

Mandatory Stand Up Talk

July 8, 2020

COVID-19 test kits in the mail

As the safety of our employees is always our top priority, this talk is being provided to advise you that COVID-19 related test kits are being mailed through the Postal Service.

The Postal Service has partnered with several manufacturers, vendors, and laboratories to ship virus and vaccine test kits to a variety of healthcare providers and citizens across the country.

COVID-19 Test Kits

These test kits have been designated as Category B “Infectious Substances,” which are mailable per the provisions found in Publication 52, *Hazardous, Restricted and Perishable Mail*, Section 346.32.

- The vendors and their packaging have met all Postal Service mailing requirements, packaging and labeling guidelines.
- The kits will include explicit mailing instructions to home-end customers along with a prepaid Return Service label (Priority Mail or First Class Package Return Service) to expedite shipping.

Do not detain or delay delivery. The contents of these packages are highly sensitive and should be processed as quickly as possible to ensure the integrity of the sample. To ensure safety, the kits will be monitored and compliance will be enforced.

Spills are unlikely. COVID-19 test kits contain small samples of biological material that are inserted into a primary receptacle, such as a tube.

- The primary receptacle is securely sealed and inserted inside leak-proof packaging with absorbent material and further placed in a rigid container.
- The entire receptacle is triple packaged.

- Some kits may include a fourth layer (polybag) as an added level of security and protection.

In the event that a test kit package is found damaged or opened, please follow the established guidelines for the handling of hazardous material releases as specified in Management Instruction EL-810-2006-3, *Response to Hazardous Materials Releases*. The MI provides a full overview on handling spills and leaks.

- Wear proper personal protective equipment (PPE) to prevent contamination from substances that may become airborne or come in contact with the skin.
- Personnel exposed to any biohazardous release via inhalation, skin contact, or some other route must receive immediate medical attention. If medical assistance is not available, the exposed person should self-isolate until he or she can be seen by a physician.

Every day, the Postal Service plays an important role in processing and delivering critical mail and packages such as medicines and biological substances throughout the United States.

Giving you accurate and timely information promotes safety and helps us all handle these materials more efficiently. For more information or clarification, speak with your supervisors or managers.

The safety of our employees is always our top priority. Thank you for doing your part to ensure these important mail pieces reach their final destinations.

Thank you for listening.

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