

UNFPA

Policy Title	Policy and Procedures for Mail and Pouch
Document identifier	PPM/MAIL/2025/1
Previous title (if any)	Mail and Pouch Policy
Policy objective	This policy outlines the process involved for management of sending and receiving mail at UNFPA offices worldwide.
Target audience	The policy applies to all UNFPA personnel worldwide.
Risk control matrix	Controls of the process are detailed in the Risk Control Matrix .
Checklist	N/A
Effective date	9 April 2025
Revision History	Issued: 10 July 2009 Revision 1: 9 April 2025
Mandatory review date	9 April 2028
Policy owner unit	Facilities and Administrative Service Branch, Division for Management Services
Approval	Link to signed approval template

POLICY AND PROCEDURES FOR MAIL AND POUCH**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

I. Purpose	4
II. Policy	4
A. General Principles	4
B. Accountability	4
1. Disciplinary Measures	4
2. Internal Control and Segregation of Duties	5
C. Definitions	5
D. Delegation of Authority for Mail and Pouch	5
E. Roles and Responsibilities	7
1. Outgoing and incoming Mail and Pouch in field offices and headquarter units located outside of New York	7
2. Outgoing and incoming Mail and Pouch at New York headquarters	7
F. Mail and Pouch Mechanisms	8
1. Outgoing Mail and Pouch	8
a. Interoffice Mail	8
b. United Nations Diplomatic Pouch Services	8
c. Government Postal Services	9
d. Commercial Delivery and Courier Services	9
e. Messenger Services	9
2. Incoming Mail and Pouch	9
a. Personal Incoming Mail	9
b. Mail Collection and Distribution	10
3. Common Services	10
III. Procedures	10
A. Outgoing Mail and Pouch	10
1. Guidelines for the Selection of Delivery Method	10
2. Interoffice Mail	11
a. Interoffice Mail Guidelines and Restrictions	11
b. Interoffice Mail Handling Procedures	11
3. United Nations Diplomatic Pouch Services	11

UNFPA

Policies and Procedures Manual

Policy and Procedures for Mail and Pouch

Facilities and Administrative

a. Diplomatic Pouch Destinations	11
b. Diplomatic Pouch Requirements and Limitations	12
c. Certifying Diplomatic Pouch Material	13
d. Diplomatic Pouch Handling Procedures	13
4. Government Postal Services	15
a. Government Postal Requirements and Limitations	15
b. Governmental Postal Service Handling Procedures	15
5. Commercial Delivery and Courier Services	16
a. Guidelines for Use and Selection of Commercial Delivery and Courier Services	16
b. Commercial Delivery and Courier Handling Procedures	16
6. Messenger Services	17
a. Messenger Services Requirements and Limitations	17
b. Messenger Services Handling Procedures	17
B. Incoming Mail and Pouch	18
1. Personal Incoming Mail	18
2. Procedures for Incoming Mail	19
a. Mail Collection	19
b. Distribution of Incoming Mail	20
3. Physical verification procedures	20
4. Guidelines for Handling Suspicious Mail or Package	21
IV. Other	22
V. Process Overview Flowchart	23
VI. Risk Control Matrix	23
Annex I: Delegation of Authority	25
Annex II: Request for Special Mail Services	26
Annex III: Summary of Enclosure Form	27
Annex IV: Request for Messenger Services	28

POLICY AND PROCEDURES FOR MAIL AND POUCH**I. Purpose**

1. The Policy and Procedures for Mail and Pouch applies to the collection, distribution, sending, and receiving of mail, including the selection of the appropriate delivery method.
2. The policy outlines procedures, role and responsibilities for UNFPA mail and pouch processes in order to:
 - a. Ensure integrity and accuracy in the use and administrative and financial recording of mail and pouch services; and
 - b. Promote the best interest of UNFPA regarding the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of mail and pouch services.

II. Policy

3. This policy outlines UNFPA's mail and pouch process, identifies control actions to mitigate potential risks related to the process and establishes the following.

A. General Principles

4. All use of mail and pouch services must strictly comply with UNFPA financial regulations and rules, procurement policies and procedures, and all relevant administrative policies and procedures. The delegation of mail and pouch authority is granted on an individual basis and requires delegated authorities to adhere to the relevant portions of the controlling legal instruments. In the case of any inconsistency or ambiguity between them, these instruments must be applied in the following order of priority:
 - a. Article 100 of the [Charter of the United Nations](#)
 - b. [Staff Regulations and Rules of the United Nations](#) ; and
 - c. The applicable policies and procedures.

B. Accountability**1. Disciplinary Measures**

5. Failure to adhere to the provisions of this policy may result in disciplinary action, as per the [Disciplinary Framework](#).

2. Internal Control and Segregation of Duties

6. UNFPA heads of unit and Chief, FASB must ensure that there is a reasonable segregation of duties to minimize the risk of fraud (e.g. mail tampering) and to promptly detect fraud. For example, it is important that the individual responsible for making/processing payments is not the person distributing incoming mails.
7. The provisions of the [UNFPA Internal Control Framework](#) must be strictly followed.

C. Definitions

8. The following definitions apply for the purpose of the present policy.
 - a. “Official Mail” refers to all official correspondence, documents bearing the United Nations or UNFPA symbol or United Nations publication sales code, United Nations stamps, computer printouts, posters, files, etc. which relate to the programmes, services, and functions of UNFPA.
 - b. “United Nations Diplomatic Pouch” refers to the United Nations diplomatic pouch service which is a channel for the exchange of mail throughout the United Nations system and is a privilege granted by section 10 of the *Convention on Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations*.
 - c. “Government Postal Service” refers to government operated postal services which exist in most countries and are used for the transmission of official mail to destinations other than United Nations offices or entities.
 - d. “Local Messenger Services” refers to local messenger services which provide immediate delivery within a local area, and can be provided either by UNFPA staff messengers, United Nations messengers that are part of a common services arrangement or through private companies.
 - e. “Courier and Commercial Delivery Services” refers to those companies that provide door-to-door delivery of mail to national and international destinations, often in an expedited time frame and is generally registered in a parcel tracking system. These will vary from country to country.

D. Delegation of Authority for Mail and Pouch

9. The UNFPA Executive Director has delegated management and approval authority for mail and pouch functions to the Deputy Executive Director (Management) (hereinafter referred to

UNFPA

as DED(M)), who has further delegated their authority to the Director, Division for Management Services (DMS).

10. The Director, DMS has delegated their authority as follows:
 - a. For the field and headquarter units located outside of New York: UNFPA head of unit¹.
 - b. For New York headquarters: Chief, Facilities and Administrative Services Branch (FASB).
11. UNFPA head of unit and the Chief, FASB are responsible for ensuring that operational procedures are established for specific local mail operations and control systems that follow the policies and procedures contained herein.
12. UNFPA heads of unit as well as the Chief, FASB may further delegate responsibilities for overseeing outgoing and incoming mail to an appropriate staff member, referred to here as the mail focal point (MFP) and for overseeing incoming and outgoing pouch services to the Diplomatic Pouch Certifying Officer (DPCO)². These roles will normally be given to the operations manager with preference given to senior staff, but may be delegated to any appropriate personnel.
13. At New York headquarters, the Chief, FASB further delegates responsibilities for outgoing mail, overseeing incoming mail functions and the management of the Mail and Pouch Unit to the registry associate, who is referred to in the policies and procedures herein as the MFP, and the DPCO. The MFP may further delegate the responsibility for collecting and preparing outgoing mail, packages, and diplomatic pouch materials to the registry clerk.
14. The delegation of mail and pouch authority is granted on an individual basis. Each individual who has been delegated authority to use, record, or maintain mail and pouch services is responsible for adhering to the policies and procedures described herein.
15. However, UNFPA heads of unit in the field and headquarter units located outside of New York and Chief, FASB remain responsible for compliance with all relevant financial regulations and rules, and all relevant policies and procedures.

¹ The UNFPA head of unit refers to the representative, division director, regional or subregional director, country director or the chief of operations (or the delegated officer), as appropriate.

² The staff's roles and responsibilities as DPCO should be included in his/her job description and/or Career and Performance Management (CPM).

E. Roles and Responsibilities

16. All personnel are responsible for ensuring that they strictly adhere to the policies and procedures regarding outgoing mail (what may be shipped, by what delivery method, and by whom) as well as their use of incoming mail facilities.

1. Outgoing and incoming Mail and Pouch in field offices and headquarter units located outside of New York

17. UNFPA heads of unit are responsible for ensuring all outgoing and incoming mail conforms to the policies and procedures described herein.

18. The MFP is generally responsible for collecting and preparing outgoing mail, packages, and diplomatic pouch material.

19. The MFP is generally responsible for the day-to-day execution of incoming mail tasks.

20. The DPCO is responsible for ensuring that the use of the United Nations diplomatic pouch is in accordance with established requirements and limitations. The DPCO also ensures responsibility for the proper sealing and dispatch of outgoing pouches and for verifying the summary list of enclosures.

21. The DPCO is responsible for verifying the legitimate contents of incoming pouches.

2. Outgoing and incoming Mail and Pouch at New York headquarters

22. The Chief, FASB is responsible for ensuring that all incoming and outgoing mail conforms to the policies and procedures described herein.

23. The MFP is generally responsible for collecting and preparing outgoing mail, packages, and diplomatic pouch material.

24. The MFP is generally responsible for the day-to-day execution of incoming mail tasks.

25. The DPCO is responsible for ensuring that the use of the United Nations Diplomatic Pouch is in accordance with established requirements and limitations outlined in further detail later in this policy document. They also ensure responsibility for the proper sealing and dispatch of outgoing pouches and for verifying the summary list of enclosures.

26. The DPCO is responsible for verifying the legitimate contents of incoming pouches.

F. Mail and Pouch Mechanisms**1. Outgoing Mail and Pouch**

27. The MFP is responsible for identifying the types of mail delivery options available.
28. All UNFPA offices must take all measures to ensure the cost-effectiveness of mail and pouch services.
- a. Interoffice Mail
29. Interoffice mail is used to transfer official mail between United Nations personnel in the same office or duty station.
30. Sending personal mail (including magazines, cash, and checks) via interoffice mail is prohibited. Interoffice mail facilities may only be used for official purposes.
- b. United Nations Diplomatic Pouch Services
31. The United Nations diplomatic pouch service constitutes one cost-effective and secured channel for carrying official correspondence or other items throughout the United Nations system. According to section 10 of the Convention on Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations, “The United Nations shall have the right to ... dispatch and receive its correspondence ... in bags, which shall have the same immunities and privileges as diplomatic ... bags.”
32. All official mail bound for United Nations offices may be sent via pouch. UNFPA head of unit in field offices or headquarter units located outside of New York should ensure they have approved a DPCO for UNFPA valises.
33. Official mail includes the shipment of documents and official papers when a UNFPA staff member is transferred from one UNFPA duty station to another. Staff members transferred from one UNFPA duty station to another may ship up to two (2) pieces at a maximum of 30 lbs each via the pouch. Any material over this weight must be shipped as part of the staff member's personal effects. This is not applicable to UNFPA staff members transferred to different United Nations entities.
34. Personal letters from UNFPA personnel in the field may be included in the pouch in exceptional cases only where regular mail service is unavailable or inadequate in the specific country, as determined by the UNFPA head of unit in field offices or Chief, FASB in writing.
-

35. The use of diplomatic pouch for personal mail for staff located in headquarters is not considered necessary due to the availability of a reliable government postal service.

c. Government Postal Services

36. Government postal services should be used for mail that is not eligible for shipment within the United Nations Diplomatic Pouch and for which the timeliness and reliability of the government postal service is acceptable.

d. Commercial Delivery and Courier Services

37. Courier and commercial delivery services can be a fast and safe way of dispatching mail. They could also be used for items that can neither be shipped via the diplomatic pouch (either because the recipient is not a United Nations office or because the size of the delivery is too large for the pouch) nor through the government postal service in a reasonable time frame and/or with a suitable degree of reliability.

e. Messenger Services

38. Given the cost of messenger services, these should only be used in situations where interoffice mail is not available or appropriate and where the timeliness and reliability of the government postal service cannot meet the needs of the shipment.

2. Incoming Mail and Pouch

a. Personal Incoming Mail

39. In field offices and headquarter units located outside of New York, the UNFPA head of unit must ensure that procedures are put in place to regulate private mail delivery.

40. In field offices and headquarter units located outside of New York, items for personal use such as food, clothing, gifts, etc. are not acceptable for inclusion in the diplomatic pouch.

41. In headquarters, only official UNFPA mail may be delivered. The delivery of personal mail, periodicals, and packages to the UNFPA office is strictly prohibited with the exception of new and outgoing staff members may have their personal mail delivered to UNFPA for a maximum of 2 months from the date of their appointment or separation respectively.

b. Mail Collection and Distribution

42. All UNFPA offices must ensure that locally-specific distribution guidelines are in place.

3. Common Services

43. In general, mail services have already been established in ways that support the principles of the United Nations common services. However, if in the spirit of United Nations Reform for cost efficiency and cost effectiveness, it is found that further shared or common services arrangements for mail, courier, messenger, and/or commercial delivery services could be pursued with other United Nations entities, the standard procedures for Business Operations Strategy must then be followed, as per the Development Coordination Office ([DCO guidelines](#)). The agreement between UNFPA and other United Nations entities for shared/common services arrangements for mail, courier, messenger and/or commercial delivery services acquired via a Common Back Office must be cleared by the Chief, FASB.

III. Procedures**A. Outgoing Mail and Pouch****1. Guidelines for the Selection of Delivery Method**

44. The MFP must assess schedules, and information about rates and packaging requirements in order to ensure that the most efficient and cost-effective delivery can be chosen.
45. The type of service chosen will depend on the local circumstances. The key factors in the selection of delivery method are the location of the addressee, the time-sensitivity of the delivery, the reliability of the delivery method, the size of the delivery, and, importantly, the associated cost. The sections that follow outline the various service delivery options and their appropriate use.
46. [UNFPA Procurement Procedures](#) must be strictly followed for the provision of all mail and pouch services.
47. Mail and pouch services generally require careful planning by UNFPA offices long before shipments are made to ensure that the least expensive delivery method is used. Since slower delivery methods are generally the least expensive, UNFPA offices must make every effort to allow enough time for delivery via the least expensive means, particularly for large shipments.

2. Interoffice Mail

a. Interoffice Mail Guidelines and Restrictions

48. For interoffice mail, the addressor should clearly indicate on the envelope the name, branch, division, room number (where available), and United Nations agency (where applicable) of the addressee.
49. For large shipments between offices and/or entities, the addressor should make special arrangements with the MFP.

b. Interoffice Mail Handling Procedures

50. Specific handling procedures for interoffice mail must be established by the MFP for each field office.
51. At New York headquarters, personnel must place interoffice mail in the outgoing mail receptacle at the Mail and Pouch Unit which will be routed appropriately by registry staff.

3. United Nations Diplomatic Pouch Services

52. The diplomatic pouch service is administered by the Mail Operations of the United Nations and has been established to ensure secure and speedy transmission of official United Nations correspondence between offices in different locations. The UNFPA valise is transported within the United Nations pouch.

a. Diplomatic Pouch Destinations

53. For pouch service between field offices or headquarter units located outside of New York and headquarters in New York, the UNFPA valise follows the schedule of the United Nations Diplomatic Pouch. The United Nations Mail Operations, Department of Operational Support at United Nations Headquarters establishes the diplomatic pouch schedule. This schedule, which is provided to all United Nations offices and entities, details the day of the week that pouches are dispatched to specific destinations and the average number of days for delivery of the pouch.
54. The current schedule for outgoing pouches from New York is available [here](#).
55. For pouch service between field offices and headquarter units located outside of New York, under normal circumstances, pouched mail will be included in the valise to New York

headquarters and will then be redirected to the appropriate destination office³. As a result of this routing through New York Headquarter, the pouch service between field offices may not be the most timely and/or cost-effective option and should therefore be used only exceptionally. However, direct pouch service should be established between duty stations on a continuous or ad hoc basis, where the volume of material from the United Nations Country Team (UNCT) meets the minimum pouch weight requirements of an airline. Regular direct pouch service can be established only after the respective national governments have issued their concurrence, and will generally be established by the UNCT through UNDP. Confirmation of an additional pouch service should be communicated, post facto, to Chief, FASB. Such agreements are not normally required for ad hoc shipments between countries.

b. Diplomatic Pouch Requirements and Limitations

i. *Official Mail*

56. Individual parcels of official mail for inclusion in the diplomatic pouch should not exceed 16 kilograms (35 pounds). Measurement restrictions vary, depending on the size of the pouch.

ii. *Personal Mail*

57. In the exceptional cases where inclusion of personal letters from personnel in the field has been approved by the head of unit, the personal letters may be included in pouches to headquarters locations for onward forwarding. The correct postage in un-cancelled stamps must be affixed by the originator. This may be in the form of either United Nations stamps (in the correct currency) or government postal stamps (e.g. if the mail is to be forwarded from New York headquarters, it must have United Nations stamps in US dollar denominations or United States Postal Service (USPS) stamps⁴). United Nations and government postal system stamps may not be mixed. Letters which do not have the correct postage, have mixed postage, or are not properly addressed will be returned to the originator.

58. Weight and measurement restrictions for official mail apply to personal mail.

³ For example if the Ethiopia country office ships a pouch to the South Africa country office and no direct pouch service has been established between the two countries, the pouch will ship to New York headquarters first. The New York headquarters MFP receives the pouch and redirects the pouch to the South Africa country office.

⁴ Postage rates for the United States Postal Service can be found at

<http://www.usps.com/tools/calculatepostage/welcome.htm?from=home&page=0061calculatepostage>

c. Certifying Diplomatic Pouch Material

59. The staff member nominated to undertake the responsibility of DPCO must complete the form P.86 United Nations Delegation of Authority ([Annex I](#)).
60. The UNFPA head of unit in field offices or headquarter units located outside of New York is responsible for ensuring that a copy of form P.86 is kept on file in the field office. The staff member nominated DPCO and alternate DPCO must notify the Mail and Pouch unit of their nomination using this [form](#).

d. Diplomatic Pouch Handling Proceduresi. *Addressing and Postage*

61. All envelopes must clearly indicate that it is UNFPA material. The branch, division, and room number must be clearly visible so that the United Nations will be able to query possible anomalies and/or charge back correctly to UNFPA.
62. All Mail: In headquarters, envelopes smaller than 8.5”x11” (21.59cm x 27.94cm) will be placed directly in the UNFPA valise for the specific field office and therefore do not require barcodes. However, any bulky envelope larger than 8.5”x11” (21.59cm x 27.94cm) and all parcels will be forwarded to the United Nations pouch unit for weighing and will therefore require a barcode which is affixed by the MFP.
63. Official Mail: Official mail must be enclosed in plain envelopes, and should be delivered unsealed to the DPCO (with the exception of mail already certified by a higher-level officer such as the UNFPA head of unit, in field offices, or division directors or branch chiefs, in headquarters). Airmail envelopes should not be used. The DPCO must ascertain that pouch material complies with the established guidelines in paragraphs 33-35, 56-57 above.
64. Personal Mail: Personal mail that conforms to the guidelines in paragraphs 57-58 above must be fully addressed and must bear the appropriate postage. Such mail may be delivered sealed to the DPCO for inclusion in the pouch.
65. All mail which does not comply with paragraphs 62 to 64 will be returned to the sender by the DPCO. All items may be subject to inspection by UNFPA and/or the United Nations Mail & Pouch Unit and/or by the local UNDP office to ensure compliance.

ii. Charge Back Costs

66. UNFPA office sending envelope(s) or package(s) to an addressee weighing a total of 100 pounds (45.5 kilograms) or more or costing US\$300 or more must complete the Request for Special Mail Services Form ([Annex II](#)), including the appropriate chart of account to charge the cost of the shipment by pouch. This form must be duly signed by the unit's certifying officer. The UNFPA offices should submit the form along with the item(s) to the DPCO in field offices and the Mail and Pouch Unit in New York headquarters.

*iii. Special Procedures**Valuable Items*

67. Official items of value or of special importance (e.g. electronic equipment, United Nations Laissez Passer, or any items that require proof of receipt) included in the pouch should bear the notation "List on Summary of Enclosures" on the envelope or the package and must be sealed and must bear the recognisable signature of the DPCO.

68. In headquarters, these items should be delivered personally by the sender to the Mail and Pouch Unit with clear instructions that the items should be registered on the Summary of Enclosure forms ([Annex III](#)).

Sealed Pouch Material

69. The DPCO must verify all sealed items to be included in the diplomatic pouch. Such certification indicates that the contents comply with the requirements outlined in paragraphs 33, 35, 56-57 above. The DPCO is personally responsible for all items included in the diplomatic pouch.

iv. Valise shipment

70. The UNFPA valise is prepared in accordance with the pouch schedule and forwarded to the UNDP office for inclusion in the diplomatic pouch. The Summary of Enclosures must be included in each pouch with a copy retained in the field office for record. Field offices must date stamp, sign and return a copy of the summary of enclosures to the MFP in headquarters in the next valise.

4. Government Postal Services

71. Most government postal services establish a range of postal rates, which are normally grouped by destination and are further divided by class. Most government postal systems also provide special services such as registered mail and special delivery at additional cost.

a. Government Postal Requirements and Limitations

i. *Packaging Standards*

72. Most government postal services have specific packaging standards which vary according to the size, weight, and shape of the item to be posted. Most government postal services provide labels or require that posted items be stamped/labelled to identify the class/type of service requested. The MFP must ensure adherence for individual packages to avoid unnecessary costs or delays. The MFP must also obtain the necessary supplies required to package, address, and secure items for mailing.

ii. *Payment methods*

73. In field offices, payment may be in the form of postage stamps or a pre-paid postage meter, depending on the field office. At New York headquarters, all first class United States Postal Service (USPS) mail is dispatched by the registry clerk.

74. In all cases, payment must strictly comply with [UNFPA Financial Regulations and Rules](#) and relevant [financial policies and procedures](#).

b. Governmental Postal Service Handling Procedures

75. In field offices, the MFP must establish an internal office schedule to ensure that the collection of outgoing postal mail is collected to coincide with the local government postal service schedule.

76. In field offices and headquarter units located outside of New York, the MFP must ensure that all outgoing mail is properly packaged, clearly addressed, contains the required labels or markings, and has adequate postage.

77. In field offices and headquarter units located outside of New York, the MFP is responsible for ensuring that outgoing mail is duly delivered to the government postal service, whether through pre-arranged office pick-ups, drop-offs to the post office facility, or delivery to a common United Nations agency drop-off point, depending on the situation in the country.

78. In New York headquarters, all official outgoing USPS mail must be placed by the sender in the outgoing mail receptacles at the Mail and Pouch unit. The USPS mail will be dispatched by the registry staff.
79. All envelopes must clearly indicate that it is UNFPA material. The branch, division, and room number of the sender should be clearly visible in order to query possible anomalies and/or charge back correctly to UNFPA.

5. Commercial Delivery and Courier Services

80. When necessary commercial delivery and courier services (e.g. DHL, FedEx, UPS, etc) can be used for overnight or express delivery and generally have a registered parcel tracking system.

a. Guidelines for Use and Selection of Commercial Delivery and Courier Services

81. As mentioned in the common services section above, the awarding of contracts to commercial delivery and courier services is a prime area for United Nations entities common business operations to benefit from a common services programme, given the potential to negotiate lower prices.
82. Even if a formal common services arrangement is not appropriate for a particular field office, it is good practice to select a firm that has been vetted and recommended by other United Nations entities.

b. Commercial Delivery and Courier Handling Procedures

83. UNFPA offices requiring commercial delivery or courier services should fill out the Request for Special Mail Service form ([Annex II](#)) including the chart of account to charge the cost of the shipment. The form must be duly signed by the unit's certifying officer. The UNFPA office should submit the form along with the item to the MFP in field offices and to the Mail and Pouch Unit in New York headquarters.
84. The MFP must obtain information about various commercial delivery and courier services available locally. Based on the schedule of rates, delivery time, extent of bonding or insurance, and billing procedures the MFP must select the service that best serves UNFPA's interests as per [UNFPA Procurement Procedures](#), whether in a long-term contract arrangement (where feasible) or in individual shipments.

85. Specific handling procedures will depend on the circumstances in the local offices and must be laid out for individual offices by the MFP, but in each case the following information must be recorded by the MFP: the name of the requesting staff member, name of the company providing the service; destination; contents; costs; date sent; and the account code to be charged. Where tracking numbers are issued by the service provider, these should also be recorded.

6. Messenger Services

a. Messenger Services Requirements and Limitations

86. In some offices, UNFPA staff messengers are available (where messenger services are needed on a regular basis), whether these are full-time staff or are staff members who undertake messenger duties along with other responsibilities.

87. Where UNFPA staff messengers are unavailable or non-existent, the MFP should first consult with other local United Nations entities to determine the availability of existing United Nations messenger services and negotiate appropriate arrangements for these services.

88. If United Nations messenger services are unavailable, then local commercial messenger services may be contracted, subject to the guidelines in paragraph 44-47.

b. Messenger Services Handling Procedures

89. Specific handling procedures will depend on the circumstances in the office, but the following are general guidelines for the use of messenger services.

90. The UNFPA office requesting the use of messenger services should complete the request form ([Annex IV](#)) and submit the request to the MFP.

91. The MFP must ensure the selection of the most appropriate service provider as per [UNFPA Procurement Procedures](#), whether in a long-term contract arrangement (where feasible) or through individual shipments.

92. For control purposes, the following information must be recorded by the MFP: the name of the requesting staff member, name of the company providing the service; destination; contents; costs; date sent; and the account code to be charged (if appropriate).

B. Incoming Mail and Pouch**1. Personal Incoming Mail**

93. In field offices and headquarter units located outside of New York, non acceptable items for personal use will be returned to the sender if a return address has been provided. If no return address has been provided, the contents will be given to charity.

94. In field offices and headquarter units located outside of New York, there are two sets of procedures governing the kind of mail staff members may receive. One set applies to all countries, and the other is for countries with exception status:

a. For all countries

For all countries, all UNFPA international staff members may have the following items (in reasonable amounts) sent to them via pouch to their duty station:

- i. first class correspondence (letters and postcards sent at full postal rate);
- ii. professional and technical magazines and journals;
- iii. prescription medicines and eyeglasses in reasonable amounts certified by the United Nations Medical Director;
- iv. material for accredited correspondence courses⁵.

b. For countries with exception status

For countries with exception status (such as embargoed status restrictions and services alerts from the United Nations Office of Information and Communications Technologies (OICT)), in addition to the items listed above, the following items (in reasonable amounts) may also be sent via pouch to countries:

- i. newspapers;
- ii. a limited number of magazines;
- iii. job-related books.

95. The current list with exception status can be found [here](#) and is subject to periodic review and is updated by the Registry Associate.

⁵ Note that all material pertaining to accredited correspondence courses in which UNFPA staff and/or their dependents are enrolled may be forwarded via pouch free of charge. Weight of any one package is limited to a maximum of 30 lbs (12 kgs) and dimensions of 9 x 11 x 12 inches (23 x 28 x 30 cm). In order to receive such material, staff should notify the MFP in New York headquarters when subscribing to a correspondence course.

96. All shipments ordered from field offices or headquarter units located outside of New York to be included in the UNFPA valise should be cleared by the DPCO at New York headquarters prior to ordering. In order to receive personal mail that meets the above guidelines, staff should ensure it is addressed as follows:

Mr. John Doe
UNFPA, Duty Station (City, Country)
c/o UNFPA
605 Third Avenue, 5th Floor
New York, NY 10158

97. New staff members are allowed to have their personal mail delivered to UNFPA for a maximum of 2 months from the date of their appointment and must collect their personal mail from the Mail and Pouch Unit directly.
98. At New York headquarters, registry staff notifies recipients of incoming mail which will need to be collected at the Mail and Pouch Unit.

2. Procedures for Incoming Mail

99. All UNFPA offices must ensure that locally-specific distribution guidelines follow the general procedures below.

a. Mail Collection

i. *Governmental Postal Service*

100. In countries where mail is not delivered directly to the office, the MFP must ensure that mail is collected from the appropriate delivery point. All registered or special delivery mail must be appropriately signed for by the MFP.

ii. *United Nations Diplomatic Pouch*

101. The DPCO must arrange for the pick-up or delivery of pouches from the appropriate delivery point (at the Office of General Services at the United Nations for headquarters and normally the local UNDP office for field offices). Contents of pouches that appear not to conform to the procedures must be brought to the attention of the UNFPA head of unit in field offices or the Chief, FASB (in headquarters), who must decide what remedial action must be taken.

102. It is essential that field offices complete their summary of enclosure forms ([Annex III](#)) with the correct date and time of arrival, and advise both the United Nations pouch service and the DPCO at New York headquarters of pouch receipt delays. If recurring problems exist, the United Nations pouch service (in consultation with FASB) will try to resolve the problem with the specific carrier, or suggest a different routing.

iii. Courier and Messenger

103. All deliveries from courier and messenger services must be signed for and logged by the MFP or appropriate staff member, ensuring that the following information is captured: date received by the office; addressee; addressor; date received by addressee; signature of addressee.

b. Distribution of Incoming Mail

104. In field offices and headquarters units located outside of New York, the MFP must establish an internal office procedure to distribute all received mail to the relevant intended recipient.

105. In New York headquarters, for all incoming postal and pouch mail, the addressee will be informed by email upon receipt. The addressee or their representative must then collect the item from the Mail and Pouch Unit.

106. In New York headquarters, all registered or certified mail, courier, or messenger deliveries will be signed for and logged upon receipt by the MFP. The addressee will then be informed electronically that the delivery has been received. The addressee or their representative must then collect and confirm electronically the receipt of the item from the Mail and Pouch Unit.

3. Physical verification procedures

107. In New York headquarters, all mail deliveries, courier mail and parcels to UNFPA premises are subject to screening by visual or physical inspection by the Registry clerk or Registry associate. Unexpected deliveries, such as United States postal, are screened with security technologies. Any shipment that raises concerns due to its origin, appearance, or other factors, is isolated in a containment chamber for further inspection. Upon completion of security inspection, shipments are released for distribution. Suspected mail containing hazardous materials is reported immediately to the Office of Security Coordinator, United Nations Department of Safety and Security and or host country security entities.

108. In New York headquarters, for the delivery of diplomatic pouches and United Nations agency mail addressed to UNFPA headquarters, security measures are undertaken at the United Nations prior to the delivery to UNFPA. All mail and pouches are subject to security screening. The screening process is conducted by the United Nations Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS) and consists of canine inspection, radiography imaging, and a visual inspection by United Nations Security and United Nations mail department throughout the process. After inspection all large boxes, flats and packages are stamped by the United Nations Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS) for confirmation. If at any time, something suspicious arises the United Nations mail department will contact United Nations Security and their fire unit for further instructions.
109. In field offices and headquarters units located outside of New York, UNDP serves as the recipient of the Diplomatic Pouch. As such, all necessary screening takes place at the UNDP office premises. In addition, the host country postal services also administers screening for all packages prior to distribution to United Nations entities and others. Field offices can seek guidance from their local United Nations Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS) to factor any specific security concerns for mail reception/inspection prior to distribution.

4. Guidelines for Handling Suspicious Mail or Package

110. The best defence against contaminated mail is to be aware of what to look for and what steps to take if a suspicious letter or package is found. Common sense is the best defence.
111. General Precautions
- a. Wash your hands with warm soap and water before and after handling mail.
 - b. If you have open cuts or skin lesions on your hands, disposable vinyl gloves may be appropriate.
 - c. Use a letter opener, not your hands, to open envelopes.
 - d. Suspicious Mail Indicators:
 - i. No return address
 - ii. Badly typed or handwritten address
 - iii. Lopsided or uneven envelope
 - iv. Title, but no name
 - v. Excessive tape, string, weight or postage
 - vi. Misspelled common words
 - vii. Protruding wires
 - viii. Strange odour
 - ix. Oily stains on wrapper
 - x. Ticking sound

- xi. Personal or confidential markings

112. Safety Guidelines

If a letter is received that contains powder or contains a written threat:

- a. Do not shake or empty the envelope.
- b. Isolate the workplace area so that no one disturbs the item. Do not attempt to clean up or cover any spilled powder.
- c. Make co-workers aware of the envelope and have them call your supervisor, who will call local law enforcement authorities (in New York headquarters, call 911). Tell the law enforcement authorities what you received, what was done with it, if the envelope contains any visible powder and if the powder was released.
- d. Leave the immediate area and wash hands with warm water and soap. Have employees available when emergency personnel arrive.

Important:

- a. Do not panic
- b. Do not move, shake or handle the letter
- c. Do not open or discard the letter
- d. Do not smell or taste any powder

113. Special precaution for biological threats

- a. Do not handle the mail piece or package suspected of contamination.
- b. Make sure that damaged or suspicious packages are isolated and the immediate area cordoned off.
- c. Ensure that all persons who have touched the mail piece wash their hands with soap and water.
- d. Immediately notify your direct supervisor, local law enforcement authorities, and the Security Coordinator's office at headquarters.
- e. List all persons who have touched the letter and/or envelope. Include contact information and have this information available for the authorities.
- f. Place all items worn when in contact with the suspected mail piece in plastic bags and have them available for law enforcement agents.
- g. As soon as practical, shower with soap and water.

IV. Other

No other content available.

V. Process Overview Flowchart

No overview flowchart applicable.

VI. Risk Control Matrix

Risk Description	First Line of Defense Controls			Second Line of Defense Controls		
	Control Activity Description	Reference (Policy section, paragraph or Control #)	Who Performs	Control Activity Description	Reference (Policy section, paragraph or Control #)	Who Performs
Mail Security of incoming mail	Visual inspection of all incoming mail. Any suspicious mail detected by visual inspection to be investigated and law enforcement authorities to be notified if necessary.	107-113	MFP, DPCO, registry associate	N/A	N/A	N/A
Loss of shipment	Office to lay out specific procedures to ensure proper recording of the name of the requesting staff member, name of the company providing the service; destination; contents; costs; date	83-85	MFP, DPCO	N/A	N/A	N/A

UNFPA

Risk Description	First Line of Defense Controls			Second Line of Defense Controls		
	Control Activity Description	Reference (Policy section, paragraph or Control #)	Who Performs	Control Activity Description	Reference (Policy section, paragraph or Control #)	Who Performs
	sent; and the account code to be charged and tracking numbers (when issued by the service provider)					
Misuse of the diplomatic pouch	Incoming and outgoing diplomatic pouches are verified for legitimate contents by authorized staff members.	16-26	MFP, DPCO, all staff	N/A	N/A	N/A

Annex I: Delegation of Authority

Form P.86

**UNITED NATIONS/NATIONS UNIES
DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY/ DÉLÉGATION DE POUVOIRS**

Date: _____

TO: _____

Chief of Department or Service Concerned -

A: Chef du Département ou du Service intéressé

is hereby authorized

M_____ est autorisé par les présentes

to request/to act as United Nations Diplomatic Pouch Certifying Officer

à requérir (services ou fournitures)/ à agir en qualité de

for the _____ pour le
compte de OFFICE NAME –BUREAU

Signature of Authorizing Officer -
Signature du délégué

Signature of Official Authorized -
Signature du délégué

Department - Département

COPY – For Originating Office

Copie – Pour le Bureau d’origine

Annex II: Request for Special Mail Services

REQUEST FOR SPECIAL MAIL SERVICES		
To: Facilities and Administrative Services Branch Mail Operations		Date:
From:	Contact:	
Reason for Request:	Addressee:	
<u>COA: All Fields must be completed accurately</u>		
Account:	Fund Code:	
Department Code:	Operating Unit:	
Project ID-Activity:	IA:	
<u>Completed by FASB</u>		
Weight:	Cost:	Courier:
Date:	AWB:	
<p>Notes: ***Please be advised that in the event of an erroneous Project or Admin charge of accounts the requestor will be held accountable for any charges inappropriately incurred.</p>		

Annex III: Summary of Enclosure Form



SUMMARY OF ENCLOSURE: _____ VALISE NO: _____

DISPATCHED FROM: _____ TO: _____ DATE DISPATCHED: _____

CONTENTS OF POUCH (CHECK APPROPRIATE BOX)

- 1. CORRESPONDENCE
- 2. NO. ITEMS FOR LISTING
- 3. SPECIAL ITEMS FOR LISTING (LIST INDIVIDUALLY)

ITEM NO.	SENDER	ADDRESSEE	RECEIPTED	DESCRIPTION

INSTRUCTIONS: PLEASE RETURN DUPLICATE COPY
DULY RECEIPTED IN NEXT POUCH
TO ORIGINATED OFFICE. INDICATE
DATE OF RECEIPT.

SIGNED: _____
POUCH OFFICER

Annex IV: Request for Messenger Services



Request for Messenger Services

TO: (Addressee)

Name: _____

Office (Budg. & Room Number) _____

FROM (Addresser)

Name: _____

Office (Branch/Unit) _____

Requester Name: _____

Date/Time Received by Mail Unit and initialled _____

=====

RECEIVED BY:

Name in Print: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Time: _____