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Federal Protective Service Guidance on How to Handle Suspicious and Possibly Contaminated Mail

General Precautions for Mail Handling:

- **Examine unopened envelopes/packages.**
- **If the envelop/package does not appear to be suspicious as outlined on the Indicators List, proceed to open mail.**

Types of suspect mail: Indicators List

- **Excessive postage, no postage, or non-canceled postage**
- **No return address or fictitious return address**
- **Improper spelling of addressee names, titles, or locations**
- **Unexpected envelopes from foreign countries**
- **Suspicious or threatening messages written on packages**
- **Postmark showing different location than return address**
- **Distorted handwriting or cut and paste lettering**
- **Unprofessionally wrapped packages or excessive use of tape, strings, etc.**

- Packages marked as “Fragile - - Handle with Care”, “Rush - - Do Not Delay”, “Personal” or “Confidential”
- Rigid, uneven, irregular, or lopsided packages
- Packages that are discolored, oily, or have an unusual odor
- Packages with soft spots, bulges, or excessive weight Protruding wires or aluminum foil
- Visual distractions
- Use latex gloves when handling mail.
- Use of other protective gear, such as protective mask, should be considered.
- Restrict access to mail room to only authorized individuals.

If you receive a suspicious package, letter, or object:

- **Do Not Open the Package.**
- **Remain calm.**
- **Bag the object.**
- **Place in containment can.**
- **Immediately telephone 9-1-1.**

GIVE THE 9-1-1 DISPATCH OPERATOR YOUR:

- **Name**
- **Location**
- **A comprehensive as possible description of the object.**
- **Cooperate with responding law enforcement and emergency medical units.**
- **Do not leave area until instructed to do so by responding units.**

For opened packages which contain suspicious materials:

- Do not shake or empty the contents of the suspicious package.
- Place the object in a plastic bag and then in the containment can.
- Do not touch your eyes, nose, or any other part of your body.
- Wash hands vigorously as soon as possible with soap and water.
- If clothing is heavily contaminated, do not brush vigorously.
- **Immediately telephone 9-1-1.**

GIVE THE 9-1-1 DISPATCH OPERATOR YOUR:

- Name
- Location
- A comprehensive as possible description of the object.
- Keep others from entering the area.
- **Cooperate with responding law enforcement and emergency medical units.**
- **Do not leave area until instructed to do so by responding units.**