

THE POST OFFICE ACT, 2023

(No. 43 of 2023, dt. 24-12-2023)

An Act to consolidate and amend the law relating to Post Office in India and to provide for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto.

BE it enacted by Parliament in the Seventy-fourth Year of the Republic of India as follows:—

1. Short title and commencement

(1) This Act may be called the Post Office Act, 2023.

(2) It shall come into force on such date¹ as the Central Government may, by notification in the Official Gazette, appoint.

2. Definitions

In this Act, unless the context otherwise requires,—

(a) “Director General” means the Director General of Postal Services appointed by the Central Government and includes any officer authorised by the Central Government to perform the duties of the Director General;

(b) “item” means an indivisible article which the Post Office accepts for providing a service;

(c) “notification” means a notification published in the Official Gazette;

(d) “Post Office” means the Department of Posts and includes every house, building, room, place or any other asset used by the Post Office for providing any service;

(e) “prescribe” means prescribe by rules made under this Act and the expression “prescribed” shall be construed accordingly;

(f) “regulations” means the regulations made under this Act.

3. Services to be provided by Post Office

(1) The Post Office shall provide such services as the Central Government may prescribe.

(2) The Director General may make regulations—

(a) in respect of activities necessary to provide services referred to in sub-section (1); and

(b) to fix charges for, and the terms and conditions in respect of, services referred to in sub-section (1).

(3) Any service provided by the Post Office shall be subject to any other law for the time being in force.

4. Exclusive privilege in respect of postage stamps

(1) The Post Office shall have the exclusive privilege of issuing postage stamps.

(2) The Director General may make regulations relating to the supply and sale of postage stamps and postal stationery.

¹ Enforced w.e.f. 18-6-2024, vide SO 2352 (E), dt. 17-6-2024.

(3) In this section, the expressions—

- (a) “postage stamp” means any stamp provided by the Central Government, in any form, physical or digital, for denoting sums payable in respect of such service provided by the Post Office, as may be prescribed and includes stamps affixed, printed, embossed, embedded, impressed, or otherwise indicated on an item;
- (b) “postal stationery” means stationery, issued by the Post Office such as envelopes, letter cards, postcards, bearing imprinted stamps or inscriptions indicating that sum payable in respect of a service provided by the Post Office has been prepaid.

5. Addresses and postcodes

(1) The Central Government may prescribe standards for addressing on the items, address identifiers and usage of postcodes.

(2) In this section, “postcode” means a series of digits, letters or digital code or a combination of digits, letters or digital code used to identify a geographic area or location, and ease the process of sorting and delivery of items and for other purposes.

6. Power to give effect to arrangements with other countries

The Central Government may make rules to give effect to arrangements made with any foreign country or territory for services provided by the Post Office between India the said foreign country or territory.

7. Recovery of sums due in respect of services provided by Post Office

(1) Every person who avails a service provided by the Post Office shall be liable to pay the charges in respect of such service.

(2) If any person refuses or neglects to pay the charges referred to in sub-section (1), such amount shall be recoverable as if it were an arrear of land revenue due from him.

8. Official mark to be evidence of certain facts denoted

The Central Government may prescribe the conditions for denoting the official marks on items to be used as *prima facie* evidence of the facts so denoted.

9. Power to intercept, open or detain any item or deliver item to customs authority

(1) The Central Government may, by notification, empower any officer to cause any item in course of transmission by the Post Office to be intercepted, opened or detained in the interest of the security of the State, friendly relations with foreign states, public order, emergency, or public safety or upon the occurrence of any contravention of any of the provisions of this Act or any other law for the time being in force.

(2) The Central Government may cause any item referred to in sub-section (1) to be disposed of in such manner as it deems appropriate.

(3) The Central Government may, by notification, empower any officer of the Post Office to deliver an item, received from within or beyond the limits of India and reckoned to contain anything liable to duty or which is suspected to contain any prohibited item to such customs authority or any other authority as may be specified in the said notification, and such customs authority or any other

authority shall deal with such item in accordance with the provisions of any law for the time being in force.

10. Exemption from liability

(1) Notwithstanding anything in any other law for the time being in force, the Post Office shall not incur any liability except such liability as may be prescribed with regard to a service provided by the Post Office.

(2) No officer of the Post Office shall incur any liability with regard to a service provided by the Post Office, unless the officer has acted fraudulently or wilfully caused loss, delay or mis-delivery of service.

11. Delegation of power, other than rulemaking powers to Director General

The Central Government may, by notification, authorise, either absolutely or subject to conditions, the Director General to exercise any of the powers conferred upon the Central Government by this Act, other than the power to make rules.

12. Power to make rules

The Central Government may, by notification, make rules for carrying out the purposes of this Act.

13. Power to make regulations

The Director General may, with the prior approval of the Central Government, by notification, make regulations for carrying out the provisions of this Act.

14. Laying of rules and regulations in Parliament

Every rule or regulation made under this Act shall be laid, as soon as may be after it is made, before each House of Parliament, while it is in session, for a total period of thirty days which may be comprised in one session or in two or more successive sessions, and if, before the expiry of the session immediately following the session or the successive sessions aforesaid, both Houses agree in making any modification in the rule or regulation or both Houses agree that the rule or regulation should not be made, the rule or regulation shall thereafter have effect only in such modified form or be of no effect, as the case may be; so, however, that any such modification or annulment shall be without prejudice to the validity of anything previously done under that rule or regulation.

15. Power to remove difficulties

(1) If any difficulty arises in giving effect to the provisions of this Act, the Central Government may, by order in the Official Gazette, make such provisions not inconsistent with the provisions of this Act as appear to it to be necessary or expedient for removing the difficulty:

PROVIDED that no order shall be made under this section after the expiry of two years from the date of commencement of this Act.

(2) Every order made under this section shall be laid, as soon as may be after it is made, before each House of Parliament.

16. Repeal and savings

(1) The Indian Post Office Act, 1898 (6 of 1898) is hereby repealed.

(2) Notwithstanding the repeal of the Act by sub-section (1), all rules, notifications and orders, made or purported to have been made under the Indian Post Office Act, 1898 (6 of 1898), shall, insofar as they relate to matters for which

provision is made in this Act and are not inconsistent therewith, be deemed to have been made under this Act and shall continue in force unless and until they are superseded by any rules or notification or order made under this Act.

THE POST OFFICE RULES, 2024

[G.S.R. 767(E), dt. 16-12-2024, w.e.f. 16-12-2024]

In exercise of the powers conferred by section 12 of the Post Office Act, 2023 (43 of 2023), and in suppression of the Indian Post Office Rules, 1933, except as respects things done or omitted to be done before such suppression, the Central Government hereby makes the following rules, namely:—

1. Short title and Commencement

- (1) These rules may be called the Post Office Rules, 2024.
- (2) They shall come in to force on the 16th day of December, 2024.

2. Definitions

- (1) In these rules, unless the context otherwise requires,—
 - (a) “Act” means “the Post Office Act, 2023” (43 of 2023);
 - (b) “Board” means the Postal Services Board specified in rule 5;
 - (c) “Circle Head” means the Chief Postmaster General concerned or an officer exercising the powers of Chief Postmaster General in the circle;
 - (d) “Divisional Head” means Director or Senior Superintendent or Chief Postmaster or Superintendent of Postal Division or Railway Mail Service (RMS) Division or Foreign Post, or an officer exercising the powers of Director or Senior Superintendent or Chief Postmaster or Superintendent of Postal Division or Railway Mail Service Division or Foreign Post;
 - (e) “mail offices” means the Post Offices or premises associated with handling, processing or transmission of items, used by the Department of Post;
 - (f) “mail service” means all activities related to collection, handling, transmission, delivery, forwarding, returning and holding of items;
 - (g) “postage” means the sum chargeable on mail service;
 - (h) “Regional Director” means the Director concerned or an officer exercising the powers of Director in the region;
 - (i) “Regional Head” means the Postmaster General concerned or an officer exercising the powers of Postmaster General in the region;
 - (j) “universal postal service” means the provision of such postal services which are affordable and made available to all users, within and outside the country; and
 - (k) “value-added service” means add-on features on mail services.

- (2) Words and expressions used herein but defined in the Act shall have the meanings respectively assigned to them in the Act.

3. Services to be provided by Post Office (Domestic/Foreign)

Every Post Office may provide the following service for carrying out the purposes of the Act, namely: —

- (a) mail services within or beyond the limits of the country;
- (b) value-added service applicable in respect of clause (a);
- (c) universal postal service in respect of clause (a);
- (d) financial services including banking, Government Savings Bank, payment system and any other financial services;
- (e) money remittances services within or beyond the limits of the country;
- (f) insurance services including life insurance or any other insurance;
- (g) citizen-centric services as authorised by the Central Government;
- (h) services associated with addressing identifiers and postcodes;
- (i) any service offered by State Government or Local Government;
- (j) any service offered through collaboration with public or private entities.

4. Director General to authorize certain Services

The Director General is authorised to —

- (a) introduce new products, or modify or discontinue any products related to the services mentioned in these rules; and
- (b) enter into a collaboration with public or private entities in respect of services specified under rule 3.

5. Postal Services Board

The Postal Services Board shall be the apex level policy making body, having perpetual succession and a common seal, for any of the services provided by the Post Office, under rule 3.

6. The Central Government may, by notification in the Official gazette, specify the composition of the Board; and powers, functions and duties of the Board.

7. Exclusive privilege in respect of postage stamps

Subject to the provisions of rule 8, the Central Government or, as the case may be, the Director General shall issue definitive, commemorative, special issues of postage stamps or any other form of postage stamps or related material.

8. Philatelic Advisory Committee

The Central Government may constitute a Philatelic Advisory Committee which shall advise that Government on issues of commemorative and special postage stamps and other allied matters related thereto.

9. Modes of payment of postage or other charges

The payment of the postage or other sums chargeable for mail services under rule 3, shall be made through any of the following mode and in such manner as may be specified in the regulations, namely:—

- (a) in cash; or
- (b) payment through digital mode; or

- (c) by postage stamp; or
- (d) by means of impressions of franking machines; or
- (e) any other mode, as may be specified in the regulations.

10. Modes of payment for other Services

The modes of payment for the sum chargeable on any other services mentioned in these rules shall be such, as may be specified in the regulations.

11. Addresses and postcodes

- (1) The Director General shall, by regulations,—
 - (i) specify the standards for addressing on the items;
 - (ii) manage and allocate addressing identifiers and postcodes.

(2) The Director General shall manage, allocate and publish Postcodes or Postal Index Number (PIN) codes.

12. Power to give effect to arrangements with other countries

(1) The Central Government shall provide the services as mentioned in these rules in furtherance to international postal co-operation.

(2) The international postal co-operation shall be with other countries or territories, Universal Postal Union (UPU), or other postal unions, or public or private entities, and in conformity with the provisions of the UPU Convention Manual and Regulations, multilateral or bilateral agreements with the foreign countries, other unions, laws and bye-laws, and the international laws, as may be applicable, for the time being in force.

(3) The Director General is authorised to issue regulations, for the purposes of sub-rules (1) and (2).

13. Official mark to be denoted

The Post Office marks shall be the proof of certain facts denoted on the item, in respect of, —

- (a) the production of the item, having thereon the official mark of the Post Office denoting that the item has been refused or rejected or unclaimed, or cannot for any other reason be delivered, or any other remark so denoted, shall be sufficient proof of the fact indicated, and
- (b) every proceeding for the recovery of any postage or other sum alleged to be due under the Act.

14. Sender of Item

The person or the address or from whom the item is purported to have come, shall, be deemed to be the sender thereof.

15. Official mark on items

Director General may, by regulations, authorise certain officers or officials to make an official mark on an item denoting that—

- (a) any postage or other sum is due in respect thereof to the Post Office;
- (b) the mark shall be the proof to denote that the said sum as is so due; and
- (c) the item has been refused or rejected or unclaimed, or cannot for any other reason be delivered.

16. Interception, detention and opening of item(s)

(1) Subject to the provisions of sub-section (1) of Section 9, no direction for interception, detention or opening of any item or class of item under sub-section (1) of section 9 of the Act shall be issued, except by an order made by a Member of the Board looking after the work of operations in the Department of Posts or the Circle Head.

(2) In unavoidable circumstances, such order may be made by an officer, not below the rank of the Regional Head or the Regional Director.

(3) In emergent cases, where obtaining of prior directions for interception, detention or opening of item is not feasible, the required interception, detention or opening of item shall be carried out on the directions of the Divisional Head, who shall inform the concerned competent authority specified in sub-rule (1) or sub-rule (2) within three working days of such interceptions, detention or opening and that such order shall be got confirmed by the concerned competent authority within a period of seven working days:

PROVIDED that if the confirmation from the competent authority is not received within the stipulated seven days, such interception shall cease to operate and shall not be recommenced without the prior approval of the competent authority.

(4) Any order issued by the competent authority under sub-rules (1), (2) and (3) shall contain reasons to be recorded in writing for such direction.

(5) In order to oversee the interception done under sub-rules (1), (2) and (3), the Central Government shall constitute a review committee consisting of the following, namely:—

- (a) Director General, Posts-Chairman and
- (b) two Members of the Board, other than the Member mentioned in sub-rule (1) – Members.

(6) The review committee shall meet at least once in three months and review all directions issued under sub-rules (1), (2) and (3).

(7) The Central Government hereby notifies the following officers as authorized officers to intercept and detain items on the orders of the competent authority, namely;—

- (a) Officer in-charge of Post Office or any higher officer; or
- (b) Officer in-charge of the Mail Office or any higher officer.

(8) No authorized officer shall open any item specified in this rule, except in the presence of the concerned law enforcement authority.

(9) The authorised officer shall maintain proper records mentioning therein, category of the item including any tracking number, particulars of sender and addressee, weight of the item, postage, reason for interception and detention of the item, date of interception and detention of the item and the duration for which the directions remain in force.

(10) The authorised officer shall ensure the disposal of the item intercepted under sub-rules (1), (2) and (3) in the manner as specified in the Post Office Regulations, 2024.

(11) The directions for interception and detention shall remain in force, unless revoked earlier, for a period not exceeding thirty days from the date of issue and may be further extended:

PROVIDED that the period may not be extended beyond ninety days:

PROVIDED FURTHER that on the expiry of the period specified in the first proviso, the detained item shall be handed over to the concerned law enforcement authority.

(12) The interception and detention of an item under sub-rules (1) to (3) does not exempt the sender from any action which might have been taken, if the item had been delivered in due course through post.

(13) The provisions of sub-rules (1) to (11) shall apply *mutatis mutandis* to the items sent to and received from foreign countries.

17. Duty of authorized officers in delivering items

The authorized officers shall be empowered to deliver an item, reckoned to contain anything liable to duty, or which is suspected to contain any prohibited item, to such customs authority or any other law enforcement authority as may be specified in notification issued under sub-section (3) of Section 9 of the Act for taking necessary action in respect of such item in accordance with the provisions of any law for the time being in force.

18. Interception in addition to and not in derogation of other laws

Nothing contained in rule 16 shall prevent interception of items as required under any law for the time being in force and shall be governed by any procedures applicable under such law.

19. Exemption from Liability

(1) The Central Government shall provide compensation for loss or damage of an item or its contents or on any other grounds, if any, as specified in the regulations.

(2) The compensation shall not exceed the amount of the loss or damage, and shall not be paid on prohibited items, or loss or damage caused by the fault or negligence of the sender, or arising from force majeure.

THE POST OFFICE REGULATIONS, 2024

(S.O. 5440(E), dt. 16-12-2024)

*[As amended by Post Office (Third Amendment) Regulations, 2026,
dt. 25-3-2026, w.e.f. 1-4-2026]*

In exercise of the powers conferred by section 13 of the Post Office Act, 2023 (43 of 2023), the Director General, with the prior approval of the Central Government, hereby makes the following regulations, namely:-

CHAPTER I

PRELIMINARY

1. Short title and commencement

- (1) These regulations may be called the Post Office Regulations, 2024.
- (2) They shall come in to force on the 16th day of December, 2024.

2. Definitions

- (1) In these regulations, unless the context otherwise requires, -
 - (a) **“accountable items”** means such items that provide a receipt at the time of booking for track and trace (stage wise electronic data on movement of item) and require the signature (in ink or digital) of the addressee, the payee, or their authorised person upon receipt of an item, to provide evidence of delivery and include items such as India Post Parcel, Speed Post, Magazine Post, International Speed Post Services (EMS), International Air Parcels, International Tracked Packets, International Registered Letter items, Money Order and items with value added services like registration, insurance and cash on delivery (COD);
 - (b) **“Act”** means the Post Office Act, 2023 (43 of 2023);
 - (c) **“addressee”** means the intended recipient or the person to whom any item is to be delivered;
 - (d) **“administrative instructions”** means the executive or administrative orders or instructions including guidelines issued by the Central Government or, as the case may be, the Director General as specified under regulation 178 or regulation 179 or regulation 180, as the case may be;
 - (e) **“authorised person”** means a person, duly authorised by the addressee to receive the item or by a payee to receive the money on his behalf;
 - (f) **“delivery”** means the delivery of an item at the address of the addressee, or to the addressee or other person or location considered

to be authorised to receive the item according to the usual manner of delivering items to the addressee;

- (g) **“Director (Postal Services)”** means the Director in any administrative office of the Post Office or an officer exercising the powers of Director (Postal Services);
- (h) **“in course of transmission by post”** means the period starting from receipt of an item by the post office to its delivery to the addressee or return to the sender or otherwise disposed of;
- (i) **“letter box”** means a box installed in post offices or mail offices or at public places, for posting of fully prepaid letters, postcards, letter cards and book post items;
- (j) **“payee”** means the person who intends to receive money through money remittance services;
- (k) **“post”** means any system for collection, clearance, sorting, dispatch, conveyance, and delivery of items by the postal network;
- (l) **“Postmaster”** means the Director or Chief Postmaster of general post office, or Senior Postmaster or Head Postmaster of head post office, or an officer exercising the powers of Postmaster, as the case may be, who is the head of such post office;
- (m) **“redirection”** means action of assigning or directing an item to an address, other than the one to which it was initially addressed, for a specific reason;
- ¹[(ma) **“Registration”** or **“Registered Post”** means value added service for Speed Post items (documents and parcels) for addressee specific delivery;]
- (n) **“remitter”** means the person who remits money through money remittance services;
- (o) **“rules”** means the Post Office Rules, 2024 and the expression “rule” shall mean a rule of the said rules;
- (p) **“schedule”** means the schedule annexed to these regulations;
- (q) **“sender”** means a person who sends any item; and
- (r) **“weight”** means gross weight or volumetric weight, whichever is higher, except when stated otherwise.

(2) Words and expressions used herein but defined in the Act or the Post Office Rules, 2024, shall have the meanings respectively assigned to them in the Act or the said rules.

CHAPTER II GENERAL

3. Business hours

(1) The business hours in a post office, during which business is transacted with the public, shall generally be as under on normal weekdays, which are not holidays for the Post Office or the Government holidays, namely:—

¹ Inserted vide S.O. 4375(E), dt. 25-9-2025, w.e.f. 1-10-2025.

Sl. No.	Work	Business Hours
(i)	For references and enquiries	During the entire hours of the office working
(ii)	Counter services including booking and posting of items, premium collection of insurance premiums	Six hours
(iii)	Money remittance-Electronic Money Order, Indian Postal Order etc.	Six hours
(iv)	Savings Bank	Six hours

(2) Branch post offices shall be kept open for a maximum period of five hours in a day.

4. (1) The Circle Head, Regional Head and Divisional Head are empowered to specify the period of each of the post offices under their jurisdiction, during which business is transacted with the public or customer and the time at which items are delivered and dispatched, keeping in view, the maximum working hours, business hours, local convenience and the arrival and departure timings of the items and working of the post office counters.

(2) The Circle Head or Regional Head may, if it is necessary or expedient to meet the requirement of the public, or in any special circumstances, specify-

- (a) the business hours and the days other than the working days including Sundays and holidays, during which the post offices shall be opened for business;
- (b) the kind of transactions available during such business hours; and
- (c) the maximum number of items that may be tendered for booking during business hours to meet the rush of work in a post office and to ensure the equitable availability of facilities to the public.

5. Payment of postage and other sums chargeable on items

(1) Postage shall generally be paid by modes mentioned in rule 9.

(2) The pre-payment of postage and other sums payable on an item shall be mandatory except otherwise mentioned in these regulations.

6. Postage on unaccountable items and unpaid items

(1) If the postage required on unaccountable items, which have embossed postage on it, is more than the value of the stamp printed on them, the difference shall be made good by affixing additional postage stamps of the requisite value.

(2) Unpaid or insufficiently paid items are liable to be kept on hold for charging the postage due on them.

7. Postage and chargeable sums not deemed to be prepaid

The postage and other sums chargeable on an item shall not be deemed to be prepaid by means of a proper stamp or franking impression or point of sale receipt if—

- (a) the stamp or impression of a stamp or impression which has not been provided for use as a postage stamp or franking impression or point of sale receipt under these regulations or rules;

- (b) the stamp has been obliterated, defaced, torn, cut or otherwise rendered imperfect;
- (c) the stamp or franking impression or point of sale receipt has upon it, any word, letter, figure or design, printed or impressed upon it, otherwise than by the Director General before posting; or
- (d) the stamp has been cut, or otherwise, separated from an embossed envelope, or from a postcard or wrapper:

PROVIDED that nothing in this regulation shall prevent the perforation of postage stamps with initials, or other identifying marks, traced in minute holes:

PROVIDED FURTHER that nothing in this regulation shall prevent the transmission of Book Now Pay Later (BNPL) items or other items as specified by administrative instructions from time to time.

8. Supply of postage stamps

(1) The operational guidelines for supply, custody and sale of postage stamps, shall be specified by administrative instructions from time to time.

(2) No person or entity or institution or organisation or electronic platform shall sell or distribute postage stamps or deal in any other manner in postage stamps, except with the prior permission of the Director General.

(3) Whoever contravenes the provisions of sub-regulation (2) above or any term or condition of permission issued thereunder shall be punishable under the relevant provisions of the applicable law of the land for the time being in force.

9. Fraudulent usage of stamp

(1) The act of usage of previously used postage stamp, fraudulently or with intent to cause loss to the Government, shall be punishable under the applicable law of the land for the time being in force.

(2) If such postage stamp is detected on an item already posted, the item shall not be delivered and dealt with in a manner as may be specified by administrative instructions from time to time.

10. Illegal manufacture or usage of postage stamps

(1) The illegal manufacturing and usage of the postage stamp such as forged, counterfeit, or fictitious postage stamps shall be punishable under the applicable law of the land for the time being in force.

(2) Reproduction of stamps shall only be allowed for illustration purposes in a philatelic publication, or in an item or section relating wholly to postage stamps that may appear in a publication or a general character, and such reproductions shall only be in such form as may be specified by administrative instructions from time to time.

11. Philately

(1) Philately is a study and collection of stamps, postal stationery, postmarks and other philatelic materials.

(2) The operational procedures related with the philately shall be specified by administrative instructions from time to time.

12. Philatelic materials

(1) Philatelic materials shall be issued by the Post Office as per administrative instructions specified from time to time.

(2) Philatelic materials include —

- (a) philatelic stamps;
- (b) first day covers, brochures or information sheets, special covers, maxim cards, annual packs, postal stationeries and various Philatelic publications and ancillaries;
- (c) artworks, proofs, progressive sheets, printed sheets and printing plates of philatelic stamps; and
- (d) postmarks, slogan dies and other artifacts used in connection with the production of philatelic stamps.

(3) The Director General shall specify by administrative instructions the philatelic material to be sold in post offices.

(4) All the activities corresponding to production and issue of philatelic materials shall be carried out as per administrative instructions issued from time to time.

13. Issuance of postage stamps

The postage stamps shall be issued in the following types, namely:-

- (a) **Definitive Stamps:** Definitive Stamps are postage stamps, specifically issued to meet the day-to-day postage needs and are made available for sale for a period till stocks of a particular series last, which shall be printed and reprinted in different denominations as per the requirement of the post office.
- (b) **Commemorative Stamps:**
 - (i) Commemorative Stamps are postage stamps issued to commemorate an event, institution, theme and personages, which shall be printed only once, in limited numbers and are sold for a limited period, as may be specified by administrative instructions from time to time, through philatelic bureaus, philatelic counters, online channels or authorised offices.
 - (ii) The Commemorative Stamps may be kept as collectible items and may be used for payment of postage.
- (c) **Special Stamps:** Special Stamps are postage stamps which are thematic like flora, fauna, architecture or art without commemorating any specific event.
- (d) **Joint Issue Stamps:** Joint Issue Stamps are postage stamps which are issued by India and any other country on mutually agreed terms and conditions.
- (e) **My Stamps:** My Stamps are such stamps which are issued on the basis of personalised or customised printing elements provided by the customer or proponent, subject to confirmation with administrative instructions specified from time to time.

14. Issuance of Commemorative Postage Stamp

(1) Any citizen of India may tender a proposal for issue of Commemorative Postage Stamp in accordance with the administrative instructions specified from time to time.

(2) All such proposals shall be examined on the basis of the administrative instructions specified by the Central Government from time to time.

(3) Proponents for issue of a commemorative stamp relating to institutions or events or organisations are required to make a mandatory purchase of number of such stamps as specified by administrative instructions from time to time:

PROVIDED that in exceptional and deserving cases, Central Government may relax this condition.

(4) The denominations of postage stamps shall be in consonance with domestic and international postal postage.

(5) No postage stamp shall be issued on a living personality.

(6) Stamp design and denomination shall be as approved by the Central Government.

(7) All philatelic stamps, brochures, first day covers and philatelic ancillaries shall be sold by the Post Office on the denoted value or on the value specified by administrative instructions from time to time.

15. Philatelic Advisory Committee

(1) The Philatelic Advisory Committee shall advise on the issue of Commemorative Stamps, Special Stamps, and other allied matters related thereto.

(2) The Union Minister-in-Charge of the Ministry of Communications shall be the *ex officio* Chairperson of the Philatelic Advisory Committee and shall nominate the official and non-official members of the Committee as per the administrative instructions specified from time to time.

16. Manner of affixing postage stamps

(1) Stamps affixed to an item must be completely adherent to the item itself and not to any part of its contents or any separate label or other device tied or attached to the item.

(2) The stamps should be affixed to the right-hand top corner of the address side.

(3) The provisions of this regulation shall apply to franking of items *in toto*.

17. Price of postage stamps and stationery

(1) Postage stamps, postcards, letter card and aerogramme shall be sold for the denoted value of the stamps which they bear.

(2) The embossed envelopes and the registration envelopes shall be sold at the prices mentioned in Table VII of Schedule I.

(3) Special Rakhi Envelopes shall be sold at the prices as the Circle Head concerned may determine.

18. Standards for addressing on domestic items

(1) An item shall not have more than one delivery address;

PROVIDED that nothing in this sub-regulation shall prevent the delivery of an item to another address as may be specified by administrative instructions from time to time.

(2) The address, either handwritten or machine printed, shall contain such elements and, in such order, as given below: -

Name

C/o, D/o, S/o, W/o, H/o

Mobile Number (optional)

House/ Building (including floor)/ Apartment (including floor)

Street /Road /Lane

Landmark

Area / Locality/ Sector

Village/ Town/City

Post Office

District

State

PIN code/ Postcode

(3) The address of the addressee shall be written in the centre of the front side and address of the sender shall be written on the lower left of the front side of an envelope.

(4) Address of the addressee and the sender should be started from the words "To" and "From", respectively.

(5) Blank space of minimum 15mm shall be kept from left, bottom and right side of envelope and the address block of addressee shall have minimum gap of 40 mm from top.

(6) Stamps or Frank impressions shall be affixed in maximum area of 74 mm on the upper right corner.

(7) The address of addressee and sender should be positioned parallel to the length of the envelope.

(8) A zone of 10mm around the address block should be free from any printing or writing.

(9) Non-address information such as sender's code, serial or account numbers or other information are not to be generally included in the address of the addressee and if necessary, it should be printed above the first line but never below the last line of the address.

(10) The spacing between the address lines shall be uniform and be more than 1mm and less than 5mm.

(11) The maximum number of characters per line is 40 characters, excluding spaces between words.

(12) An accountable item tendered at a post office for transmission shall not be accepted unless they are addressed to a particular person or firm or institution.

(13) Such items addressed to a particular person or firm, care of post box and the name of the office where the post box is located shall also be accepted, provided they are addressed to persons or firms in whose names the post box stands registered;

PROVIDED that in the office of delivery, if it is found that there is no post box in the name of the addressee, or the addressee has ceased to be a renter of a post box, the item shall be returned to the sender.

19. Mails for defence services personnel

The following particulars shall be furnished in the address in the case of items for the personnel of the defence services, which are to be delivered through the army post offices: -

No.

Rank

Name

Unit

Such items should be addressed to Care of (C/o) 56 A.P.O. or Care of (C/o) 99 A.P.O.

20. Exemption in method of addressing of an item in certain cases

Item(s) addressed to such authorities and with specified superscription on the envelope, tendered at a post office, shall be accepted for transmission without the name and complete address of the sender as may be specified by administrative instructions from time to time.

21. Standards for addressing on international items

(1) An item shall not have more than one delivery address:

PROVIDED that nothing in this sub-regulation shall prevent the delivery of an item to another address as may be specified by administrative instructions from time to time.

(2) The address, either handwritten or machine printed, shall be worded in a precise, complete and legible manner to ensure the easy transmission of the item and its delivery at the country or territory of destination to the addressee.

(3) The address of the sender and the addressee must be written in roman letters and in Arabic numerals, and wherever required, the address of the addressee may also be written in the language of country or territory of destination.

(4) The name of the place of destination and the country or territory of destination shall be written in capital letters together with the correct postcode number or delivery zone number, whichever applicable.

(5) The address of the sender and addressee shall contain such elements, whichever applicable, and, in such order, as given below, unless otherwise specified:—

Name

Mobile Number (optional)

Building (door, floor, stairwell, wing, building, distinct instances)

Street (street name/number/type, primary thoroughfare, secondary thoroughfare)

PO Box

Post Office

City/town/Rural Area

Administrative Areas (region level)

Postcode

Country/Territory

(6) The address of the addressee shall be written on right of front side and address of the sender shall be written on lower left of front side on an envelope.

(7) The address of the addressee and the sender should be started from the words "To" and "From", respectively.

(8) Blank space of minimum 15 mm shall be kept from left, bottom and right side of envelope and the address block of addressee shall have minimum gap of 40 mm from top. Stamps or Frank impressions shall be affixed in maximum area of 74 mm on the upper right corner.

(9) A zone of 10 mm around the address block should be free from any printing or writing.

(10) Non-address information such as sender's code, serial or account numbers or other information are not to be generally included in the address of the addressee and if necessary, it should be printed above the first line but never below the last line of the address.

(11) The spacing between the address lines shall be uniform and be more than 1mm and less than 5 mm.

(12) The maximum number of characters per line is 40 characters, excluding spaces between words.

(13) An accountable item tendered at a post office for transmission shall not be accepted unless they are addressed as per regulations 18, 19 and sub-regulation (5).

22. Posting of items

The following modes may be used for posting of items: -

- (a) **Letter Boxes** – Letters, letter cards, aerogramme, postcards, airmail postcards, book post, ¹[xxx] printed papers and literature for the blind, shall be posted in the letter boxes, provided the postage chargeable is fully prepaid.

Note 1: Registered newspaper items, periodical post items and franked items shall not be posted in these letter boxes and, if posted, these shall be treated as unpaid and shall be dealt as per regulation 71.

Note 2: Accountable items shall also not be posted in the letter boxes.

¹ Word "small packets," omitted vide SO 6099(E), dt. 30-12-2025, w.e.f. 1-1-2026.

Note 3: Large items, which owing to their size cannot be posted in the letter-boxes, may be received by hand at the window of the post office. However, such items shall not be deemed to be accountable items.

- (b) **Post office counter** - All the accountable items shall be presented at the counter of post office for transmission by post.
- (c) **Franchisee Outlet** - Items as specified by administrative instructions from time to time, may be presented through the franchisee outlet of the Post Office.
- (d) **Self-Booking Kiosk** - Self-booking kiosk available at the designated post offices may be used for posting of items as may be specified by administrative instructions.
Note: The Regional Head is authorised to designate the post offices, where the service of self-booking kiosk is available.
- (e) **Web or Mobile Application**- The authorised web portal or mobile application may be used for posting of items as may be specified by administrative instructions from time to time.

23. Receipt for transmission by post

A receipt shall be given to the person who presents an accountable item for transmission by post.

24. Ownership of items

(1) For domestic items, an item shall remain the property of the sender until it is delivered to the rightful addressee, except in the case of seizure of the item under the applicable law of the land for the time being in force.

(2) For international items, an item shall remain the property of the sender until it is delivered to the rightful addressee, except in the case of seizure of the item under any law of the land of the country or territory of origin or transit or destination.

25. Prohibition of domestic items

(1) Subject to the provisions of these regulations, no person shall send by post, —

- (a) any explosive, dangerous, filthy, noxious or deleterious substance, any sharp instrument not properly protected, or any living creature which is either noxious or likely to injure items in course of transmission by post or any officer of the Post Office; or
- (b) anything likely to injure, any item during transmission by post, or any officer of the Post Office; or
- (c) any ticket, proposal, advertisement or any other matter relating to a lottery, except the case where the lottery is organised or authorised by the Central Government or State Government; or
- (d) any indecent, immoral or obscene printing, painting, photograph, lithograph, engraving, book or card, or any other digital media, or any other indecent, immoral, or obscene item; or

- (e) any item having thereon, or on the cover thereof, any words, marks or designs of an indecent, obscene, seditious, scurrilous, threatening or grossly offensive character; or
- (f) any item having thereon, or on the cover thereof, any matter which is prejudicial to the maintenance of law and order; or
- (g) any item having thereon, or on the cover thereof, any pictorial representation of a person who is a proclaimed offender, or who has been convicted of an offence punishable under any applicable law of the land for the time being in force; or
- (h) any item having thereon, or on the cover thereof, anything written, printed, or otherwise impressed upon or attached to its address side, which, either on account of its being likely to be mistaken for stamps used for the payment of postage or by inconvenient proximity to any such stamp or by tending to prevent the easy and quick reading of the address; or
- (i) narcotics and psychotropic substances, as defined by the International Narcotics Control Board, or other illicit drugs which are prohibited in the country or territory of destination, the country or territory of origin, the Central Government, State Governments, or any authorised agency; or
- (j) counterfeit and pirated items; or
- (k) anything which, by their nature or their packing, may expose officials or the general public to danger, or soil or damage other items, postal equipment, or third party property; or
- (l) dangerous goods, narcotics and psychotropic substances, prohibited drugs and cosmetics items, items prohibited by or under International Air Transport Association (IATA), International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO), Department of Wildlife and the Drug and Cosmetics Act, 1940 (23 of 1940) or items prohibited by any law of the land; or

Explanation : For the purpose of this clause, “dangerous goods” means items or substances that are capable of posing a risk to health, safety, property or environment, which include explosives, gases, flammable liquids, toxic and infectious substances, corrosives and other miscellaneous items which may cause health and safety hazards : PROVIDED that battery and other items, the transmission of which, by air, is prohibited, shall be sent to the addressee through surface mode only; or

- (m) live animals except otherwise permitted in these regulations; or
- (n) coins, banknotes and other valuable items, except permitted through a special process:

PROVIDED that the order shall be in consonance with Reserve Bank of India guidelines, Foreign Exchange Management (Export and Import of Currency) Regulations, 2015 made under the Foreign Exchange

Management Act, 1999 (42 of 1999), or any other applicable law of the land for the time being in force on the subject:

PROVIDED FURTHER that currency notes, coins, or bank notes, shall invariably be transmitted as insured items; or

- (o) other items, the importation or circulation of which is prohibited in the country or territory of origin or destination; or
- (p) documents having the character of current and personal correspondence, with the exception of archived materials, exchanged between persons other than the sender and the addressee or persons living with them; or
- (q) anything prohibited in International Postal Services by the Universal Postal Union (UPU) or any other organisation; or
- (r) any other thing, prohibited by Central Government from time to time.

26. Prohibition of international items

International items not fulfilling the conditions laid down in these regulations shall not be admitted and items sent in furtherance of a fraudulent act or with the intention of avoiding payment of the postage or other postal fee, shall not be admitted.

27. Application of regulation 25 on international items

Regulation 25 shall apply to International items to be transmitted by post to or from any foreign country or territory, except in the following cases, namely: -

- (a) such dangerous goods which may be transmitted by post between the country or territory of origin and destination that have declared their willingness to admit them either reciprocally or in one direction, provided that they comply with national and international relevant laws;
- (b) live animals which shall be admitted in-
 - (i) letter post items other than insured items: bees, leeches and silk-worms; parasites and destroyers of noxious insects intended for the control of those insects and exchanged between officially recognised institutions; flies of the family drosophilidae for biomedical research exchanged between officially recognised institutions;
 - (ii) parcels: live animals whose conveyance by post is authorised by the postal regulations or applicable laws of the countries or territories concerned.

28. Transmission of precious metals and precious stones

(1) Precious metals (including gold, silver, platinum or other precious metals), precious stones (including diamond or other precious stones), jewellery or any combination of these, whether manufactured or not, coins, bank notes, currency notes, securities of any kind payable to bearer, travellers' cheques, except as otherwise specified, shall, in no case, be transmitted by post in an uninsured letter-post item.

(2) Without prejudice to the provisions of sub-rule (1), any country or territory may prohibit the enclosure of gold bullion in insured or uninsured parcels