ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

SUBJECT: MAIL SERVICES

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RESPONSIBLE OFFICE: UNIVERSITY SERVICES

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RATIONALE: The Mail Services Department (MSD) provides efficient distribution, collection, and processing of Oakland University (University) business mail. This policy establishes procedures for processing mail through the MSD.

POLICY: Delivery of mail by the MSD is intended for Oakland University business only. Business materials are those dealing with some aspect of University operations. The MSD has the right to refuse any incoming mail/parcels they deem to be of a private nature or for other personal use (exceptions for students residing on campus). The University is not responsible for loss or damage to private/personal property or mail.

Outgoing University mail must meet all United States Postal Service (USPS) guidelines for mail handling. When preparing jobs to be printed and mailed, the mail piece must be approved by the Manager of Mail Services or his/her designee to ensure that USPS regulations are followed. The Manager of Mail Services is the authorized representative for communicating with USPS on behalf of the University.

All outgoing pieces should have a University return address. The Director of University Services may review and approve exceptions to this requirement.

All Standard Mail (formerly referred to as bulk mail) job requests must be approved by the Manager of Mail Services or his/her designee due to the large size of the mailing.

SCOPE AND APPLICABILITY: This policy pertains to all on-campus handling of mail.

DEFINITIONS:

Flats: USPS classification for rectangular mail pieces that exceed any of the dimensions for a letter. The item must also be flexible and uniform in thickness. A mail piece that does not comply will be classified as a parcel.

Indicia: A postage permit imprint specifically assigned to Oakland University Mail Services. Use of Indicia must be pre-approved. See the MSD website.

Inter-Departmental Mail: Also referred to as "campus mail" and consisting of envelopes, memorandums, forms, publications, and other business mail routed from one campus location to another.

Machinable: A mail piece is Machinable if it can be sorted on USPS processing equipment and meet their specific standards, including size, shape and weight. Higher postage rates will apply to pieces that do not meet Machinable standards.

Off-Campus Mail: Mail that will be forwarded by the MSD to the USPS with the proper postage for delivery outside of the Oakland University campus.

Personal Mail: Any mail not directly related to Oakland University business – including personal bills, account statements or periodicals.

Standard Mail: Previously termed "Bulk Mail", Standard Mail is large volume mail. It offers a lower postage rate and delivery timing is typically longer. Standard Mail cannot be used for sending personalized correspondence, bills or statements because these require First Class postage.

PROCEDURES:

For off-campus business mail prepared at the department level that requires postage, the Mail Services Request form should be used. This form along with bar-coded labels, identifying the applicable fund to be charged is available at no cost from the MSD. Requesting these forms can be by email (mailroom@oakland.edu) or fax to 2286. Note that grant fund numbers should not be utilized without approval from the Office of Research Administration.

In order for the MSD to be effective and compliant with USPS regulations, the following information is required on the form:

- Type of Service (First Class, International, Media Mail, UPS, etc.)
- Piece count of letters and/or Flats
- Fund Number with associated bar code label

If any of the above items are missing, the MSD reserves the right to return the mail to the originating department for proper completion of the needed information. Mail should also be separated into batches if more than one type of service is requested.

For higher volume or more complicated services (e.g., applying address labels), use the Mail Services Requisition form which can be found on the MSD website.

No less than once a month, the MSD will charge expenses incurred by a department to the appropriate fund number in the University general ledger system.

Mail Pickup and Delivery

The MSD picks up mail each weekday from the USPS and thereafter sorts and delivers the mail to University departments. Mail addressed to a person no longer employed at the University will be delivered to the department or office address on the envelope for further disposition.

Inter-Departmental Mail and outgoing U.S. mail are picked up each business day from departmental mail stops/mail rooms. Mail is then either sorted for delivery to the on-campus addressee or sorted and forwarded to the USPS.

If the MSD has completed its pickup for the day at a departmental mail stop and processing is of an urgent nature, the items for inter-departmental or USPS delivery may be dropped off during business hours at the front counter of the MSD in the Police and Support Services (PSS) building.

Outgoing USPS mail leaves the campus at approximately 3:00 p.m. each day. Any mail/parcels reaching the MSD after that time will be forwarded to the USPS on the following business day.

Inter-Departmental Mail

The University's internal mail service is governed by Federal law, which requires that all mail delivered without postage be for University business and delivered by University employees. No personal or commercial mail should be sent through Inter-Departmental Mail.

When addressing inter-departmental envelopes, complete and clearly state:

- Name of addressee (if an individual) and/or
- Name of department, office or school
- Office Address or Name of building

Notification of a change of campus office address should be sent to the MSD. If addressee information is not clear or is ambiguous, the mail piece will be delivered to the department. Inter-Departmental Mail that is not properly addressed will be set aside for dispensation and may be returned to the sender.

Inter-Departmental Mail involving satellite University locations (Macomb University Center, as an example) will be processed based on need, with responsibilities and procedure determined by the Manager of Mail Services.

New multiple-use Inter-Departmental Mail envelopes may be purchased from the Printing Services Department. Partially-used envelopes may also be available at no charge at the MSD.

United States Mail

The MSD offers several options in conjunction with the USPS. Current information on minimum volumes or other constraints are available on the MSD website, or from the Postal Service at www.usps.com.

- **First Class Mailing.** Besides processing low volume pieces at the current USPS postage rates, the MSD can handle high volume first class mailings at a reduced, automated postage rate provided that the specific USPS Machinable requirements are met.
- **Standard Mail** (commonly referred to as bulk mail) is often the most economical way to send large volumes of mail. Such a mailing might be sent at a reduced, automated rate if the specific USPS regulations have been met. If in doubt, the MSD may take a concept sample of the mail piece to the USPS to evaluate its acceptability.
- **International Mail**, including Customs forms. Description of contents must be given to the MSD.
- **Special mail** such as insured mail, registered mail, and certified mail.
- **Postal Permit** numbers (Indicia). All requests to use an Oakland University permit Indicia must be processed and approved by the Manager of Mail Services or by the Director of University Services.
- **Business reply postage** and handling charges are billed back to departments.
- **Postage due** fees incurred and charged by the USPS are billed to the appropriate department.

Providing Electronic Address Files

The MSD can accept electronic files to prepare mailing labels and/or imprint the addresses directly on mail pieces. Please note the following for sending electronic files:

- Can be sent via electronic requisition using the MSD website or by email.
- Addresses can be printed on labels or by inkjet directly on the mail piece.

- The file can be in either Excel (preferred) or text, comma delimited format.

Personal Services

In the absence of USPS collection boxes on the University campus, MSD will, as a courtesy, collect stamped Personal Mail (envelopes only) while making their rounds for official business mail. In doing so, MSD does not assume responsibility for these pieces arriving at their destination in the same time frame as if the individual had mailed them at a USPS facility. This is the only personal service that MSD will provide. If individuals need to purchase postage or to ship a personal package, they must go to an office of one of the full-service carriers – USPS, FedEx or UPS.

RELATED POLICIES AND FORMS:

APPENDIX: