


LDH Mail Handling Policy and Procedures for the LDH Administration Building

	Louisiana Department of Health (LDH)	
	Policy Number	106.3
	Content	Mail Handling Policy and Procedures for the LDH Administration
	Effective Date	December 4, 2018
	Inquiries to	Office of Management and Finance Office of the Undersecretary- Administrative Services Section P.O. Box 628 Baton Rouge, LA 70821 Phone: (225) 342-9331 FAX (225) 342-2467

I. PURPOSE

This policy provides for a uniform system of mail handling within the LDH Administration Building (Bienville Building) as it relates to mailroom operations and courier services.

II. APPLICABILITY

This policy is applicable to all offices located in the LDH Administration Building (Bienville Building) at:

628 N. 4th Street
Baton Rouge, LA 70802

for mail handling procedures. This policy and procedure is applicable to all agencies/sections housed within the LDH Bienville Building, and personnel that receive and disseminate mail for personnel assigned to the Office of Technology Services-Printing Support Services Section (OTS/PSS).

Particular attention should be exercised when opening mail. The guidelines, though applicable to a wide variety of circumstances, are particularly oriented in response to current and future suspected letters and packages, which could possibly be contaminated with Anthrax. (*Anthrax may be contracted by inhalation, ingestion, or breaks in the skin. Detected at exposure, Anthrax is an easily treatable disease.*)

III. POLICY STATEMENT

In order to ensure that the Louisiana Department of Health (LDH) mail is correctly processed, sorted, and routed in an efficient and timely manner, LDH has adopted the following basic policies and procedures for the Louisiana Department of Health Administration Building (Bienville Building) mail handling. All agencies, employees, and contractors of LDH that utilize the mailroom located in the LDH Administration Building (Bienville Building), for the receipt of and/or processing of their mail or packages, shall be responsible for understanding and following the mail and package handling procedures described below.

IV. HANDLING PROCEDURES FOR SUSPICIOUS PACKAGES OR LETTERS

Suspicious Packages and Letters are typically those:

- That are unusual in appearance or appear different from mail normally received by an individual recipient, unit or section.
- Shown addressee is no longer employed at address, or has inaccurate or incorrect information on letter or package.
- With sizes not customarily received by a particular office.
- Posted with numerous stamps.
- Leaking, stained or emitting a strange or unusual odor.
- Having a powdery residue.
- Having handwritten address, missing or illegible return address, especially if postmarked out of state.
- Having a city and/or state postmark that is different from the return address.
- Received where the return address is not known, shown or identified.

A. ACTION TO BE TAKEN BY EMPLOYEE IF A SUSPICIOUS/THREATENING PACKAGE OR LETTER ARRIVES BY MAIL:

1. Do not open.
2. Notify immediate supervisor.
3. Supervisor is to notify the LDH Safety/Security Manager who will then activate the Threat Management Plan.

4. Contain the letter. Options include, placing the envelope in a plastic zip lock type bag (triple bag); steel can; poly containment vessels, or simply cover with available material, etc.
5. Evacuate and seal off the immediate area.
6. Do not evacuate the Bienville Building unless there is corroborating evidence or reason to believe the threat is credible.
7. Wash hands with soap and water.

B. PROCEDURES FOR POSSIBLE EXPOSURE OR CONTAMINATION BY ANTHRAX:

Employees' Responsibilities:

1. Remain calm.
2. Contact immediate supervisor.
3. Thoroughly wash hands with soap and water.
4. Do not clean or brush clothes.
5. If possible, carefully remove contaminated clothing, jewelry, etc. unless doing so would add to contamination, and place into appropriate sealable plastic bags.
6. Do not attempt to clean or collect powder.
7. Upon release by appropriate authorities, shower with soap and water at home as soon as practical.
8. Change into fresh clothing and seek medical attention from family doctor or nearest available health care provider.

Supervisor Responsibilities:

1. Evacuate immediate work area but do not evacuate from the Bienville Building unless there is corroborating evidence or reason to believe the threat is credible.
2. Immediately contact the LDH Safety/Security Manager to activate Threat Management Plan.
3. Isolate contaminated individuals from other employees. Do not have the contaminated individual leave the premises until appropriate emergency response personnel have released them.
4. Isolate suspicious package and restrict access to affected area.
5. Make a list of all persons either directly affected or in immediate area of exposure.

V. LDH MAILROOM PROCEDURES

A. Receiving Mail through the LDH Bienville Building mailroom

1. Standard mail is picked up twice daily by OTS/PSS in a morning pickup (approx. 8AM) and afternoon pickup (approx. 12PM) weekdays from the Baton Rouge Main Post Office Branch office located at:

750 Florida Blvd
Baton Rouge, LA 70820

2. All United States Postal Service (USPS) mail picked up by OTS/PSS staff will include caller services, certified mail, priority mail, packages, and post office boxes. USPS delivers Express packages addressed to a P.O. Box directly to the Baton Rouge Main Post Office Branch. The USPS does not deliver street address mail or P.O. Box mail directly to the Bienville Building. All mail addressed to the physical address is required to be put with LDH caller service's mail and will be picked up by OTS/PSS and delivered to the Bienville Building.
3. The Administrative Services mail log sheet is prepared daily, the designated bin authority contact will be required to sign, and date for the receipt of caller services, certified mail, priority mail, and all packages.
4. Express Couriers (UPS & FedEx) are instructed to deliver mail to the LDH Bienville Building mailroom #526. An Administrative Services log sheet will be prepared, and a designated bin authority contact will be required to sign and date for the receipt of caller services, certified mail, priority mail, and packages.

B. Mail that is not routed through LDH Bienville Building mailroom

There may be instances where an office will receive a delivery that is not routed through the LDH Bienville Building mailroom. These deliveries may be made directly to the individual addressed after signing in with the LDH Bienville Building Security Desk. These packages/mail are not the responsibility of the LDH Administrative Services Section and are the direct responsibility of the individual receiving the package/mail.

C. Sorting the mail

Mail sorted and placed in the LDH Bienville Building Mail Bins are determined by P.O. Box numbers, address, bin number, or other identifying information. Improperly addressed mail/packages may be delayed if not addressed correctly.

1. The LDH Bienville Building mailroom staff does not personally deliver mail/packages within the Bienville Building.
2. If no identifying information is provided, LDH Bienville Building mailroom staff should utilize the state email system to identify recipients. It is the responsibility of all LDH employees to ensure their email information is accurate and up to date.
3. If the post office incorrectly sorts mail, it will be returned to OTS/PSS the next day to return to the Baton Rouge Main Post Office on Florida Blvd.
4. Non-deliverable mail shall be returned to the sender. If mail is for a former employee, the mail shall be placed in the appropriate former employee's agency bin.
5. The LDH Bienville Building mailroom will not sign for any packages/mail that are determined to be personal in nature.
6. The LDH Bienville Building mailroom will not sign for large equipment deliveries (i.e. computer purchases, bulk laptop purchases, bulk printers, etc.) These large equipment deliveries shall be delivered to the Office of Technology Services for handling.
7. Mail/packages marked "personal" and/or "confidential" should be delivered directly to the addressee unopened by the designated bin authority picking up the mail from the LDH Bienville Building mailroom.

D. LDH Departmental Personnel Collecting Mail from the Mailroom

1. Only the designated bin authority contact is permitted to pick up mail from the LDH Bienville Building mailroom. Bin authorization is obtained by the designated bin authority who is designated by the agency appointing authority.
2. For safety and security reasons, all bin keys used to collect the mail from the bins located in the mailroom shall be kept in a secure location. Those employees having bin authority are the only employees permitted to enter the mailroom should they need to sign for mail/packages and to pick up mail/packages that did not fit into the mailbox.

3. All mail in the bins should be picked up by the end of each business day, and not left in the bins overnight or on the weekends.
4. Any mail that has been incorrectly sorted by the LDH Bienville Building mailroom staff and picked up from the bin authority should be given directly to the mailroom clerk so corrections/notifications can be noted. Do not attempt delivery as this may circumvent log sheet requirements and possibly be in violation of other divisional specific policies.

E. Outgoing Mail

1. LDH agencies housed in the Bienville Building shall deposit mail in the USPS Mail Bin located outside of room #526, before 8AM and before 12PM daily, using the "LDH Mail Bundling Form." The LDH Mail Bundling Form must be completed in its entirety and approved for pick up by LDH Bienville Building mailroom staff. This includes the sub account number and agency description. Any special instructions must be noted on the form.
2. Any mail going outside the U.S. needs to be flagged and given directly to the mailroom clerk.
3. LDH Administrative Services will sort and prepare mail for the OTS/PSS pickup.
4. LDH will NOT apply any postage to any employee's personal mail.

F. Special Services

1. The recipient must sign Certified Mail if a return receipt was requested. The sender must fill out certified slips and return receipts in advance and a limited supply is available in the mailroom. Offices may also order their own supplies through the USPS or by visiting their offices' directly on Florida Boulevard or via the web.
2. There is a FedEx box outside the front door of the Bienville Building that employees may utilize if they have a FedEx account.

G. Acquiring a Post Office Box

In order for an agency within the LDH Administration Building (Bienville Building) to open a post office box for the receipt of its mail, that business unit must obtain prior written authorization from the LDH Undersecretary and present that signed written authorization to the Baton Rouge Main Branch Post Office.

1. A post office box key must be provided to the LDH Bienville Building mailroom if mail is to be picked up by OTS/PSS staff.
2. Notices for payment due for boxes are placed in the applicable bin when received and is the responsibility of the agency to renew the post office box and remit payment of any rent due directly to the USPS.
3. Once fees/dues are paid, submit a copy of the receipt with the PO Box number written on top to the mailroom clerk, who will maintain a record of payment.

H. Postage/Fees Due

OTS/PSS will bill each agency’s cost center directly every month for actual postage utilized. It is the responsibility of the agency to pay their bills timely or all mail services will be suspended.

OTS/PSS will bill the LDH Office of the Secretary (LDH/OS) for monthly interagency mail services and those services will be paid by the LDH/OS and cost-allocated according to Bienville Building agency space/staffing percentage.

I. Mailroom Security

1. The Bienville Building mailroom shall be locked when no mailroom employee members are in the mailroom.
2. The Bienville Building Mailroom hours are between 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. weekdays. The Mailroom is not open on State Declared Holidays or when the Bienville Building offices are closed for any reason.

VI. DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS

Any employee who violates this policy may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from employment.

VII. REFERENCES

Contacts	Phone
Mailroom	225-342-9330
Mailroom Supervisor	225-342-9331
Mailroom Administrator	225-342-8890

VIII. REVISION HISTORY

Date	Revision
May 14, 2016	Policy created
December 14, 2016	Policy revised (housekeeping changes)
December 4, 2018	Policy revised