

Policies & Procedures

Policy Title: Suspicious Mail

Policy #807

Date Issued: January 2013

I. POLICY:

The Southern Poverty Law Center will strive to maintain a safe and orderly flow of incoming and out-going mail by providing employees the requisite knowledge to protect themselves against contact with hazardous mail or packages.

II. PURPOSE:

The purpose of this policy is to provide employees with information to design a course of action for avoiding or minimizing contact with harmful substances delivered through mail or other delivery services.

III. PROCEDURE:

A. Appearance and other suspicious signs:

1. Powdery substance felt through or appearing on the package or envelope
2. Oily stains or discolorations
3. Unusual odor
4. Lopsided, empty or uneven envelope
5. Misspelled or incomplete addresses
6. No return address
7. Excessive postage
8. Excessive packaging such as tape, string, etc.
9. Excessive weight
10. Ticking sound
11. Protruding wires or aluminum foil

B. Procedures for handling suspicious unopened letters or packages:

1. Do not shake or empty the contents of any suspicious envelop or package.
2. Put package or envelope down on a stable surface immediately; do not move or touch it.

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3. Clear the immediate area of all persons and keep others away.
4. Cordon off the immediate area.
5. Contact SPLC Security at 8500
6. Instruct people to wash hands and other exposed skin with soap and water, if a wash station is in the immediate area
7. Isolate exposed persons to a designated area away from the substance and await further instruction.
8. List the names of the persons in the immediate area of the mail or package.
9. Remain available in a safe area to provide information to first responders.

IV. GUIDELINES:

- A. Limit the number of areas where mail is opened.
- B. Open mail addressed to high profile positions or programs in the mail screening area on G-2.
- C. Open mail that does not meet the “suspicious” criteria but raises some level of concern in the mail screening area on G-2.
- D. Visually inspect letters and packages before opening them.
- E. Provide all employees who open mail with immediate access to clear plastic wrap or clear plastic sheets, clear plastic zip-lock bags, non-latex gloves, and particulate masks. Use of masks and gloves is optional until a suspicious substance is identified.

V. REFERENCES: