other suitable quarters are not available, the lack of qualified personnel to operate the office, severe health or safety hazard in the work environment, severe damage to or destruction of the office, and the lack of adequate measures to safeguard the office of its revenues.
Final Determination	A written decision that comes from the vice president, Delivery and Retail, to discontinue a Post Office. The final determination is based on information in the official record, and must be publicly posted for at least 30 days.
Government Relations and Public Policy	The Postal Service organizational unit at Headquarters that investigates and responds to congressional inquiries.
Highway Contract Route (HCR)	A highway contract route that provides mail transportation between Post Offices, or other designated points, where mail is received or dispatched. Box delivery, collection service, and other mail services may also be provided on these routes.

Incorporated Community	A community that has some type of local government.
Intermediate Office	A Post Office where a rural carrier/highway contract carrier stops to distribute mail. The emanating office has administrative responsibility for the route.
Nonpersonnel Rural Unit (NPU)	A self-service unit that provides essential mail services, such as the collection and delivery of ordinary mail and sale of stamps. Services such as the sale of money orders and the acceptance and delivery of Certified, Insured, Registered, and COD mail are provided to customers of nonpersonnel units by rural carriers at the time they service their units. Carriers are required to remain at the unit a minimum of 15 minutes each day their routes are scheduled to operate, to afford customers the services not otherwise available from the unit.
Official Record	A chronological file of all information that the district manager, Customer Service and Sales, considers in relation to the proposed discontinuance of a Post Office. No information or views submitted by customers may be excluded, whether or not it tends to support the proposal.
Parcel Locker	A compartment in a CBU that is used for the delivery of packages, large articles, or accumulated vacation hold mail too large to fit in a mail receptacle. The carrier provides a key for the customer at the time of delivery. The key is retained in the parcel locker upon receipt of the mail. This eliminates the need for customers to pick up their mail at the Post Office.
Post Office Move	A total Post Office operation that moves locally from one building to another for the purpose of having more adequate quarters. Service to customers is the same and no address and ZIP Code changes are required. This action is not considered a closing and authorization is not required from the vice president, Delivery and Retail.
Postal Rate Commission (PRC)	An independent government organization to which appeals on Post Office discontinuance final determinations are sent. The PRC address is 1333 H Street, NW, Suite 300, Washington, DC 20268-0001. An opinion by the PRC is rendered within 120 days of the appeal.
Preproposal Investigation	An initial review of the Post Office and community — along with questionnaires, community meetings, and other activities — that is conducted before the discontinuance proposal is written.
Proposal	A document that explains — both to higher Postal Service managers and to all persons served by the affected Post Offices — the nature and justification of the proposed change in service. The written proposal must address each of the following matters in separate sections: a. Responsiveness to Community Postal Service Needs, b. Effect on Community, c. Effect on Employees, d. Economic Savings, e. Other Factors, f. Summary, and g. Notice.
Remanded	An appeal decision from the Postal Rate Commission that does not agree with the Postal Service decision to discontinue a Post Office.
Revised Proposal	A document that includes information relative to the original proposal to discontinue a Post Office, customer comments to the proposal with appropriate Postal Service responses, and any new information not included in the original proposal. A significant change to the original proposal requires reposting the proposal. The format is the same as the proposal.

Suitable Alternate Quarters	An available facility that meets the specific requirements of the Postal Service in order to continue Postal Service operations in a community. Criteria for an independent Post Office vary from those of a contract postal unit.
Unincorporated Community	A community that does not have any type of local government.

Appendix B

Forms Index

PS Form Number	Title	Reference
150	<i>Postmaster Workload Information</i>	Exhibit 134.62e; 222c, Exhibit 222c
3227	<i>Stamps by Mail</i>	Exhibit 252.23; Exhibit 335; Exhibit 336; Exhibit 352.1; Exhibit 432.31; Exhibit 613.3
3227-R	<i>Stamp Purchase Order</i>	Exhibit 252.23; Exhibit 336; Exhibit 352.1; Exhibit 432.31
4003	<i>Official Rural Route Description</i>	221c
4003-A	<i>Official Rural Route Description Continuation Sheet</i>	221c
4920	<i>Post Office Closing or Consolidation Proposal — Fact Sheet</i>	133.4; 133.61; 134.4; 134.63e; 145o; 146i; 221i; 222f; 341.1; 341.2; 411; Exhibit 133.31; Exhibit 134.62e; Exhibit 221i; Exhibit 341.2; Exhibit 422

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Appendix C

Document References

Administrative Support Manual

412 — Military Post Offices, Establishment and Discontinuance

519.224 — Plaques Honoring an Individual

518.2 — Community Contact

Domestic Mail Manual

D910 — Post Office Box Service

Employee and Labor Relations Manual

354 — Assignment of Unassigned Employees

Handbook AS-305, *Records Control Schedule*

Handbook AS-707F, *Contracting for Contract Postal Units*

Handbook F-66, *General Investment Policies and Procedures*

Postal Operations Manual

123 — Post Offices, Stations, Branches, Contract Postal Units, and Nonpersonnel Units

United States Code

Title 39 USC 404 (b)

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Appendix D

Exhibit List

Chapter 1 — Introduction	
Exhibit 133.31	Headquarters Legislative Affairs Notification Instructions
Exhibit 134.62e	Official Record Index (pp. 1–3)
Chapter 2 — Decision to Study and Preproposal Investigation	
Exhibit 211	Sample Letter — Authority to Conduct Preproposal Investigation
Exhibit 221b	Sample Letter Requesting Customer Information
Exhibit 221e	Sample Letter to County Officials Requesting Growth Information
Exhibit 221f	Sample Request for Local Law Report (p. 1)
Exhibit 221f	Sample Request for Local Law Enforcement Report (p. 2)
Exhibit 221h	Sample Request to Conduct Surveys Letter (p. 1)
Exhibit 221h	Window Transaction Survey (p. 2)
Exhibit 221h	Survey of Incoming Mail (p. 3)
Exhibit 221h	Survey of Dispatched Mail (p. 4)
Exhibit 221i	PS Form 4920, <i>Post Office Closing or Consolidation Proposal — Fact Sheet</i>
Exhibit 222c	PS Form 150, <i>Postmaster Workload Information</i> (pp. 1–2)
Exhibit 222c	Workload Service Credit Ranges (p. 3)
Exhibit 222c	Worksheet for Calculating Workload Service Credit (WSC) for Post Offices (p. 4)
Exhibit 222f	Post Office Survey Sheet (pp. 1–2)
Exhibit 222f	Community Survey Sheet (p. 3)
Exhibit 222f	Executive and Administrative Schedule (EAS) Postmaster Schedule (p. 4)
Exhibit 222f	EAS A-E Postmaster Salary Schedule (p. 5)
Exhibit 232.22	Sample Highway Contract Route Cost Analysis Form (p. 1)
Exhibit 232.22	Sample Rural Route Cost Analysis Form (p. 2)
Exhibit 251	Sample Questionnaire Transmittal Letter
Exhibit 252.22	Summary of Post Office Change Regulations for Independent Post Offices
Exhibit 252.23	Welcome to Rural Delivery Service (p. 1)
Exhibit 252.23	Post Office on Wheels (p. 2)
Exhibit 252.23	Cluster Box Units and Neighborhood Delivery and Collection Box Units (NDCBUs) (p. 3)
Exhibit 253.1	Sample Questionnaire Cover Letter — Proposal for CPO (Office Not Suspended) (pp. 1–3)

Exhibit 253.2	Sample Questionnaire Cover Letter — Proposal for CPO (Office Suspended) (pp. 1–3)
Exhibit 253.3	Sample Questionnaire Cover Letter — Rural Route/HCR Service to CBU/Roadside Box/Non-Personnel Unit (Office Not Suspended) (pp. 1–3)
Exhibit 253.4	Sample Questionnaire Cover Letter — Rural Route/HCR Service to CBU/Roadside Box/Non-Personnel Unit (Office Suspended) (pp. 1–3)
Exhibit 254	Sample Postal Customer Questionnaire Analysis
Exhibit 255	Sample Response to Postal Customer Questionnaire
Exhibit 263	Sample Community Meeting Notification Letter
Exhibit 264a	Public Affairs and Communications Address List
Exhibit 264b	Community Meeting Roster
Exhibit 265	Sample Community Meeting Analysis
Chapter 3 — The Proposal	
Exhibit 335	Sample Proposal Cover Sheet and Paragraphs (pp. 1–26)
Exhibit 336	Sample Proposal to Close Post Office and Extend Rural Route Service (pp. 1–8)
Exhibit 341.1	Proposal Checklist (pp. 1–3)
Exhibit 341.2	Sample Notification to Government Relations of Proposal Posting
Exhibit 342.2	Sample Proposal Posting Instructions to Postmaster
Exhibit 342.3	Sample Invitation for Customer Comments
Exhibit 342.4	Sample Customer Comment Form
Exhibit 343.1	Sample Letter of Instructions — Removal of Proposal and Invitation for Comments
Exhibit 343.2	Sample Notice of Taking Proposal and Comments Under Internal Consideration
Exhibit 343.3	Sample Analysis of 60-Day Posting Comments (p. 1–2)
Exhibit 343.4	Sample Response Letter to Customer Comments
Exhibit 352.1	Sample Revised Proposal to Close Post Office and Continue to Provide Rural Route Service (pp. 1–8)
Chapter 4 — Transmittals and Headquarters Review/Decision	
Exhibit 412	Certification of the Record
Exhibit 413	Sample Record Transmittal Letter from Post Office Operations Manager to District Manager
Exhibit 422	Log of Post Office Discontinuance Actions (pp. 1–2)
Exhibit 423	Sample Record Transmittal Letter from District to Headquarters
Exhibit 424	Sample Headquarters Acknowledgment of Receipt of Official Record
Exhibit 432.1	Sample Returned for Further Consideration Letter
Exhibit 432.2a	Sample Proposal Not Warranted Letter
Exhibit 432.2b	Sample Notice to Customers — Proposal to Discontinue Withdrawn
Exhibit 432.31	Sample Final Determination Transmittal Letter (pp. 1–10)
Exhibit 432.32	Sample Letter of Instructions for Posting the Final Determination
Exhibit 432.33	Postal Bulletin Post Office Change Announcement Form
Exhibit 432.35	Sample Letter of Instruction to AMS

Exhibit 433.1	Sample Notification Letter to District Personnel
Exhibit 433.2	Sample Notification Letter to Customers (pp. 1–2)
Chapter 5 Appeal Procedures	
Exhibit 514a	Sample No Appeals Letter
Exhibit 514b	Sample Appeal Filed Letter
Exhibit 531	Sample Determination Affirmed Notice and PRC Opinion (pp. 1–11)
Exhibit 532.1	Sample PRC Opinion Remanding Determination (pp. 1–8)
Exhibit 532.2	Sample PRC Appeal Remanded Notice Determined Not Warranted
Exhibit 532.3	Sample PRC Appeal Remanded Notice Returned for Further Consideration
Chapter 6 Special Considerations	
Exhibit 613.1	Notice of Post Office Emergency Suspension (pp. 1–2)
Exhibit 613.2	Sample Notice to Local Officials of Post Office Emergency Suspension
Exhibit 613.3	Sample Notice to Customers of Post Office Emergency Suspension (pp. 1–2)
Exhibit 616b	Sample Notification to District Manager of Suspension Review Team Onsite Visit
Exhibit 618	Notice of Restoration of Service from Area to Headquarters
Exhibit 642.2	Sample ZIP Code Elimination Request Letter
Chapter 7 Discontinuance of Classified Stations/Branches or CPOs	
Exhibit 721	Classified Station/Branch or Community Post Office Discontinuance Checklist (pp. 1–3)

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Appendix E

Index

A

Address change, 620, 640

- Name change, 622, 623, 624, 625, 730
- Post Office box range, 642.4
- Rural route number and box range, 642.5
- ZIP Code elimination, 341.3, 640

Address Management System (AMS), 432.35, Exhibit 432.35

Alternate services, 230

- Classified station/branch, 232.14
- Closing, 232.2
- Consolidation, 232.1
- Contract station/branch, 232.15
- Community Post Office, 232.13
- Nonpersonnel unit, 232.23
- Rural/highway contract route, 232.22, Exhibit 232.22
- Prohibited locations, 232.12
- Recommendation of service, 241

Appeal, 510, 520, 530

- Decisions on, 530
- Notification of, 514, Exhibit 514a, Exhibit 514b
- Official record documentation, 133.63, 515
- Procedures for, 121, 510
- Status of discontinuance, 520

Architectural Barriers Act (handicap building modifications), 212.1

Authority, 120, 130

- Appeal decision, 121, 530
- Approval to study, 132.1, 211, Exhibit 211
- Authority to post proposal, 134.4, 341.1
- Classified station/branch or CPO discontinuance, 122, 710
- Final determinations, 131, 430
- Transmittal of record to Headquarters, 133.61, 423, Exhibit 423

C

Classified stations or branches (see Discontinuance, classified stations, branches, and CPOs)

Cluster box units (CBUs), 252.23, Exhibit 252.23 (p. 3)

Community meetings, 260

- Analysis of, 265, Exhibit 265
- Conducting the meeting, 264, 614
- Notifying customers, 252.21, 263, Exhibit 263
- Problem areas, 144
- Purpose of, 261
- Roster of, 264, Exhibit 264
- Selecting date and location, 262

Comments to proposal (see Proposal)

Contract stations/branches, 232.15

Coordinator, district, 133

- Qualifications, 133.2
- Reassignments, 132.2
- Responsibilities of, 133.1
- Training, 133.1, 133.2

Coordinator, investigative, 134

- Reassignments, 132.2
- Responsibilities, 134.1
- Training, 133.1

Customer questionnaires (see Questionnaires customer)

D

Decision to study, 210

- Authorization, 132.1, 211, Exhibit 211
- Circumstances not warranting study, 212
- Circumstances prompting study, 213
- Regional notification, 133.32

Discontinuance, classified stations, branches, and CPOs, 710, 720, 730

Authorization, 722
 Documentation, 721
 Name Change, 730
 Notification, 122

Discontinuance process, independent Post Office

Alternate services, 230
 Appeal procedures, 510, 530
 Authorization for, 132.1, 211, Exhibit 211
 Community meeting, 260
 Federal laws regarding, 121
 Final determination, 131, 430
 Initial investigation (preproposal), 134, 220
 Justification for, 242
 Log of discontinuance actions, 133.5, 422, Exhibit 422
 Plan of action time frame, 213.4, 617
 Problem areas, 140
 Proposal, 310
 Questionnaire, 250
 Summary of discontinuance process, 112.1
 Summary of Post Office change regulations, 252.22, Exhibit 252.22

District manager, Customer Service and Sales, responsibility of, 132**E****Emergency suspensions, 610**

Alternate services, 614
 Authority for, 612
 Employee reassignment, 615
 Notification of customers, 613.3, Exhibit 613.3
 Notification of district officials, 613.2, Exhibit 613.2
 Notification of Headquarters, 613.1, Exhibit 613.1
 Notification of area, 613.2
 Plan of action, 213.4, 617
 Problem areas, 141
 Reasons for, 213.2, 611
 Restoration of services, 618, Exhibit 618
 Suspension Review Team, 616

Exhibits (see Appendix D)**F****Federal laws regarding discontinuance, 120**

Classified station/branch, 122
 Community Post Office, 122
 Independent Post Office, 121

Final determination (also see Headquarters review and decision), 131, 430

Not warranted, 432.2, Exhibit 432.2

Warranted, 432.3, Exhibit 432.31

Forms (see Appendix B)**G****Government Relations and Public Policy, 133.31, 341.2**

Address list, Exhibit 133.31
 Notification of proposal posting, Exhibit 341.2

H**Headquarters review and decision, 410, 430**

Acknowledgement of record receipt, 424, Exhibit 424
 Address management systems notification/AMS update, 432.35, Exhibit 432.35
 Customer notification of, 433.2, Exhibit 433.2
 Log of Post Office discontinuance actions, 133.5, 422, Exhibit 422
 Not warranted decision, 432.2, Exhibit 432.2a
 Official discontinuance, 432.34
Postal Bulletin Post Office Change Announcement, 432.33, Exhibit 432.33
 Returned for further action, 432.1, Exhibit 432.1
 30-day notice, 432.32
 Warranted, 432.3, Exhibit 432.31

I**Inspection Service report, 221f, Exhibit 221f****Investigation, onsite, 222, 616****J****Justification for discontinuance, 242****M****Mail volume survey, 221h, Exhibit 221h (p. 2-3)****Merging facilities, 630**

Definition, 631
 Hypothetical merger, 632
 Reasons for, 631

N**Name change, 620**

Closing, 624
 Consolidation, 625
 Station/branch, 730

Neighborhood and delivery collection box units (NDCBUs) (see Cluster box units)

O**Official record, 130**

- Archiving, 133.63
- Availability to public, 134.64
- Certification of, 412, Exhibit 412
- Content of, 134.63
- Format of, 134.62
- Headquarters receipt of, 424, Exhibit 424
- Inconsistencies, 134.3
- Maintenance of, 133.62
- Memorandum for the record, 134.3
- Preparation of, 134.1, 211
- Problem areas, 146
- Purpose of, 134.6
- Review of district, 133.1, 133.61
- Review by headquarters, 430
- Sample index, Exhibit 134.62e

P**Photographs, 134.63, 222****Post Office closing, 232.2****Post Office consolidation, 232.1****Postal Bulletin Post Office Change Announcement, 432.33, Exhibit 432.33****Postmaster vacancy, 213.1****Postmaster workload information, 222c, Exhibit 222c****Preproposal investigation, 220, 230, 240, 250, 260, 270**

- Analysis, 240, 270
- Authority to study, 132.1, 211, Exhibit 211, 221
- Alternate services, 230
- Community meeting, 260, Exhibit 263, Exhibit 264, Exhibit 265
- Community survey, 222f, Exhibit 222f
- Form 4920, *Post Office Closing or Consolidation Proposal – Fact Sheet*, 221i, Exhibit 221i
- Inspection Service report, 221f, Exhibit 221f
- Plan of action time frame, 213.4, 617
- Post Office survey, 222f, Exhibit 222f
- Preparing for, 221
- Onsite investigation, 222
- Questionnaires, 250, Exhibits 252.22, 252.23, 253.1, 253.2, 253.3, 253.4
- Questionnaire analysis, 254, Exhibit 254
- Recommendation to higher management, 240, 270
- Survey of mail volumes, 221h, Exhibit 221h
- Window transaction survey, 221h, Exhibit 221h

Problem areas in the discontinuance process

- With community meetings, 144
- With initial investigations, 142

- With official record, 146
- With proposals, 145
- With questionnaires, 143
- With suspensions, 141

Proposal, 310

- Analysis of comments, 343.3, Exhibit 343.3
- Checklist, 133.4, 134.4, 341.1, Exhibit 341.1
- Comment forms, 342.4, Exhibit 342.4
- Components, 320
- Computing posting dates, 342.2
- District coordinator review, 133.4, 341.1
- Government Relations and Public Policy, 133.31, Exhibit 133.31, 133.4, 341.2, Exhibit 341.2
- Invitation for comments, 342.3, Exhibit 342.3
- Letter of instructions on posting, 342.2, Exhibit 342.2
- Letter of instructions on removal, 343.1, Exhibit 343.1
- Log of actions, 133.5, 422, Exhibit 422
- Notice of taking proposal and comments under internal consideration, 343.2, Exhibit 343.2
- Posting, 342, 353
- Response to customer comments, 343.4, Exhibit 343.4
- Revised proposal, 350
- Sample proposal, 336, Exhibit 336
- Sample proposal paragraphs, 335, Exhibit 335
- ZIP Code elimination, 341.3, 640
- Writing tips, 330

Q**Questionnaires, 250**

- Analysis of, 254, Exhibit 254
- Cover letter, 252.21
- Distribution, 251.2, Exhibit 251
- Enclosure, cluster box units, Exhibit 252.23, (p. 3)
- Enclosure, rural/HCR, Exhibit 252.23, (p. 1-2)
- Enclosure, Summary of Post Office Change Regulations, Exhibit 252.22
- Preparation of, 252.1
- Problem areas, 143
- Purpose, 251
- Sample, CPO, not suspended, Exhibit 253.1
- Sample, CPO, suspended, Exhibit 253.2
- Sample, rural/HCR, not suspended, Exhibit 253.3
- Sample, rural/HCR, suspended, Exhibit 253.4

R**References, 112.3, see Appendix C****Responsibilities, 130**

- District Post Office review coordinator, 133
- District manager, Customer Service and Sales, 132

Investigative coordinator, 134

Vice president, Delivery and Retail, 131

Review of official record (see Official Record)

Revised proposal, 350

Definition, 351

Components, 352

Posting, 353

Sample revised proposal, Exhibit 352.1

S

Summary of Post Office regulations, 252.22, Exhibit 252.22

V

Vice president, Delivery and Retail, responsibilities of, 131

W

Window transaction record, 221h, Exhibit 221h

Z

ZIP Code elimination, 341.3, 640

For proposed closing, 341.31, 642

For proposed consolidation, 341.32, 643