

## **Low Volume / Low Risk Mail Operation**

The likelihood of receiving a package or letter containing a dangerous substance (e.g. anthrax) or device (e.g. bomb) is remote. However it is important to understand safe mail handling procedures, be aware of the characteristics that are common to suspicious mail, and know the procedures to follow if a suspicious package is identified. Keep in mind that the U. S. Post Office will hold mail of a suspicious nature until it has been examined.

### **Suggestions for handling incoming mail:**

- Designate a single point of contact to open mail
- If possible, do not open mail where other personnel are present
- Wear latex gloves, if desired
- Have a supply of large ziplock bags available
- Be vigilant when opening mail
- Be alert to the warning signs of suspicious mail

### **Characteristics that are common to suspicious mail:**

- Unknown or unfamiliar sender
- Addressed to outdated/improper address, improper title, person no longer with organization
- Bears no return address or address not legitimate
- Marked with endorsements PERSONNEL, CONFIDENTIAL, RUSH, URGENT etc.
- Excessive postage
- Postmark not matching return address
- Dusty or other foreign substance on the mail

### **Procedures to follow when suspicious mail is identified:**

- Remain CALM
- If possible, DON'T open the mail item in question
- If a powder is detected DO everything possible to keep it from becoming airborne
- PLACE item in a plastic bag, or set it down gently and COVER it with anything (paper, trash can, etc.)
- ISOLATE the item then evacuate the immediate area and CLOSE all doors
- DON'T brush off your clothes
- WASH hands with soap and warm water
- TURN OFF fans, HVAC system, if possible
- SEGREGATE all exposed individuals
- NOTIFY supervisor
- CALL 911