



January 30, 2013

Dear Election Officials:

The U.S. Postal Service greatly values its role in the election process as well as the relationships we have with Election Officials. One of our goals is to ensure ongoing improvements are made to election mail processes. We are writing to you today regarding a proposal we believe will address an important issue.

With the increase in no-excuse absentee voting and vote-by-mail efforts around the country, the Postal Service has seen an increase in the number of ballots mailed back to Election Officials with insufficient postage. The reality is that each election cycle presents a different set of parameters for ballot creation and for the size and weight of the return mail piece. As a result, many voters do not know the correct amount of postage required to return their ballot by mail. To rectify this insufficient postage challenge, the Postal Service is proposing that Election Officials indicate on either the ballot, return envelope, or ballot instructions the amount of postage required for the return ballot.

The following groups would be exempt from this proposal:

- 1) Members of the Armed Forces or U.S. Merchant Marines in active service and their spouses and dependents who are absent from their place-of-voting residence and who are otherwise eligible to vote as an absentee.
- 2) U.S. citizens residing outside the territorial limits of the United States and the District of Columbia and their spouses and dependents residing with or accompanying them.
- 3) In addition, since some jurisdictions currently budget for and pay return postage for ballots coming from voters, an exception to the proposed requirement also would be applied in these situations.

We would like to host webinars and conference calls to discuss this issue with you and to get your ideas. Please contact us at [ElectionMailProgramManager@usps.gov](mailto:ElectionMailProgramManager@usps.gov), if you are interested in participating in this discussion, and we will make the necessary arrangements. We also would like to inform you that the Postal Service plans to publish a Proposed Rule on this topic in the Federal Register in the coming weeks. We encourage you to take this opportunity to provide comments during the comment period. We thank you for your feedback in this process. As always, we appreciate your business.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Steven W. Monteith".

Steven W. Monteith  
Manager of Transactions and Correspondence Mail