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POSTAL NEWS

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People, planes, trucks to deliver 20 billion pieces of holiday “cheer”

Postal Service prepares for the busiest mailing and delivery days of the year

Washington, DC – Santa isn't the only one who will be working Christmas Eve.

The U.S. Postal Service will deliver Express Mail on Dec. 24 and 25, helping families and customers across the country keep the “happy” in the holidays.

The Postal Service expects to deliver 20 billion letters, packages and cards between Thanksgiving and Christmas, with the busiest mailing day expected to be Monday, Dec. 18, when more than 280 million cards and letters will be processed – more than twice the average processed on any given day. Total mail volume on Dec. 18 is projected to rise to 900 million pieces of mail, increased from 670 million pieces on an average day.

About 100 million First-Class letters are processed daily. That number increases to about 150 million a day during the holidays. About 12 million packages will be delivered every day through Christmas Eve. The busiest delivery day will be Wednesday, Dec. 20.

“We work hard every day to make sure we meet the needs of our customers. But we take the extra step, meet the additional challenge, during the holidays,” said Pat Donahoe, deputy postmaster general and chief operating officer. “Our commitment to our customers remains strong. We have a goal ahead of us that we are going to meet.”

And meeting that challenge will take the coordinated efforts of 700,000 full-time and seasonal workers; a National Operations Center coordinating mail flow and delivery around the clock, seven days a week; expanding air cargo lifts by 60 percent; increasing the number of direct ground routes between major metro networks; and fueling, loading and driving more than 210,000 vehicles.

In addition to the national logistics of moving and delivering all this mail, the Postal Service will have extended hours at more than 7,400 Post Offices. Customers can purchase stamps online or at more than 75,000 alternate access points, including banks, grocery stores, drug stores and at Post Offices. National call center operators are ready to answer questions on hours and services. Customers can call 1-800-ASK-USPS for information.

And there are 2,500 Automated Postal Centers (APCs) in Post Office lobbies across the country. Just as an ATM is a virtual bank, the APC is a virtual, stand-alone Post Office. The APC

does everything short of face-to-face transactions – dispensing stamps, weighing packages and calculating postage for Express Mail, Priority Mail, First-Class Mail and Parcel Post items.

“APCs make visiting a Post Office easier,” Donahoe said. “It’s one more way we’re trying to save customers time waiting in line and offering another alternative to meet their mailing needs.”

And, like Santa Claus, the Post Office is everywhere, with 37,000 locations across the country and on every computer and laptop in America at **USPS.com**. Almost anything that can be done at a Post Office can be done online at a time that is convenient for the customer.

Ship a package, purchase stamps, hold mail, request a free package pickup, find a ZIP Code and design and print greeting cards. There are more than two dozen services available through the Postal Service’s website. This year, a special page was created as a single destination for all holiday needs: **USPS.com/holiday**.

More than 4 billion seasonal stamps were printed this year. The official holiday stamp is a series of four photographs of snowflakes.

“The ways Americans celebrate the holidays are as varied as snowflakes. No two are exactly alike. Snow crystals often show many flat, crystalline surfaces, or facets. Bright reflections off these mirror-like facets give freshly fallen snow its sparkle,” Donahoe said. “That’s our goal for this holiday season as well. Making Your Holidays Sparkle.”

Please note: There are two fact sheets available in the Holiday Press Room to support this release: “10 Things You Don’t Know About the U.S. Postal Service” and “Holidays by the Numbers.”

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Since 1775, the Postal Service and its predecessor, the Post Office Department, have connected friends, families, neighbors and businesses by mail. It is an independent federal agency that visits more than 144 million homes and businesses every day and is the only service provider delivering to every address in the nation. The Postal Service receives no taxpayer dollars for routine operations, but derives its operating revenues solely from the sale of postage, products and services. With annual revenues of \$72 billion, it is the world’s leading provider of mailing and delivery services, offering some of the most affordable postage rates in the world. The U.S. Postal Service delivers more than 46 percent of the world’s mail volume—some 212 billion letters, advertisements, periodicals and packages a year—and serves 7 million customers each day at its 37,000 retail locations nationwide.

Visit the Holiday Press Room at [USPS.com](https://usps.com/holiday)