Residential Mailbox Standards

USPS Standards for Residential Mailboxes

Need to purchase or replace an existing mailbox or door slot? Get started with this basic information.

Policies for Curbside Mailboxes

- **You need to contact your local Post Office before moving your mailbox or mailbox support,** because your mailbox needs to be approved by the Postal Service. Your postmaster will approve custom-made mailboxes on a one-time basis as long as they generally meet USPS standards.
- The name on your mailbox should be at least 1 inch high.
- You should **install the mailbox with the bottom of the box at a vertical height of between 41-45 inches from the road surface,** unless you have a road or curb condition that prevents this. If you do, be sure to contact the postmaster before you change your mailbox location.
- Boxes must also be on the right-hand side of the road and in the carrier's direction of travel in all cases in which driving on the left-hand side to reach the boxes would pose a traffic hazard or violate traffic laws and regulations.
- Your mailbox should be set back 6 to 8 inches from the front face of the curb or road edge to the mailbox door.
- A mailbox with a lock must be a model that's USPS approved by the Postmaster General, with a slot large enough to accommodate your daily volume of mail.
- Advertising on a mailbox or its supporting post is prohibited.
- Our regulations cover what can and can't be placed in a **curbside mailbox or mailbox outside of your house**, which generally includes only mail that has been sent through the USPS. However, our regulations don't govern what can be placed in a mail slot on your door.
- You can attach a receptacle for newspaper delivery by a private company to the post of a curbside mailbox used by the Postal Service as long as it doesn't:
    - touch or use any part of the mailbox for support.
    - interfere with mail delivery, obstruct the view of the mailbox flag, or present a hazard to a mailperson or vehicle.
    - extend beyond the front of the mailbox when the box door is closed.
    - display any advertising, except the publication's title.
- For posts and supports, it's up to you to keep them neat and adequate in strength and size. Ideally, its assembly should bend or fall away when struck by a vehicle. The Postal Service doesn't regulate mailbox supports except for purposes of carrier safety and delivery efficiency. It's also your responsibility to ensure a path is clear to your mailbox so that carriers can safely and efficiently deliver the mail.

Installation of curbside mailboxes must meet our specific construction standards, which you can find at your local Post Office™. For a copy of our standards (United States Postal Service STD-7B, Mailboxes, City and Rural Curbside), write to:

Delivery & Customer SVCS Equipment, Engineering, U.S. Postal Service
8403 LEE HWY
MERRIFIELD VA 22082-8108

Where to Buy a Mailbox

The U.S. Postal Service doesn't sell mailboxes, but you can buy approved mailboxes at local department stores, online, or at other locations. Mailbox manufacturers need to meet the aforementioned Mailbox Standard 7B for boxes to be used with the U.S. Mail.

Maintaining Your Mailbox

As a USPS customer, it's your responsibility to provide an authorized mail receptacle or door slot—that includes its purchase, installation, maintenance, and replacement. However, the Postal Service may authorize Cluster Box Units (CBU) with collection

compartments and parcel lockers for use in business and residential delivery areas, and may in some instances elect to purchase, install, maintain, or replace them.

If you have door delivery authorized, you'll need to provide either an approved house-mounted box that provides adequate protection and security for the mail or a door slot. A mailbox with a lock must have a slot that is large enough to accommodate your daily mail volume. The Postal Service neither opens a locked box nor accepts a key for this purpose.

Door Slot Standards

- The clear rectangular opening in the outside slot plate must be at least 1-1/2 inches wide and 7 inches long.
- The slot must have a flap hinged at the top, if placed horizontally, or hinged on the side away from the hinge side of the door if placed vertically.
- If you're using an inside hood for additional privacy, the hooded portion shouldn't be below the bottom line of the slot in the outside plate if placed horizontally, or beyond the side line of the slot in the outside plate nearest the hinge edge of the door if placed vertically.
- The hood at its greatest projection must not be less than 2-1/16 inches beyond the inside face of the door.
- The bottom of the slot must be at least 30 inches above the finished floor line.

More Information

For more thorough information on Residential Mailbox Standards, check the Domestic Mail Manual - 508 Recipient Services.

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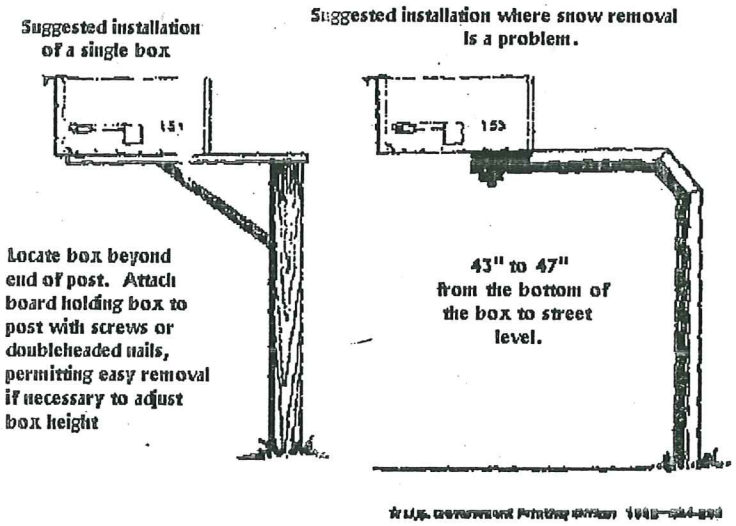
Whenever possible, boxes must be located so that carrier's vehicle is off pavement when serving them.

Box number must be painted on box in numerals not less than one inch high.

Post must be neat and of adequate strength and size.

Approach to box should be a hard level surface (gravel, cinders, stone).

Boxes must be placed to conform with state laws and highway regulations.



Extend box beyond end of post. Attach board holding box to post with screws or doubleheaded nails, permitting easy removal if necessary to adjust box height.

PS Form 4056, Dec. 1984