

Summary of Postal Service Retail Facility Change Regulations

Certain regulations based on federal law apply when postal managers propose to replace a Post Office with an alternate form of postal service. These regulations are designed to ensure that the reasons for proposing such changes in postal service are fully disclosed at a stage when customers can make helpful contributions toward a final decision. The full text of the statutory provisions appears in Title 39, *United States Code*, Section 404(b), while the implementing regulations appear in Title 39, *Code of Federal Regulations*, Part 241.3.

According to implementing regulations, an initial investigation and any subsequent formal proposal to discontinue a Post Office originate with postal field managers responsible for Post Offices in that area. The proposal must explain the services recommended as substitutes and the rationale that supports this recommendation. The written proposal is prominently posted for 60 days at affected Post Offices, along with an "Invitation for Comments," which formally invites customer comments. At the end of the 60-day comment period, additional review is made at lower and upper levels of postal management.

When a final decision is made at Postal Headquarters in Washington, DC, that decision is posted in affected Post Offices for 30 days, during which customers may appeal the decision to the Postal Regulatory Commission in Washington, DC. The Postal Regulatory Commission has 120 days to consider and decide an appeal. Even without an appeal, no Post Office may be closed sooner than 60 days after the public posting of the final decision.

