

**126.322 Money Orders**

Retail personnel who issue money orders must have on hand a sufficient number of blank money orders to accommodate the expected daily volume of business. Further details concerning the maintenance of blank money orders may be found in Handbook F-1.

**126.323 Advance Deposits**

Guidelines for handling advance deposits are as follows:

- a. The advance deposit system encompasses the acceptance, accounting, and file maintenance procedures applying to the operation of Trust Fund Accounts. A large percentage of all postal revenue is deposited in such accounts.
- b. Each person involved in the maintenance and management of this complex system must be thoroughly familiar with the established procedures. In general, funds received for use in customers' advance deposit accounts are handled as any other postal funds, subject to the same limitations, procedures, and accountability requirements.
- c. Details concerning the handling of advance deposits are contained in Handbook F-1.

**126.33 Daily Financial Report**

Individual retail clerks and all stations, branches, and main office retail units must report all financial transactions at the end of each business day on the appropriate version of Form 1412-A, *Daily Financial Form*, or Form 1412-B, *Daily Financial Report*. The report shows the total amount received for each type of transaction conducted during the day and provides a running record of stamp accountability for each clerk and unit.

Each report is checked and verified by a designated employee other than the person who prepared it. Information from the forms is used by the designated accounting unit in preparing the Statement of Account.

All retail employees must keep fully informed on current reporting procedures. The details are explained in Handbook F-1.

**126.4 Retail Hours****126.41 Nonholiday Weekdays****126.411 Retail Service**

Postmasters provide all retail services for 8½ or more hours on nonholiday weekdays, unless otherwise authorized by the district manager, Customer Service and Sales. Retail service hours are scheduled to meet the needs of local postal customers. When the postmaster determines that additional service hours are necessary to meet community needs, employee work schedules are adjusted to provide such service. Postmasters must obtain approval of the next higher management level for increasing workhour usage if additional costs are involved.

**126.412 Main Post Office and Units in Business Areas**

Main Post Offices and other postal units in business areas are usually open during the hours kept by that business community. Stations and branches are not required to be open at the same scheduled hours as main offices. Stations and branches can adjust retail service hours to meet the needs of the local community. Stations and branches in suburban communities and/or large shopping centers may provide late evening service for customer convenience if needed and approved by the district manager, Customer Service and Sales. Postmasters must inform customers of service hours, using any available means to advertise those hours.

**126.413 Self-Service Units**

Where installation criteria can be met, self-service centers or stamp vending machines are placed in lobbies to reduce retail transactions and for postal customer use when retail service is not available. Postmasters must inform postal customers of the availability, locations, advantages, and products available from self-service vending equipment and encourage their use. Vending equipment must be operable and available for customers when the lobby is open.

**126.414 Consolidation of Retail Counter Service**

Windows and services must be consolidated so that each retail service counter is used fully. Windows offering specialized service are opened only if conditions warrant and if approved by the district manager, Customer Service and Sales, or designee. All approved specialized retail service counters must also offer stamps and postal stationery.

**126.415 Specified Postal Business**

Contract stations or branches handle specified postal business during normal business hours or hours designated by the postmaster. Contractors on their own initiative may conduct postal business beyond those designated by the postmaster.

**126.42 Saturdays**

Window service is provided on Saturdays if there is a demonstrated need. Normally, such service does not exceed 4 hours. Postmasters must obtain approval from the next higher management level if more hours are necessary to meet customer needs. At financial units serving business areas, or facilities serving communities where many residents leave on weekends, retail service may be closed if service is available at other postal units, contract stations, or self-service postal centers. Postmasters must post signs telling customers of locations and hours of such services.

**126.43 Sundays**

Post Offices are normally not open on Sunday to deliver mail to the general public. Sunday duty schedules cover only employees needed to collect and prepare mail for dispatch, deliver Express Mail, make incoming mail distribution considered necessary, and avoid congestion and delays in Monday delivery.

**126.44 Lobby Hours**

As a minimum, customers must have access to their Post Office boxes during all retail service counter hours. Normally, separate Post Office box lobbies should remain open when someone is on duty in the postal unit. At the postmaster's discretion, when no one is on duty, lobbies may remain open to allow customers access to Post Office boxes and self-service equipment, provided that customer safety, security provisions, and police protection are deemed adequate by the Inspection Service.

**126.45 Local or State Holidays**

Post Offices may not be closed solely for a local or state holiday. Window or other services may be reduced if warranted by lessened demand. Otherwise, customers must receive normal levels and types of service.

**126.46 Signs**

Postmasters must use available standard signs to publicize the services and hours at each postal unit.

## 13 Retail Services at Counters

---

**131 Overview****131.1 Counter Transactions**

Counter transactions consist of the sale of postage stamps, postal stationery items, mail services, postal-related products, and other services.

All products and services should be offered at every retail service counter position. This permits full utilization of clerks during their duty tour and is a prerequisite for the successful use of queuing systems as described in 125.33.

**131.2 High-Volume Retail Units**

Postmasters of high-volume retail units are authorized to activate a stamps-only retail service counter during peak mailing periods such as noon (lunch time), late afternoon, late December, and after general rate changes. Additional staffing is neither authorized nor warranted for this procedure.

Windows offering other specialized services may be opened where local needs dictate.