

## 226 Mail Order

The PFSC services mail and telephone orders for postage stamps of philatelic quality and for other philatelic items. Customers may obtain a catalog listing items available by calling 800-STAMP-24, or by writing to:

STAMPS ETC CATALOG  
US POSTAL SERVICE  
POST OFFICE BOX 57  
GRAND RAPIDS MN 55744-0057

**Note:** Post Offices may *not* fill mail orders for stamps and other philatelic items other than mail orders under the stamps-by-mail program and orders for local cancellations. Customers must furnish a self-addressed, stamped envelope for return of precanceled stamps. Postmasters may not order precancel devices solely to satisfy collector demands.

## 23 Types of Cancellation Services

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### 231 General

#### 231.1 Definition

A postmark is a postal cancellation that contains the Post Office name, state, ZIP Code, and month, day, and year the canceling Post Office accepted custody of the material, except as provided in 231.61 and 231.7. Other postal markings are made by validators, obliterators, or special-purpose cancelers. Postmarking for philatelic purposes is provided at the request of collectors or cover servicers for postmarking outside ordinary mail processing. This service requires special procedures and arrangements so that other postal operations and services are not disrupted. This service may entail any hand stamping requested, either on a hand-back or mail-back basis, and the holding of mail for cancellation. Cancellation fees are as established by the PFSC. For 50 or more cancellations, advance approval by the PFSC is required before service is provided. Cancellation service should be provided separately from stamp sales whenever practical.

#### 231.2 Policy

#### 231.21 Publicity

The Postal Service endeavors to make all unusual postmarking services widely known to customers through advance national publicity to avoid such postmarks being available only to small groups of people.

#### 231.22 Backdating and Pre-Dating

It is Postal Service policy to prohibit backdating of mail except:

- a. When postal operating requirements and public demand necessitate that cancellation operations commence before or continue after the date contained in the postmark.

- b. When replacements are made for damaged, defective, or missing cancellations.
- c. When all requirements for cancellations are met by customers and cancellations are not applied because of errors of postal personnel.
- d. When specifically authorized in writing by the manager, PFSC or a Stamp Services manager.
- e. See specific references to First Day of Issue and Last Day of Sale cancellations in sections 231.4a(4); 231.4b; 231.63d; 231.7; and 232.4.

#### 231.23 **Clerk Availability and Training**

A sufficient number of clerks should be available to provide speedy service. Clerks should be trained in advance to provide hand-stamped postmarks of philatelic quality. Refer to 231.3 for philatelic cancellation procedures.

#### 231.3 **Cooperation With Collectors**

##### 231.31 **Postmarks**

Employees should strive to furnish clear and legible postmarks to stamp collectors by ensuring that cancellation machines and hand-stamp devices are properly inked. Postal employees must give special attention to mail bearing an endorsement that is of philatelic value or to requests for light cancellations, and they should avoid canceling stamps by pen or illegible smudging. However, stamps must be canceled sufficiently to protect postal revenue.

##### 231.32 **Special Attention**

The Postal Service cannot provide special attention to a philatelic cover if it has been routinely entered into the mailstream by the sender.

##### 231.33 **Postmarking Devices**

Postmarking devices may be used only under the supervision of authorized postal personnel.

##### 231.34 **Hand-Stamped Postmarks**

All hand-stamped postmarks are made with black ink unless the customer specifically indicates a preference for another color.

##### 231.35 **Philatelic Covers**

Employees should exercise care in handling all philatelic covers to ensure that they are not damaged in mail handling. These covers are generally identifiable by a design (cachet) on the left side of the envelope.

##### 231.36 **Defacing Philatelic Covers**

Postal employees should ensure that philatelic covers are not over-canceled, backstamped, marked "received this date," or otherwise defaced on front or back; used as a top piece in a bundle for destination-package labeling purposes; or bent, folded, mutilated, or damaged by rubber bands.

**231.4 Hand-Back and Mail-Back Service**

Postmarks rather than other obliterations should be used to provide the following services whenever they are available:

- a. *Hand-Back Service*
  - (1) When a customer personally presents an addressed or unaddressed envelope, postal card, or other item described in 231.63 to a postal clerk for cancellation with the current day's postmark, the Post Office must postmark the item and return it, or hand it back, to the customer.
  - (2) The envelope, card, or other item does not enter the mailstream. All such materials must bear uncanceled postage at the applicable First-Class rate.
  - (3) This service may be provided for special die hub or regular machine cancellations only when the particular cancellation machine is readily accessible to the postal clerk, and only when providing such service does not interfere with other sales or mail processing operations and does not inconvenience other customers.
  - (4) The Last Day of Sale cancellation will be applied to customers' covers or other items with one or more of the stamps being removed from sale affixed on a hand-back basis only.
- b. *Mail-Back Service.* Mail-back service refers to service for stamp dealers and cover servicers that is authorized by the PFSC and that permits envelopes, cards, or other items submitted for cancellation to be returned in bulk through the mail. Conditions of service are further described in 242. This form of mail-back service must be approved in writing and in advance by the PFSC. Mail-back service is not to be provided for special die hub or regular machine cancellations. Last Day of Sale covers submitted for servicing and return through the mailstream will not be entered into the mails until the date appearing on the cancellation.





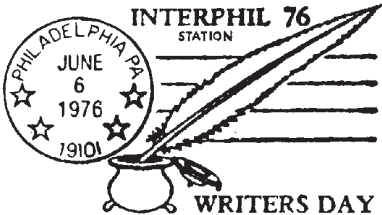
231.5 **Permissible Cancellation Devices**

231.51 **Hand-Stamped Cancellations for Collectors**

The postmark devices shown in [Exhibit 231.51](#) may be used to provide hand-stamped cancellations for collectors.

Exhibit 231.51

**Hand-Stamped Cancellations**

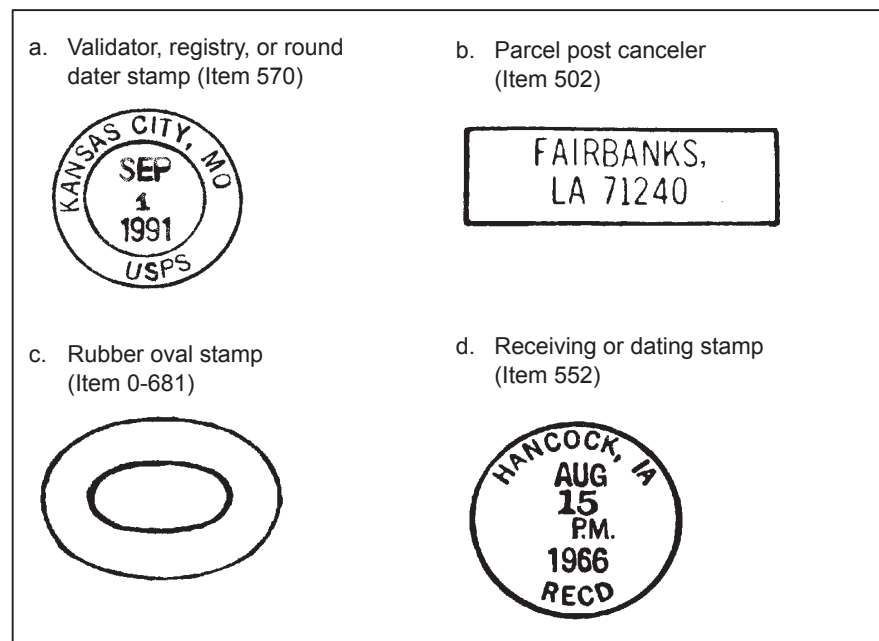
<p>a. Standard cancellation with killer bars (Item 550)</p>	<p>b. Circular cancellation without killer bars</p>
	
<p>c. First-day-of-issue cancellation at Post Office where item first issued</p>	<p>d. Bull's eye cancellation</p>
	
<p>e. Pictorial cancellation subject to 234</p>	
	

**231.52 Obliterators**

The devices (obliterators) shown in [Exhibit 231.52](#) may be used for philatelic cancellation when the postmarks or postmarking devices described in 231.51 are not available.

Exhibit 231.52

**Obliterators**



**231.6 When and Where Philatelic Cancellations May Be Done**

**231.61 Date and Place of Postmarking**

Post Offices may provide postmarking for philatelic purposes before the actual date of the cancellation and may continue after that date when demand, processing capability, or other requirements of the Postal Service dictate. However, under no circumstances may any postmarked materials be released before the date of the cancellation. The manager, Customer Service Support, or the manager, PFSC, may determine that local processing capability requires that philatelic cancellation services be performed at an office other than the Post Office whose cancellation is used; in these cases, however, all materials to be postmarked must be received at or deposited in the Post Office whose cancellation is being used, or at an office designated by the manager, Customer Service Support; the manager, PFSC; or the manager, Stamp Development. Return through the mail is permitted when items are accompanied by a package of similar size bearing the appropriate return address and postage.

**231.62 Preparation Requirements**

Postcards, postal cards, and envelopes submitted through the mail must bear postage at the applicable rate and complete addresses, except as provided in 231.4. Materials submitted for hand-back service need not be addressed.

**231.63 Special Materials on Which Cancellations May Be Requested**

Photographs, postcards, or other materials having a glossy-coated or hard-calendered surface, or any material that does not readily accept ink, are submitted for cancellation at the customer's risk. The Postal Service is not responsible for smudged cancellations or offsetting where the impression appears on the preceding item. The following materials may be canceled as indicated:

- a. *Plain Cards, Slips of Paper, and Blank Envelopes.* Postal employees may not place postmarks for customers on plain slips of paper, plain cards, or blank envelopes without unused postage equaling or exceeding the First-Class rate.
- b. *Picture Postcards (Maximum Cards).* Picture postcards with the stamp placed on the face of the card rather than on the address side are known as maximum cards. Minimum First-Class postage must be placed on the address side. Postmasters may cancel these cards and hand them back to the person presenting them. For mail-back service, refer to 231.4b.
- c. *Posters, Portfolios, and Other Memorabilia.* These items with the stamps placed thereon may be canceled when presented in person for hand-back service. Submittal and return through the mail is not permitted, except as provided in 231.4b.
- d. *Previously Canceled Stamps and Multiple Cancellations.* Items bearing previously canceled stamps and postmarks are acceptable for additional cancellations when uncanceled postage equaling or exceeding the First-Class Mail rate is affixed. Such material may be submitted and returned through the mail, except as provided in 231.4b. When fewer than 50 items are submitted for cancellation, they must all be addressed and must be returned to the addressee as individual pieces and not in outer envelopes. Return under separate cover is allowed only as specified in 241 and 243. First-day-of-issue cancellations may not be provided on a hand-back basis after the first day of issuance. Mint stamps to cover the First-Class Mail rate must be affixed for each cancellation. The Last Day of Sale cancellation will be applied to customers' covers or other items with one or more of the stamps being removed from sale affixed on a hand-back basis only. Any covers submitted for servicing and return through the mailstream will not be entered into the mails until the date appearing on the cancellation.
- e. *Currency.* Currency bearing unused postage stamps of First-Class value or items bearing currency with stamps affixed or adjacent thereto may be canceled when presented in person for hand-back service. Submittal and return through the mail is not permitted. The Postal Service does not accept responsibility for currency in its possession in conjunction with philatelic services.
- f. *Backs of Envelopes.* Post Offices may cancel unused stamps when they are affixed to the reverse side of envelopes bearing already canceled stamps. This service is available only for envelopes presented for hand-back service. They may not be returned through the mail even

when outer envelopes are provided. Such a cancellation denotes only that the item was presented to the Post Office for postmarking on that date; it does not denote that the envelope was carried by the Postal Service.

- g. *Foreign Postage Stamps.* Unused foreign postage stamps may be canceled with a U.S. Postal Service postmark only when unused U.S. postage of the appropriate rate is canceled with the same stroke unless otherwise noted in contractual agreements with the postal administrations of other countries.

### 231.7 **Holding the Mail**

Post Offices may hold mail to comply with customers' requests that the mail be postmarked on a specified date. Post Offices may not, however, hold mail for an event where the date of occurrence is not certain or where it is subject to change or for cancellation on a day when the office will be closed, except as authorized by the PFSC or Manager, Stamp Services. In these latter instances, the envelopes submitted should be returned to the customer unserved and in an outer envelope with an explanation of why the requested service cannot be provided. No more than 50 covers per customer may be held for cancellations. Except for first-day covers and last day of sale covers, where customers have affixed their own stamps, quantities above this number must receive prior written authorization from the PFSC. The PFSC may also authorize the holding of mail for events of nationwide interest.

### 231.8 **Regular Machine Cancellations**

Post Offices must not machine-cancel mail with the regular postmark when the envelopes are unaddressed or when the customer requests hand-back service, except as provided in 231.4. Mail-back (return in bulk) service is not provided, but cancellations may be provided on addressed envelopes or postal cards that are mailed to the addressee.

### 231.9 **Standard Cancellations**

Circular hand-stamped cancellations with or without killer bars may be provided upon request at Post Offices, stations, and branches. These cancellations are available each day that the office is open for business. No slogan or pictorial material may be included. Requests made by mail for these cancellations must be at the Post Office offering the service on the date of the cancellation to qualify for service.

## 232 **First-Day Cancellations**

### 232.1 **First-Day Sale**

A particular Post Office or postal facility is usually designated to have the exclusive sale of a new issue on the day that it is issued. No other postal facility may begin general sale of the new issue until the following business day unless otherwise authorized by the manager, Stamp Services. For

purposes of this section, the word “issue” means postage stamp, stamp booklet, booklet pane, postal card, stamped envelope, or aerogramme.

#### 232.2 **Notification**

New stamps and other issues are announced by notices displayed in Post Office lobbies, in the *Postal Bulletin*, through news releases distributed to the press and philatelic periodicals, and by print, radio, and television advertising.

#### 232.3 **First-Day-of-Issue Cancellation**

This type of cancellation is provided by the Post Office when a new stamp or stationery item is first placed on sale and is dated to show the date of issuance. First-day cancellations may be either metal die or rubber composition. The words “First Day of Issue” appear in the cancellation design. Requests for first-day cancellations must be postmarked no later than the date specified in the *Postal Bulletin* to qualify for service. Bull’s-eye cancellations are used when the conventional first-day-of-issue postmark cannot cancel all the unused stamps on an item presented for postmarking.

#### 232.4 **Last Day of Sale Cancellation**

This type of cancellation is provided by the Post Office when stamps are identified to go off sale and is dated to show the date of the last day of sale. Last day of sale cancellations will be available only at events authorized by Stamp Services. These events will be held in conjunction with nationally recognized stamp shows, which are held at least four times a year. Field offices may conduct events associated with the removal of stamps from sale; however, they may not use the words “Last Day of Sale” in postmarks or other material relating to their event. Last day cancellations may be either metal die or rubber composition. The words “Last Day of Sale” appear in the cancellation design. Requests for last day cancellations must be postmarked no later than the date specified in the *Postal Bulletin* to qualify for service. Bull’s-eye cancellations are used when the conventional last day of sale postmark cannot cancel all the unused stamps on an item presented for postmarking. The “Last Day of Sale” cancellation may be applied at the show from the start of the show until the actual date the stamps are removed from sale. “Last Day of Sale” cancellations may only be applied to items bearing at least one of the stamps being removed from sale.

### 233 **First-Day Covers**

#### 233.1 **Definition**

A *first-day cover* is an envelope, postcard, or other item of reasonable dimension bearing a new stamp, booklet pane, postal card, stamped envelope, or aerogramme canceled with a die reading “First Day of Issue” and showing the place and date of first-day sale.



### 233.2 Procedures

All covers must bear addresses to the right side of the envelope and at least 5/8 inch up from the bottom of the envelope. Requests must be postmarked no later than the date specified in the media announcement (see 232.2) to qualify for cancellation service. As a free service, this is limited to 50 cancellations, except for covers presented in person by the customer in first-day-of-issue cities. Customers who want first-day cancellations of new stamps have two additional options:

- a. They may buy stamps at local Post Offices, affix them to their own stamped envelopes, and mail them to the postmaster at the city of issuance for cancellation. Envelopes submitted by collectors must be of ordinary letter size and must be properly addressed. Collectors should place a filler of postal card thickness in each envelope and either turn in the flap or seal it.
- b. They may order first-day covers without cachets by mail and telephone order, through the PFSC. Each cover will have an individual catalog number and will be offered in the *Stamps etc.* catalog produced by the PFSC. Item numbers and ordering instructions will also be provided in the news releases announcing new stamps. The price of the Postal Service's first-day covers will vary with the denomination and number of stamps affixed. Remittance for mail orders should be made by money order or a cashier's, certified, or personal check made payable to the U.S. Postal Service or by credit card as indicated in the *Stamps etc.* catalog. Mail orders containing personal checks will be held until the checks clear. Cash must not be sent. Neither postage stamps nor foreign coins and currency are accepted. Any orders containing such remittance will be returned unserved. The covers remain on sale for at least 90 days after a stamp is issued.

### 233.3 Bulk Orders

The Post Office that services first-day covers will accept only stamp-affixed envelopes.

### 233.4 Hand-Stamped Cancellations

Hand-stamped cancellations are applied on covers at the location of the first-day ceremony and at the designated first-day Post Office, as well as on covers that cannot be fully canceled by postal cancellation machines. In all other cases, machine cancellations are supplied, except as provided in 24.

### 233.5 Hand-Back Service

Hand-back service for first-day cancellations is limited to the first day of issue. Material to be canceled must be presented to the designated first-day Post Office or ceremony location.

### 233.6 Unacceptable Covers

The issuing Post Office must not provide cancellation service on covers submitted through the mail that are unaddressed, or bear stamps issued after

the issue date and before the submittal cut-off date, or bear only previously canceled stamps; nor may the Post Office provide hand-back service on any items presented after the first day of issuance. These restrictions may be waived only by written authorization from the PFSC.

### 233.7 **Mail Orders for Mint Stamps**

The first-day Post Office may not accept mail order requests for uncanceled stamps from customers outside its service area, except for cover servicers as provided in 242.

### 233.8 **Cancellation Deadlines**

Deadlines for submitting covers for first-day-of-issue cancellations are established by Stamp Development and the PFSC. Any exceptions to these deadline dates must be authorized by both.

### 233.9 **Unofficial First-Day Covers**

Stamps acquired at the first-day Post Office may be canceled at any Post Office. Envelopes containing new stamps canceled on the first day of sale at a Post Office other than the issuing office are known as “unofficial first-day covers.”

## 234 **Pictorial Cancellations**

### 234.1 **Description**

Pictorial cancellations are postmarks offered by the Postal Service to commemorate local events celebrated in communities throughout the nation. These postmarks contain the name of a temporary philatelic station, city, state, ZIP Code™, and month, day, and year of the cancellation. These cancellations may also feature wording and/or graphics relating to fairs, conventions, or other various types of local celebrations.

### 234.2 **Sponsors**

Pictorial cancellations are requested by sponsors or organizers of local events and are authorized to be used only at temporary philatelic stations and at other philatelic outlets. They may not be used at regular stamp windows for special local celebrations.

### 234.3 **Cancellation Methods**

Devices used for pictorial celebrations are generally hand stamps, except when volume requires the use of a machine cancellation. There is no charge to the sponsor for the production of the hand stamp or for the Postal Service’s staffing of the temporary station.

### 234.4 **Criteria**

Collectors may obtain pictorial cancellations at a temporary philatelic station established at an event or at a philatelic outlet, on the date of the

cancellation. Additionally, such cancellations may be requested by mail. Mail-in requests must be postmarked no later than 30 days following the requested cancellation date to qualify for this service.

## 235 Temporary Philatelic Station Cancellations

### 235.1 Approval

Postmasters may request authority from the appropriate manager, Customer Service Support, at the district level, to provide cancellation service at temporary philatelic stations. Only the standard circular cancellation will be provided unless the sponsors or organizers apply to the postmaster for use of a pictorial cancellation at least 10 weeks before the event. The sponsors or organizers must also propose a design and finished artwork for a pictorial cancellation. The cancellation service and design require the approval of the postmaster and the manager, Customer Service Support, at the district level. Different cancellations for each day of an event are authorized only for international philatelic exhibitions recognized by Stamp Development and held in the United States.

### 235.2 Requirements

#### 235.21 Required Information and Dimensions

All cancellations must carry the name of the temporary station (the name of the exhibition or event, followed by the word "Station" or "Sta."), the city, state, and ZIP Code of the actual location of the temporary philatelic station, and the month, day, and year of the cancellation. Overall dimensions must not exceed 4 inches horizontally and 2 inches vertically.

#### 235.22 Approved Subject Matter

Illustrations, wording, and designs featured on cancellations must directly reflect the event to be commemorated. Cancellations that promote the sale or use of private, nonpostal products or that endorse or involve the ideals, policies, programs, products, campaigns, or candidates of religious, antireligious, commercial, political, fraternal, trade, labor, public-interest, or special-interest organizations may not be approved. However, cancellations may be approved that recognize events such as meetings, exhibitions, or conventions sponsored by or involving such organizations, provided that their designs do not include words, symbols, or illustrations referring to ideals, policies, programs, products, campaigns, or candidates. If there is doubt about whether a proposed cancellation meets these requirements, Stamp Development should be consulted before granting approval.

#### 235.23 Publicity

The manager, Customer Service Support, at the district level (or designee), must submit a reproducible copy of the pictorial cancellation (actual size) to Stamp Development, so that national publicity may be arranged. The use of standard cancellations at temporary stations must also be reported. All reports should include the dates that the temporary philatelic station is to be open, the sponsor's name, name of the temporary philatelic station, a

complete mailing address for customers requesting the cancellation by mail and a reproducible copy of the pictorial cancellation. Reports and copies of pictorial cancellations must be submitted by the first day of each month for those cancellations authorized 2 months later (e.g., January 1 for March authorization).

#### 235.24 **Equipment**

Pictorial and standard cancellations shall be applied by rubber hand stamps purchased by the host Post Office or district office. If more than 100,000 pieces of mail are anticipated, the district may apply to the manager, PFSC, at least 60 days in advance for purchase of a metal die for machine cancellation. These cancellations may be provided only for the duration of the temporary philatelic stations.

#### 235.25 **Service Limitations**

Hand stamping as a free service is limited to 50 cancellations for any single individual or group, except for cancellations at first-day-of-issue events. The sponsor may also obtain any reasonable amount of hand-backs free of service charge for its members, and special folders or programs prepared by the sponsor may be canceled and made available at the opening of the show. Other individuals or groups not in attendance at the first-day ceremony or at the first-day Post Office who require more than 50 hand-stamped cancellations may obtain this service only by paying a special fee. Written application for 50 or more cancellations must be made in advance to and be authorized by the PFSC.

#### 235.26 **Use and Disposition of Hand Stamps**

Pictorial cancellation hand stamps, like other canceling devices, may be used only under the supervision of authorized postal personnel and must be returned by the postmaster to the manager, Customer Service Support, at the district level, 65 days after close of the exhibition or convention, by which time all replacement requests are to be handled. The manager, Customer Service Support, at the district level, must destroy the cancellation device upon receipt.

#### 235.27 **Special Requests to Retain Hand Stamps**

Requests from sponsors to retain pictorial cancellation hand stamps for purposes of placement in a museum, historical site, or for any other appropriate use, must be approved by the appropriate manager, Customer Service Support, at the district level. Before release to the sponsor, the hand stamp must be defaced in such a way that it can be recognized if used improperly. Copies of the original and defaced cancellation designs must be kept on file in the local and/or district office.

## 236 Special Die-Hub Cancellations

### 236.1 Description

Special die-hub cancellations are cancellations in which a slogan or message publicizing an event is engraved on a die hub. These cancellations are applied by machine to live mail. Hand-back service may be provided only as described in 231.4. Mail-back (return in bulk) service cannot be provided, but cancellations can be provided on addressed envelopes or postal cards that are delivered to the addressee or addressees through mail delivery. Cancellations of philatelic quality are often not possible. All envelopes must be addressed. Any quantity of envelopes may be submitted, but they are not returned in bulk.

### 236.2 Criteria

#### 236.21 General

Special cancellations are authorized when the scheduled event to be observed meets one of the following criteria:

- a. It is for a national purpose for which Congress has made an appropriation.
- b. It is of general public interest and importance, it will be observed for a definite period of time, and it is not conducted for private gain or profit.

#### 236.22 Prohibitions

Special cancellations are not authorized for any of the following:

- a. Events of interest primarily to a particular local group.
- b. Fraternal, political, religious, service, commercial, or trade organizations.
- c. Campaigns or events promoting the sale or use of private products or services.
- d. Idea or slogan promotions not directly connected with an event of general public interest and importance.
- e. Post Office anniversaries.
- f. Recruitment programs.
- g. Events that occur during a period when all canceling machines in the Post Office are scheduled for other special cancellation die hubs.

### 236.3 Periods of Use

Special cancellations may not be used longer than 6 months. Special cancellations that are approved on an annual basis are limited to one 60-day period annually during each year of repeated use.

### 236.4 Revocation

Permission to use any special cancellation may be curtailed or revoked when it is necessary to use special postmarking dies for Postal Service purposes.

**236.5 Requirements****236.51 Initial Cancellation**

The sponsor must submit the application in writing, for a purpose described in 236.21, to the postmaster at the Post Office where the special cancellation is to be used. The application described in this section should be in the form of a letter from the sponsor to the postmaster, giving all required information. The application must be submitted by the sponsor at least 4 months before the date the special cancellation is to be used and must provide the following information:

- a. Complete description and schedule of the event to be observed, including evidence that it is not being conducted for private gain or profit.
- b. Wording of the proposed cancellation is limited to three lines of not more than 20 letters, numbers, or spaces for each line. Do not use illustrations or designs because, in most circumstances, such designs are not easily reproduced on a die hub. The wording must directly reflect the event to be commemorated.
- c. Name and telephone number of the Post Office where the cancellation is to be used.
- d. Period of use desired.
- e. Number of die hubs required.
- f. Name, address, and telephone number of the sponsor who will be billed for the cost of manufacturing the die hubs.

**236.52 National Events**

Wording on a special cancellation must be standardized and approved by the sponsor's national headquarters when the sponsor is an affiliate or local chapter of a national organization. Requests for national events must be forwarded to:

MAILING STANDARDS  
US POSTAL SERVICE  
1735 N LYNN ST RM 3025  
ARLINGTON VA 22209-6038

**236.53 Recurring Cancellations**

A request must be submitted for reuse of recurring annual cancellations 3 months before the date that the sponsor wants the cancellation to be used again. In the case of national cancellations, a single request from the national sponsor is sufficient.

**236.6 Referral of Postmaster****236.61 Forwarding Applications**

Employees who receive applications must immediately forward them to their designated manager, Business Mail Entry, at the district level. (See DMM G040 for the 3-digit ZIP Code areas served by each district.) Enclose the information described in 236.51.

**236.62 Name of Manufacturer**

Furnish the name of the manufacturer and the model number of the canceling machine on which the special die hub will be used. If the machine is a Model Flier, Model M, or Model G, the correct die hub part number must be stated. The part number for Model Flier and Model M machines is 1535 for a hub that uses a round base ring die, and 1535-G for a hub that uses a square base ring die. The part number for a Model G machine is 218-A for a hub that uses a round base ring die, and 218-E for a hub that uses a square base ring die. A part number is not required for other machines.

**236.63 Effect of Approval**

State the effect the approval would have on the use of special cancellations already approved for that office.

**236.7 Approval and Disapproval**

The postmaster will inform the sponsor of the approval or denial of the application. If approved, the manager, Business Mail Entry at the district level, will arrange for the manufacture of the die hub and will instruct the postmaster on its use by memorandum or PS Form 3617, *Order for Special Canceling Machine Die Hubs*. If the request is not approved, the manager, Business Mail Entry, at the district level, will advise the postmaster of the decision and the reason.

**236.8 Cost**

The sponsor must pay the cost of manufacturing the special cancellation die hub and any cost incurred in adapting canceling machines for its use or for installing the hub. The approximate cost of a die hub can be obtained from the manager, Business Mail Entry, at the district level. The organization or person assuming the cost of manufacturing the die hub will be billed by the manufacturer.

**236.9 Disposition****236.91 After Use**

Used die hubs may not be given to sponsors or transferred to another Post Office. Used hubs not retained for future use must be sent for disposal to:

MAIL EQUIPMENT SHOP  
US POSTAL SERVICE  
2135 5TH ST NE  
WASHINGTON DC 20260-6224

**236.92 Special Requests**

A request from the sponsor that a special cancellation die hub be retained for an appropriate purpose, such as placement in a museum, library, historical site, or other suitable use, may be approved by Mailing Standards at Headquarters.



**236.93 Replacement**

When a special cancellation die hub must be replaced, local sponsors must be notified immediately so that they may, if they wish, apply for a replacement through the local postmaster. Sponsors must pay for replacement die hubs.

**237 Mail Submitted for Special Die-Hub Cancellations****237.1 Postage and Addresses**

Mailers requesting that their mail be canceled with a special die-hub cancellation must affix First-Class postage to the mail. Stamps issued by foreign countries may not be placed on the mail. The mail must bear a complete address.

**237.2 Prohibitions****237.21 Holding the Mail**

Mail must not be held to comply with a customer's request that the mail be postmarked with a special cancellation on a particular date.

**237.22 Backdating**

Backdating of mail to comply with customer requests is prohibited. No exceptions to the above policy will be granted unless authorized in writing by the manager, PFSC.

**237.23 Returns**

Mail bearing the special cancellation must not be enclosed in another envelope for return, even if the customer provides a postage-paid envelope for return (see 231.4).

**237.24 Replacements**

Replacement of damaged envelopes canceled with a special cancellation is prohibited.

**238 Military Post Offices and Special-Request Cancellations****238.1 Military Post Offices**

Military Post Offices, including army Post Offices (APOs) and fleet Post Offices (FPOs), may hand stamp covers both on a hand-back basis and on a mail-order request in conformance with all policies and in accordance with all conditions and procedures stated in this section, except that:

- a. The postal chief at each such installation may establish the maximum number of covers individual collectors or dealers may submit.
- b. Military Post Offices may establish temporary philatelic stations or provide pictorial cancellations. Requests to establish temporary philatelic stations must be sent at least 90 days in advance of the



commemorative event to the responsible postmaster (New York City or San Francisco) for approval and coordination with Stamp Development.

### 238.2 **Special Requests**

Requests for cancellations at postal facilities that normally do not cancel mail must be made in writing to the appropriate manager, Customer Service Support, at the district level, at least 60 days in advance to permit area manager authorization and appropriate national publicity. These requirements also apply to requests for cancellations at offices that are inaccessible to the public or to requests for cancellations at any office on dates when mail is not normally canceled (for example, Sundays and holidays). Cover servicers, as described in 24, must submit their requests for cancellations to either the manager, PFSC, or the manager, Cancellation Services.

### 239 **Autographs**

Postal employees may, at their discretion, accept or refuse requests for autographs. Employees should exercise fairness in handling such requests. Nothing of value may be accepted or requested in exchange for autographs.

## 24 **Philatelic Cover Servicers and Dealers (Cachets)**

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### 241 **General**

Cover servicers and dealers include those groups or commercial enterprises that submit 50 or more envelopes or other items for identical cancellations, whether presented in one or more packages, and request return in bulk. To provide more efficient philatelic services, Postal Service regulations on cover servicers and dealers specify that their submissions must be of 50 or more identical pieces. Smaller quantity orders can be better handled through the centralized first-day cover process.

### 242 **First-Day Cover Servicers**

Customers recognized as first-day cover servicers are permitted, though not required, to purchase mint stamps by mail from the first-day Post Office or from the PFSC on the date of issuance. Cancellations are provided only when stamp-affixed envelopes are submitted.

### 243 **Mail-Back Service**

#### 243.1 **Service Charges and Authorizations**

Mail-back service for cover servicers and dealers is subject to a service charge established by the PFSC, which must be paid by check or money order before the mailing is processed. Additionally, written authorization must be obtained from the PFSC for more than 50 cancellations. Copies of authorizations are sent to the postmaster and the appropriate district office.