The University at Buffalo Campus Mail operations is located on the University’s North Campus, in Amherst, New York. It is an effective mail center handling mail and packages for over 26,000 students, 13,000 employees, 1,346 acres, and 192 buildings. The Campus Mail operation is a key focal point for the conducting of business at this University. It is important that the mail center be a safe and secure location and its personnel trained in the handling of threats – chemical, biological, radiological, or bomb.

This standard operating procedure provides general advice for mail handling and recommends protective measures to help staff assess, prevent, and respond to these types of threats.

The mail center is a secure area with one door access. All other doors are secure. Access is restricted to authorized personnel.

FOR ALL EMERGENCIES
CALL CAMPUS POLICE @ 2222
Protocol for Mail Handling
9/04

General:

- Every department should assess and review their protocols for handling mail. Common sense and care should be used in inspecting and opening mail or packages.

- Examine unopened envelopes for foreign bodies or powder.

- Do not open letters with your hands; use a letter opener.

- Open letters and packages with a minimum of movement to avoid spilling any contents.

- Additional precautions such as wearing gloves and restricting the opening of mail to a limited number of trained individuals may be taken.
Protocol for Mail Handling – cont’d.

What Types of Letters May Be Suspect:

- Any letter or package that has suspicious or threatening messages written on it.
- Letters with oily stains.
- Envelopes that are lopsided, rigid, bulky, discolored or have a strange odor.
- Envelopes with no return address.
- Unexpected envelopes from foreign countries.
- No postage or non-cancelled postage.
- Improper spelling of common names, places, or titles.

For Suspect Envelopes:

- Do not open the envelope or package.
- Leave it and evacuate the room.
- Keep others from entering.
- Notify your supervisor, who should call 2222 to notify the University Police who will also notify Environmental Health & Safety.
Protocol for Mail Handling – cont’d.

For Packages That Are Opened and Which Contain Suspicious Material:

DO NOT PANIC

- Chemical organisms can cause skin infection, gastrointestinal infection or pulmonary infection. To do so, the organism must be rubbed into abraded skin, swallowed, or inhaled as a fine, aerosolized mist. It does not leap into one’s body. All forms of disease are generally treatable with antibiotics.

- Chemicals cannot be easily aerosolized out of an envelope or package containing powder. The same facts and conditions are generally true for other bacteria likely to be considered as biological weapons.

CONTAIN THE EXPOSURE

- Close off the room (doors and windows), do not allow anyone other than qualified emergency personnel to enter.

- Close the package or envelope to limit additional exposure. Do not clean powder up; keep others away.

- Do not touch your eyes, nose, or any other part of your body.

- If possible, wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water.

- If clothing is heavily contaminated, don’t brush vigorously.

- If possible, close down the buildings heating/air conditioning/ventilation system.

- Make a list of all people who had actual contact with the powder for investigating authorities.
Protocol for Mail Handling – cont’d.

Bomb Threats/Suspicious Packages:

IF YOU RECEIVE A BOMB THREAT BY THE TELEPHONE

- **DO NOT** argue or antagonize the caller. Listen carefully to the caller so you recall the details later. Listen for background noises.

- Call Campus Police 2222. Explain who you are, where you are, and the nature of the call.

- Notify supervisor. Supervisor will then lock the area down and get everyone out of the building.

SUSPICIOUS PACKAGES THAT MAY HAVE A BOMB IN THEM

- If you are holding the package carefully lay it down and immediately leave the area.

- If there are other people in the area tell them to leave now.

- If a supervisor is close, notify her/him. If not, as soon as you are in a safe place call Campus Police at 2222.

- If there’s a supervisor available, he/she will call 2222 and lock down and evacuate the building.
**TRAINING**

The training of mail center employees to be alert to suspicious envelopes and packages is critical. Training/review of these procedures will be conducted at least once a year in coordination with the Department of Environmental Health & Safety. Periodic emergency response drills will be conducted.

**UNIVERSITY POLICE**

University Police should be the first call for any emergencies. Identify yourself, your location, and state the problem. They will determine whom else to contact if medical care is required.

**AFTER-THE-FACT**

After each incident, an after-the-fact review will be conducted to determine if policies/guidelines were adequate or need to be revised.

**SECURITY COORDINATOR**

The manager of Campus Mail operation is the security coordinator and has been trained in emergency response guidelines. The isolation containment area is an office with a locked door.

**ALTERNATE SITE**

In case of a disaster, the alternate mailing site will be the Helm Warehouse.

**PROTECTIVE/SAFETY EQUIPMENT/SUPPLIES**

Protective gloves, eyewear and masks are available at the mail building. Running water is available at this location.