

# US Postal Laws & Regulations

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Missent mail



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no through pouches to be dispatched by mail trains unless specially instructed to do so.

**Sec. 543. Facing Slips to be Used.**—Facing slips, bearing postmark with date and time of close or dispatch, and name of person making up the same, must be placed upon each package of letters or circulars, and in each pouch or canvas sack of newspapers, or on the label holder, if any, attached thereto. For form of facing slip, see section 994.

**Sec. 544. No Hooks on Mail Bags.**—The use of hooks in handling mail bags is forbidden.

**Sec. 545. Delivery of Mail Matter on Mail Cars by Postmasters.**—Postmasters are required to dispatch mail to railway post-offices in the lock pouches provided for that purpose, except in the case of a few late letters or postal cards, which they may deliver in person or by a sworn assistant after the postmark of the mailing office has been impressed thereon and the stamps canceled. Such postmarked and canceled letters and postal cards must not be received by the postal clerk from a mail-messenger nor from the public, as after the mail is once deposited in a post-office it cannot again come into the hands of the public until its final delivery. (See sections 532 and 979.)

#### AT OFFICES IN TRANSIT.

**Sec. 546. Missent or Unmailable Matter Inadvertently Sent and Misdirected Matter.**—Misdirected, destructive, or manifestly obscene matter, which should not have been, but through inadvertence may have been, dispatched from the post-office of mailing, should be detained and withdrawn from the mails by any postmaster into whose hands the same may come in transit. But other matter which should have been detained at the office of mailing as "held for postage," "excess of weight or size," "coin," or "lottery" (see section 379), must not be stopped in transit.

Misdirected matter of the first class, if it bear the card or request of the sender, should be withdrawn and returned to him with the words written or stamped thereon, "RETURNED FOR BETTER DIRECTION." (See section 526.)

Missent matter, or that which is plainly addressed, but sent in the wrong direction, should, when discovered, be placed in the first mail going in the proper direction.

**Sec. 547. Mail Stopping Over Night.**—When the mail stops over night where there is a post-office, it must be kept in the post-office, except at points where transfer clerks are on duty during the night in charge of such mail, or where otherwise ordered by the Department.

For time allowed in opening mail, see section 510.