



E000 Special Eligibility Standards

E050 Official Mail (Franked)

Summary E050 describes the standards for the use of official mail by Members of Congress.

1.0 BASIC INFORMATION

- Members of Congress** Official mail of Members of Congress is sent without prepayment of postage and bears instead either a written or printed facsimile signature or a specified marking. [Exhibit 1.1](#) shows what is accepted under frank and who is authorized its use.
- 1.1
- Former President and Spouse** Any former President of the United States and any surviving spouse of a former President may send nonpolitical mail as franked mail if it bears the sender's written or facsimile signature and the words "Postage and Fees Paid" in the upper right corner of the address side.
- 1.2
- Surviving Spouse of Member of Congress** When a Member of Congress dies during the term of office, the Member's surviving spouse may send correspondence relating to the death without prepayment of postage, for a period not to exceed 180 days after the death of the Member. The mail must bear the sender's written or facsimile signature in the upper right corner of the address side. If there is no surviving spouse, this privilege may be exercised by an immediate family member of the deceased Member of Congress designated by the Secretary of the Senate or the Clerk of the House of Representatives, as appropriate.
- 1.3
- Use** A person entitled to use franked mail may not lend this frank or permit its use by any committee, organization, association, or other person. This restriction does not apply to a committee of the Congress.
- 1.4
- Criteria** Franked mail must be addressed to the recipient by name, except under [A020](#), and it must meet the mailability criteria in [C010](#), [C020](#), and [C030](#) and the physical standards for the class of mail used.
- 1.5
- Handling** Franked mail is entitled to all special services for which it is properly endorsed, and is handled and forwarded as ordinary mail, except that after delivery to the addressee, it may not be remailed.
- 1.6
- Package to One Addressee** A person entitled to use franked mail may send a package of franked mail to one addressee, who may open the package and, on behalf of such person, address the franked articles and mail them.
- 1.7



Exhibit 1.1 Franked Mail of Members of Congress

User Entitled	Matter Permitted	Marking Required	Period Authorized
Vice President of the United States, Members of Congress, Resident Commissioners, Secretary of the Senate, Sergeant at Arms of the Senate, and each elected officer of the House of Representatives (other than Members of the House)	Public documents printed by order of Congress	“Public Document” and “U.S.S.” or “M.C.” must appear on address side.	During 90 days immediately after expiration of term of office
Members of Congress and Resident Commissioners	<i>Congressional Record</i> or any part of it (including reprints of any part, speech, or report contained in it) if for official business, activities, or duties	“Congressional Record” or “Part of Congressional Record” and “U.S.S.” or “M.C.” must appear on address side.	During term of office only
Members of Congress	Seed and agricultural reports from Department of Agriculture	Signature and title (written or printed facsimile) of person entitled to frank must appear on address side.	During 90 days immediately after expiration of term of office
Vice President of the United States, Members and Members-elect of Congress, Resident Commissioners, Secretary of the Senate, Sergeant at Arms of the Senate, each elected officer of the House of Representatives (other than a Member of the House), Legislative Counsels of the House of Representatives and the Senate, Law Revision Counsel of the House of Representatives, and Senate Legal Counsel	Official correspondence including Mailgrams	Mailgrams may be sent in standard Mailgram envelopes. For other correspondence, signature and title (written or printed facsimile) of person entitled to frank must appear on address side.	During term of office only. When position of Secretary, Sergeant at Arms, elected officer, Legislative Counsel, Law Revision Counsel, or Senate Legal Counsel is vacant, privileges may be exercised in officer’s name by authorized persons.
Vice President-elect	All mail connected with preparation for assumption of official duties as Vice President	Signature and title (written or printed facsimile) of Vice President-elect must appear on address side.	Until assumption of duties as Vice President
Former Vice President, each former Member of Congress, former Secretary of the Senate, former Sergeant at Arms of the Senate, each former elected officer of the House (other than former Member of the House), and each former Delegate or Resident Commissioner	Matter on official business about closing of offices	Signature and title (written or printed facsimile) of person entitled to frank must appear on address side.	During 90 days immediately after date of leaving office
Former Speakers of the House	Public documents, seeds, and agricultural reports from Department of Agriculture, official correspondence including Mailgrams	Signature and title (written or printed facsimile) of former Speaker, or Mailgram or public document marking as shown above, must appear on address side.	For as long as former Speaker determines necessary



2.0 ADDRESSING

- Required Addressing**
2.1 Except as permitted in [2.2](#), all mail sent under the franking privilege must be addressed to the recipient by name and complete delivery address.
- Alternative Addressing**
2.2 **[4-1-04]** Mail sent under the franking privilege of a member of or member-elect to Congress or a delegate, delegate-elect, resident commissioner, or resident commissioner-elect to the U.S. House of Representatives may be addressed under the alternative addressing formats in [A020.2.0](#) through [A020.4.0](#) for delivery to customers within the congressional district, state, or area that he or she represents. A member of the House of Representatives may not, under the franking privilege, use the alternative addressing formats to send mail outside the congressional district that he or she represents. Any representative-at-large may send franked mail with the simplified address format to Postal Service customers within the entire state that he or she represents.
- Simplified Address Format Mail Preparation**
2.3 Mailers must prepare containers of mail using the simplified address format in the manner listed below:
- a. Containers of congressional frank mailpieces using the simplified address format must be prepared under [A020](#).
 - b. PS Tag 11, *Congressional Mail* (“Postmaster—Open and Distribute”), must be securely affixed to each sack or tray of congressional mail to ensure adequate identification of the mail. On trays, the tag must be affixed to the end that bears the tray label.
- Delivery**
2.4 **[4-1-04]** Mail with a simplified address format is delivered within the district, state, or area to any of the following:
- a. Each boxholder or family on a rural or highway contract route.
 - b. Each post office boxholder.
 - c. Each active possible delivery on city carrier routes.
 - d. For deliveries under [2.4a](#) and [2.4c](#), partial distribution of simplified address mailings is permitted only when the carrier's delivery territory crosses congressional district boundaries. In these cases, complete distribution is made to the portion of the route within a single congressional district.
- Delivery Information**
2.5 Delivery information as described in [A930](#) is provided on request for a congressional district when a post office serves areas located in more than one district.

