UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE®

In-Office Cost System (IOCS)

Handbook F-45   August 2020
Updated through SP#4, FY2020   Transmittal Letter

A.   Introduction. This edition of Handbook F-45 contains revisions that Statistical Programs has made since the handbook's previous publication in August 2019, including revisions to management policies and procedures, and revisions issued in Statistical Programs Letters through SP #4 FY20 (dated June 3, 2020). All previous editions of Handbook F-45 are obsolete.

B.   Explanation. This handbook serves as both a training aid and reference guide for Postal Service employees at Headquarters and at area and districts offices, and for local Postal Service employees who conduct and support In-Office Cost System (IOCS) readings. The procedures within this handbook are part of the Postal Service's continuing effort to improve data quality and productivity through benchmarking and standardizing of best practices.

C.   Availability. Copies are available for Postal Service employees on the Postal Service PolicyNet Web site at http://blue.usps.gov — in the left-hand column under "Essential Links," click on *PolicyNet;* then in the column on the right, click on *Handbooks;* and then scroll down and click on the link for this handbook.

D.   Comments on Content. Address comments or questions regarding the content of this handbook to the following address:

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> UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE
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E.   Comments on Format. Address comments or questions regarding the language or organization of this handbook to the following address:

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F.   Effective Date. This handbook is effective August 2020.

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1 Introduction

1-1 Overview

Handbook F-45 describes the purpose, policy, and procedures for performing In-Office Cost System (IOCS) readings. This handbook introduces the data collection technician to the data collection process for conducting IOCS readings, spells out official United States Postal Service policies governing that process, and provides instructions to help prepare for and conduct IOCS readings.

Note: This handbook uses the pronoun "you" to refer to the data collection technician.

This August 2020 edition of Handbook F-45 reflects significant changes to the IOCS questions and CODES software, and it has a format to appear more like other Statistical Programs data collection handbooks.

You are to use this handbook as a learning tool during your training period and also later as a reference source. Others who also use this handbook as a reference source are the Manager Financial Programs Compliance (MFPC) and the Supervisor Statistical Programs (SSP).

Note: To simplify wording and to avoid redundancy, uses of MFPC in this book also refer to the SSP or, at the MFPC's direction, a trained designee.

1-2 Developing Cost Information

The United States Postal Service develops cost information for each class of mail, price category, and type of service in order to set appropriate prices. The Postal Service uses cost information to develop proposals for new Postal Service prices, help prepare budgets, and conduct management studies. Statistical Programs at Postal Service Headquarters (HQ SP) uses this cost data to determine the proportion of the total cost attributed to each class and subclass of mail and each extra service.

The Postal Service must report annual cost, revenue, volume, and quality of service to the Postal Regulatory Commission (PRC), which sets the appropriate prices. The Postal Service must also ensure that market-dominant products do not subsidize competitive products and that each competitive product covers its attributable costs. Prices for competitive products must be high enough to ensure that revenue exceeds cost. To help

meet this requirement, the Postal Service continually collects revenue, volume, weight, and cost information.

To gather information about mail characteristics and the costs of processing, transporting, and delivering the mail, the Postal Service conducts tests that provide data for the following cost systems:

a.   City Carrier Cost System (CCCS).

b.   Rural Carrier Cost System (RCCS).

c.   In-Office Cost System (IOCS).

d.   Transportation Cost System (TRACS).

1-3   Four Phases of the Cost Systems Measurement Process

1-3.1 Overview

The primary sampling systems for estimating the cost of processing, delivering, and transporting the mail are CCCS, RCCS, IOCS, and TRACS. The data collected from these systems enable the Postal Service to allocate costs to each mail category. This helps the Postal Service to determine prices, so collecting consistent, accurate data is essential.

The cost systems measurement process consists of four phases as shown in Exhibit 1-3.1, and 1-3.2 through 1-3.5 discuss the four phases.

Exhibit 1-3.1
Cost Systems Measurement Process
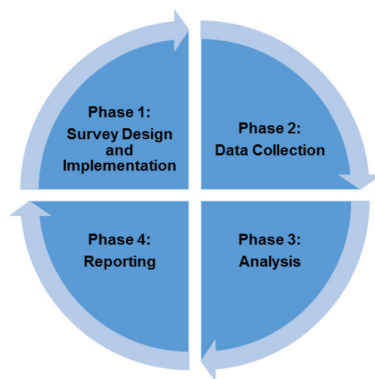
1-3.2 Phase 1: Survey Design and Implementation

In the survey design and implementation phase, HQ SP Cost Team statisticians develop and revise data collection for the cost systems. The statisticians decide the frequency of certain tests, the number of test sites, the type of information to gather, the procedures for conducting the tests, and the time, manner, and method of data collection. In addition, HQ SP personnel provide data collector training.

When designing a test, HQ statisticians use statistical methods to ensure the data's reliability. Principles behind these methods include the following:

a.   Collect data by conducting a census or a sample — a census selects every item, whereas a sample selects a smaller group for study.

b.   Use the same procedure to gather data, no matter who is conducting the test. This method ensures that you will not interpret test questions differently, and that different data collectors still gather the same data by performing the same test under the same circumstances.

c.   Conduct pilot tests to evaluate the questions and procedures before using them to gather data. These tests allow designers to find problems in the procedures that may lead to inaccurate or unreliable data, and then allow the test designers to correct the problems.

1-3.3   Phase 2: Data Collection

In the data collection phase, trained data collectors record data for the cost systems tests on laptops.

You use Computerized On-Site Data Entry System (CODES) laptop computers to record IOCS readings of the employee's activity. If you observe the employee handling mail, record the mailpiece characteristics using the CODES software. The employee's craft and type of work activities, as well as the type of mail handled, automatically determine the question sequence. The CODES software also has built-in checks to ensure consistent responses. When you complete a reading and transmit the data from the laptop computer to the CODES Web Base Unit (WBU), the data is available to HQ SP for analysis.

The HQ SP Cost Team statisticians write test questions and procedures to gather data in order to avoid introducing error or bias. Thus, to ensure the data's reliability, you must follow the procedures exactly so that the collected data is consistent regardless of who performs the tests. You must periodically review the policies and procedures in this handbook to maintain knowledge of current procedures.

If you have any issues requiring clarification, address them to the MFPC or SSP. The MFPC or SSP reports these issues to HQ SP personnel, who work to develop solutions. The MFPC or SSP then shares these solutions with you.

1-3.4   Phase 3: Analysis

In the analysis phase, HQ SP personnel analyze the data for accuracy on two levels:

a.   On the first level, the MFPC or SSP reviews and approves the tests on the CODES WBU.

b.   On the second level, HQ SP personnel check the data again.

1-3.5   Phase 4: Reporting

In the reporting phase, HQ SP Cost Team statisticians compile the data and create reports that the Postal Service and the PRC use to develop estimates for costs of processing, delivering, and transporting the mail by product, shape, and other characteristics.

The Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act of 2006 established rate-setting policies and procedures for both noncompetitive (market-dominant) and competitive postal products. The Postal Service submits price change requests to the Postal Service Board of Governors. These requests include an explanation of, and justification for, the price change, an effective date, and a schedule of the changed rates.

The Board of Governors reviews and helps to justify the rate changes before sending requests to the PRC. The PRC considers the request, reviews supporting materials, seeks comments from the public, and in turn makes a decision to approve, deny, or alter the rate request. The Postal Service is bound by the PRC's decision and must put into effect the rate change the PRC approves.

1-4 In-Office Cost System Readings

IOCS is the primary probability sampling system to distribute labor costs of clerks, mail handlers, city carriers, and supervisors to those employees' activities, particularly those activities relating to handling mail of all classes and rate categories and to providing extra services.

Although the Postal Service accounting system (the general ledger) shows the Postal Service's total costs, it does not indicate how the total costs relate to each specific class and subclass of mail, and to each extra service.

Further, while Postal Service timekeeping systems indicate the amount of labor time in each operation or work center, the systems do not indicate what types of mail the employees handle or the employees' specific activities in the various work centers. The IOCS sampling system provides details of activity data for clerk, mail handler, city carrier, and supervisor labor costs in Cost Ascertainment Grouping (CAG) A through L Post Office facilities and in special processing facilities. The IOCS sampling system does this by sampling a moment in an employee's work day and then estimating the proportions of that work time spent on various office functions. Some of these functions involve proportions of time spent handling or processing categories of mail. The time proportions distribute certain costs to each class and subclass of mail and to each special service. IOCS also indirectly provides data for certain nonlabor costs — such as mail processing equipment costs — related to sample labor activities.

For an IOCS reading, you observe a sample employee at a designated time within the employee's workday and record the employee's activity in the CODES software. Also, you record the characteristics of any mail or mail transportation equipment that the sample employee is handling during the reading.

2 Preparing for the In-Office Cost System Reading

2-1 Overview

The Postal Service schedules IOCS readings each pay period. For a reading, IOCS randomly selects a clerk, mail handler, city carrier, or supervisor listed for a sample site's finance number. Because Postal Service employees may work any day of the week and any hour of the day, the Postal Service schedules IOCS readings accordingly throughout the country — the Postal Service schedules approximately 550,000 readings each year.

HQ statisticians select a new IOCS sample each pay period. The sample indicates the employees to observe, the reading date and reading code for each sample employee, and the random time for each reading date.

This chapter describes the preparatory tasks for IOCS readings and how to complete them. It also introduces the many participants and policies relating to the data collection process.

2-2 Personnel

Conduct an IOCS reading with the help of the following personnel:

a. The MFPC.

b. The postmaster or designee.

c. The sample employee.

The process of the IOCS reading is a follows:

1. The MFPC first accesses the district's Readings Schedule, and then schedules and assigns the readings.

2. The MFPC may ask you to contact a sample reading site and verify that the sample employee is working for that finance number, identify where the employee is working, and verify the sample employee's start and end times on the reading date.

3. You are responsible for loading new samples onto the CODES laptop, determining sample employees' start and end times, and recalculating the scheduled reading time when a sample employee's schedule differs from that shown on the Readings Schedule Report. When you cannot conduct a reading within the appropriate time, notify the MFPC to reschedule the reading.

4.   Contact the postmaster or designee at the reading site by telephone and ask them your preliminary questions regarding a sample employee's scheduled start and end times. In cases when you conduct the IOCS reading by telephone, the postmaster or designee must accurately answer your questions regarding the sample employee's work activities and the characteristics of any mail that the employee is handling at the time of the reading.

2-3   Required Materials

To prepare for IOCS readings, obtain the following materials:

a.   A CODES laptop with fully charged battery pack.

b.   A scanner for all on-site IOCS observations.

c.   Current IOCS samples on the CODES laptop.

d.   The IOCS Readings Schedule Report.

e.   An electronic scale indicating pounds, ounces, and tenths of ounces.

f.   Copies of the following documents:

(1)   Handbook F-45.

(2)   Statistical Programs (SP) letters (available at *http://blue.usps.gov/finance/pricing/statistical-programs/references/sp-letters.htm*).

(3)   News items (available at *http://blue.usps.gov/finance/pricing/statistical-programs/news.htm*).

g.   The IOCS Reference Guide (RG) (available at *http://blue.usps.gov/finance/pricing/statistical-programs/references/reference-guides.htm*).

h.   A telephone (if conducting a telephone reading).

i.   A measuring tape for all on-site IOCS observations.

2-4   Required Tasks

2-4.1   **Overview**

To prepare for IOCS readings, perform the following tasks as necessary:

1.   Load new samples onto the CODES laptop at least once each pay period, or more frequently as the MFPC directs.

2.   Examine the IOCS Readings Schedule Report for information about the reading:

a.   Date, time, and reading code for the reading.

Note: The Reading Code indicates which reading interval to observe: the first (1), second (2), third (3), or last (L).

b.   Sample employee's name, Employee Identification Number (EIN), Post Office, roster designation, activity code, pay location, and scheduled start and end times.

3.   Determine the start time and end time for the sample employee, including any overtime.

4.   If the sample employee's schedule differs from the Readings Schedule Report, recalculate the scheduled reading time.

5.   Notify the MFPC when you miss a reading — the MFPC must reschedule a missed reading.

Parts 2-4.2 through 2-4.6 discuss the descriptions of your preliminary tasks and instructions, the respective purposes and background information, and the IOCS Readings Schedule and scheduling methods.

2-4.2   Loading New Samples Onto the CODES Laptop Computer

Before loading new readings into the CODES IOCS software, download IOCS samples from the CODES WBU onto the CODES laptop.

Load new samples onto the CODES laptop at least once per pay period, or more frequently as the MFPC instructs.

2-4.3   Preparing for Daily Readings

2-4.3.1   Overview

The sections in 2-4.3 explain the procedures for determining each sample employee's schedule, the procedures for recalculating the scheduled reading time (if the employee's schedule is different than that shown on the Readings Schedule Report), and what to do if you miss a reading.

2-4.3.2   Examining the Readings Schedule Report

The IOCS Readings Schedule contains information about the sample employee to determine when to take the reading. Compare the information on the Readings Schedule for each individual reading with the sample employee's actual schedule (including any overtime on the reading date) to determine whether or not to adjust the Readings Schedule.

Exception: If a reading is scheduled for a sample employee at a station, branch, or office that is not open on the reading day, call a day in advance to determine whether the employee is in a nonworking status on the sample day. Verify that the sample employee is working at the facility where you expect the employee to be on the reading day, rather than at a different facility. If the employee is in a nonworking status, enter this information into the laptop before the reading time.

You must understand the information on the Readings Schedule Report and the use of the report in IOCS readings. The IOCS Readings Schedule Report contains the following information:

a.   *Facility Finance Number, Cost Ascertainment Group (CAG), Office, ZIP Code, and Pay Location:* The finance number, CAG, office name, ZIP Code, and pay location where each sample employee is working.

b.   *Employee Identification Number (EIN) and Employee Name:* Each employee's EIN and name.

c. *Roster Designation and Activity Code:* The roster designation and activity code for each employee. This information indicates whether the sample employee is a clerk, mail handler, city carrier, or supervisor and whether this employee works full-time or part-time. See IOCS RG 3-1.10 for a list of roster designation and activity codes.

d. *Employee Start and End Times:* The start and end times for each employee. These times appear in military time and indicate when the sample employee is scheduled to work. Verify an employee's start and end times before the reading, and if there are changes to the employee's start and end times, recalculate the reading time (see 2-4.3.3). See IOCS RG 3-3 for details on converting among ordinary, military, and decimal times.

e. *Reading Code, Random Time, Reading Time, and Reading Date:* The reading code, random time, reading time, and reading date for each employee. The reading code indicates what reading interval to observe — the first (1), second (2), third (3), or last (L). See 2-4.3.4.3 for a definition of each of the reading codes. The random start time (random time) — i.e., the time at which the employee's shift begins — is the starting point for dividing the sample day into 2-hour intervals for conducting IOCS Readings Schedules. The reading time indicates the time to take the reading, according to the sample employee's scheduled start and end times — if the reading time does not match the employee's start and end times on the reading date, recalculate the scheduled reading time. The reading date indicates the day to take the reading.

    Note: For Tour II and Tour III employees, the reading date is the calendar day on which the sample employee's shift begins — but this might not be true for Tour I employees. For example, a Tour I employee reporting to work on Friday night at 22:00 hours is actually reporting for the employee's Saturday workday. If the Readings Schedule Report indicates that Saturday is the reading day, conduct the reading according to the employee's start time on Friday night (e.g., 22:00 hours) and end time on Saturday morning, (e.g., 06:30 hours). Conduct the first reading on Friday night, and conduct the second, third, or last reading on Saturday morning.

f. *Pay Period (PP) and Week:* The pay period (abbreviated "PP" on the report) corresponding to the reading date for each employee. Readings for multiple pay periods may appear on the Readings Schedule Report. The "Week" column displays either number "1" or "2," depending on which week within the pay period the reading is scheduled.

2-4.3.3 Determining the Sample Employee's Start and End Times

Verify the employee's schedule at the reading time. The MFPC may also request that you verify the employee's schedule several hours before the reading time — this helps to reduce the frequency of rescheduling readings. In such a case, verify the employee's schedule reading twice on the reading day — once in advance, and again at the time of the reading.

You can determine the sample employee's actual schedule from either the employee's supervisor or the Time and Attendance Collection System (TACS). The sample employee's schedule must reflect any overtime on the reading day.

The start time is when the employee is scheduled to report for duty. If the employee either does not report on time (within the 5-minute leeway, before or after the scheduled report time) or is working overtime before the scheduled reporting time, the start time is the time the employee reports for duty. The end time is the employee's scheduled time to end the tour of duty. This rule of thumb extends to guaranteed time. If the employee is paid guaranteed time, the end time is the employee's scheduled end time, even if the employee left work early.

If the employee has authorized overtime after the scheduled end time, the end time includes all authorized overtime.

If the employee is away on training and you cannot determine the employee's actual schedule, use the employee's regular schedule to determine start and end times.

Exception 1: If you verify early in the day that a sample employee is Terminated/Resigned/Retired or All Military/Continuation of Pay/OWCP for the entire day, enter this information in the laptop before the reading time. You do not need to check back before the scheduled reading time.

Exception 2: If the sample employee is Nonscheduled or scheduled for Annual Leave, Sick Leave, Loaned to Others, or Jury Duty for the entire day, you must confirm with the supervisor on the day of the reading that the employee is not scheduled to work at any time during that day. Enter this information into the laptop before the reading time. You do not need to check back at the scheduled reading time.

Exception 3: On the day after a holiday (other than a Sunday), if you determine from a supervisor or through TACS that on the holiday a sample employee was Nonscheduled or scheduled for Annual Leave or on Sick Leave, enter this information into the laptop without rescheduling the reading.

2-4.3.4 **Recalculating the Scheduled Reading Time**

2-4.3.4.1 **Overview**

Recalculate the scheduled reading time in the following situations:

a. When a sample employee's start time or end time on the reading day does not match the IOCS Readings Schedule.

b. When a sample employee's schedule changes.

c. When a rescheduled reading needs to be rescheduled again.

In order to determine the recalculated reading time, obtain the employee's new start time, end time, reading code and random start time for the day's readings.

There are two ways to recalculate the scheduled reading time — in CODES (see 2-4.3.4.2) or manually (see 2-4.3.4.3).

2-4.3.4.2   **Recalculate in CODES**

Do the following to recalculate the scheduled reading time in Codes:

1.   In the Header screen, select the Recalculate Reading Time button in the Conduct Reading screen.

2.   Enter the employee's new start time and new end time.

3.   Click the OK button.

The CODES software calculates the new scheduled reading time.

2-4.3.4.3   **Recalculate Manually**

Do the following to manually recalculate the scheduled reading time:

1.   *Divide the sample day into two-hour intervals:* Using the random start time from the IOCS Readings Schedule as a starting point, divide the sample day into 2-hour intervals. The random start time can be any time within the first 2 hours of the sample day, which starts at midnight.

      Example 1: If the random start time is 00:15 hours, the possible scheduled reading times are the following hours: 00:15, 02:15, 04:15, 06:15, 08:15, 10:15, 12:15, 14:15, 16:15, 18:15, 20:15, and 22:15 hours.

      Example 2: If the random start time is 01:29 hours, the possible scheduled reading times are the following hours: 01:29, 03:29, 05:29, 07:29, 09:29, 11:29, 13:29, 15:29, 17:29, 19:29, 21:29, and 23:29 hours.

2.   *Find the appropriate reading code:* Consult the IOCS Readings Schedule Report to determine which reading to take on the sample employee (the reading code is specified as 1, 2, 3, or L):

      a.   The first reading (1) is the scheduled reading time that is the first random time at or after the employee's start time.

      b.   The second reading (2) is the scheduled reading time that is the second random time after the employee's start time.

      c.   The third reading (3) is the scheduled reading time that is the third random time after the employee's start time.

      d.   The last reading (L) is the scheduled reading time that is the last random time before the employee's end time. The last reading code could correspond to either the fourth or fifth reading for an 8.5-hour day. If the reading time is within the last half-hour, it is reading five — otherwise, it is reading four. For an 8-hour day, the last reading always corresponds to reading four. For an employee working more than an 8.5-hour day and depending upon the employee's schedule, a last reading can be a sixth or seventh reading. The last reading cannot be the first, second, or third reading.

      For the following examples, suppose that the random start time is 00:15 hours:

      Example 1: If the employee's start time is 08:00 hours and a first reading is scheduled, the scheduled reading time is 08:15 hours, which is the first random time after the employee's start time.

Example 2: If the employee's start time is 08:00 hours and the end time is 16:30 hours (the employee works 8 hours with an additional half-hour lunch) and a last reading is scheduled, the scheduled reading time is 16:15 hours (corresponding to reading number five), which is the last random time prior to the employee's end time.

Example 3: If the employee's start time is 08:00 hours and end time is 16:00 hours and a last reading is scheduled, the scheduled reading time is 14:15 hours (corresponding to reading four), which is the last random time prior to the employee's end time. If you attempt to observe the sample employee at reading five (16:15 hours) and the employee has already left for the day, you have missed the reading and you must reschedule it.

Example 4: If the employee's regular shift is from 08:00 hours to 16:30 hours and a first reading is scheduled, but on the day of the reading the employee reports to work at 06:00 hours and works until 16:30 hours, the scheduled reading time is 06:15 hours, which is the first random time after the employee's start time. If you miss the reading, you must reschedule it.

2-4.4 Scheduling a Reading for Part-Time Employees

There may be instances when a part-time employee is scheduled for a third or last reading, but the employee is scheduled to work fewer than 8 hours. In such a case, treat the tour as if it were 8 hours — when a reading falls outside the employee's scheduled time, enter Nonscheduled for the reading in the Header screen.

2-4.5 Scheduling a Reading for CAG K or CAG L Employees

Usually, an employee at a CAG K or a CAG L office has a workday that extends to a maximum of 4 hours, often in split shifts. Although such employees are never scheduled for a third or last reading, you may miss a second reading if you use the normal procedures for calculating reading times. To avoid missing a reading at a CAG K or CAG L office, use the following procedures to calculate scheduled reading times:

1. Determine if the scheduled reading time falls within the sample employee's actual work schedule. If the sample employee's scheduled reading falls within the first half of that employee's shift, follow the procedures in 2-4.3.4.

2. If the sample employee's scheduled reading occurs between the split shifts (typically the second reading), add the random start time to the beginning time of the employee's second shift, using this time as the second scheduled reading time.

    Example: The sample clerk working in a CAG L office works from 10:00 hours to 12:00 hours and from 14:00 hours to 16:00 hours and has a reading in period 2 at random minute 01:14 hours. Because the sample clerk is not working at 13:14 hours (which would be the

scheduled reading time if not for the clerk's split shift), conduct the reading at 15:14 hours.

2-4.6 Notifying the MFPC When Rescheduling a Reading

If you do not conduct an IOCS reading within 30 minutes before or after the scheduled time, you must notify your MFPC.

Example: A reading is scheduled for 07:10 hours but you forget. When you check the reading at 07:45 hours, you discover that the employee was Nonscheduled all day — consequently, you must reschedule the reading.

A missed reading typically occurs when a sample employee's schedule differs from the Readings Schedule. In such a case, recalculate the scheduled reading time. If the current time is more than 30 minutes past the scheduled reading time, reschedule the reading. This happens most often when the employee is working overtime on a short notice. It may also happen when an employee is scheduled for a reading as follows:

a.   A first reading but has overtime before the employee's normal tour.

b.   A last reading but has scheduled overtime canceled.

Example: You arrive to take a last reading on an employee whose normal end time is 14:30 hours and whose last scheduled reading time is 12:59 hours. The employee's supervisor indicates that the employee is scheduled to work 1 hour of overtime, which changes the last scheduled reading time to 14:59 hours. Upon your return at 14:59 hours, the supervisor says that the employee's overtime was canceled and the employee left at the normal end time of 14:30 hours. The MFPC must reschedule this reading because the reading was not taken at either 12:59 hours or 14:59 hours.

The MFPC is responsible for rescheduling readings on the CODES WBU according to the procedures in Handbook F-95, *Statistical Programs Management Guide.* After rescheduling a reading, the MFPC either provides the rescheduled reading date or may ask you to load new samples to obtain that information. Annotate the IOCS Readings Schedule Report with the rescheduled reading date, which is normally 1 week after the originally scheduled reading date. When a Monday–Saturday reading is rescheduled during the last 7 days of a calendar quarter (January–March, April–June, July–September, or October–December), the rescheduled reading date may be any day except Sunday before the end of that quarter. If a Sunday reading is rescheduled, the MFPC must reschedule it to a Sunday. If it is not possible to take or reschedule a reading within the rescheduling guidelines, the MFPC must cancel the reading.

If new samples with the rescheduled information are not on the CODES laptop, recalculate the scheduled reading time by using the reading code of the original reading and the random time from any other reading on the new reading date. Determine this information either by checking the Readings Schedule or by contacting the MFPC.

To avoid rescheduled readings, coordinate with supervisory personnel to receive advance notice of the sample employee's schedule changes.

2-5 Time Conversions

In conducting IOCS readings, be aware of differences in how time is kept and shown in various reporting and clocking systems:

a. Postal Service facilities often have ordinary 12-hour mechanical clocks.

b. HQ SP personnel who design CODES reports and CODES software screens use 24-hour military time. See IOCS RG 3-3 to determine military time.

c. Postal Service timekeepers combine military time (for the hours) and decimal time (for the minutes) — e.g., 7:45 p.m. is 19.75 hours.

Use military hours and minutes for entering new scheduled and actual reading times and to respond to any IOCS questions. Military time records hours and minutes from 00:00 hours (midnight) to 23:59 hours (the last minute before midnight). Morning hours need no conversion and use a leading zero for hours before 10:00 a.m.; when calculating hours after 12:00 noon, add 12 to the time (e.g., 1:00 p.m. is 13:00 hours).

When referring to timekeeping systems for determining scheduled start and end times, you must know how to convert between standard time and military time in order to enter the appropriate information.

Example 1: According to the IOCS Readings Schedule Report, a sample employee is scheduled to report for duty at 07:00 hours (7:00 a.m.) and a first reading on the employee is scheduled at 07:38 hours (7:38 a.m.). An hour before the reading, you see in the timekeeping system (which as noted in 2-5c combines military time for the hours and decimal time for the minutes) that the employee is currently scheduled to start working at 07.50 hours — by converting the military-decimal time to standard time, you determine that the employee's scheduled start time is 7:30 a.m. (07:30 hours). Perform the reading as scheduled.

Example 2: According to the IOCS Readings Schedule Report, a sample employee is scheduled to report for duty at 15:00 hours (3:00 p.m.) and you are to take a third reading on the employee at 19:20 hours (7:20 p.m.). However, on the morning of the reading, you see in the timekeeping system (which as noted in 2-5c combines military time for the hours and decimal time for the minutes) that the employee is scheduled to start work at 12.75 hours — by converting the military-decimal time to standard time, you determine that the employee's scheduled start time is 12:45 p.m. (12:45 hours), not at 3:00 p.m. (15:00 hours) as noted on the Readings Schedule Report. You must then notify your MFPC that the reading is scheduled for 17:20 hours (5:20 p.m.). A first reading is at 13:20 hours (1:20 p.m.), and a second reading is at 15:20 hours (3:20 p.m.).

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3 Locating the Employee and Completing the Header Screen

3-1 Overview

Conduct an IOCS reading by first observing a sample employee at a specific time within the employee's workday and then record the sample employee's activity during the observation. Also, record characteristics of any mail or mail transportation equipment that the sample employee handles.

This chapter describes the procedures for locating the employee, observing that employee's activity, and isolating the mail to sample when appropriate. It also describes how to complete the Header screen, which consists of administrative questions about the reading and the sample employee.

Complete the following activities before conducting an IOCS reading:

1. Load samples on the CODES laptop at least once each pay period.

2. Verify the sample employee's work schedule.

3. Recalculate the reading time when the employee's work schedule changes.

3-2 Preparing for the Reading

3-2.1 Sampling Methods

Conduct an IOCS reading by using one of two sampling methods:

a. *On Location — the preferred method:* Physically observe the sample employee on-site.

b. *By Telephone — an alternative method:* Call the USPS facility where the sample employee is scheduled to work and ask either the employee's supervisor or someone else (telephone respondent) to observe the sample employee. The supervisor or telephone respondent is responsible for following your instructions and providing you with accurate responses to the IOCS questions.

In either case, record the details of the sample employee's activity in the CODES laptop. You are responsible for following all IOCS procedures to identify the sample employee, conduct the IOCS reading, and record the appropriate activity and mail characteristic information on the CODES laptop.

3-2.2 **Procedures**

To begin an IOCS reading, perform the following tasks:

1. Locate the sample employee, observe the employee's activity, and set aside the appropriate mail to sample. When conducting a telephone reading, call the facility where the sample employee is working.

2. Enter the Header screen information and verify the information about the sample employee, including the employee's schedule. If the actual schedule is different from the schedule in CODES, recalculate the scheduled reading time (see 2-4.3.4).

3-3 Understanding the Actual Reading Time

The actual reading time pinpoints the moment when you take a visual snapshot of an employee's activity. Ideally, match the actual and scheduled reading times; however, you might not always arrive at the exact scheduled reading time to observe the sample employee. If the reading is scheduled for 12:20 hours (12:20 p.m.) and you are able to observe the sample employee at 12:18 hours (12:18 p.m.), do not wait 2 minutes for the scheduled reading time. If the reading is scheduled for 12:20 hours (12:20 p.m.) and you are not able to observe the sample employee until 12:24 hours (12:24 p.m.), the actual reading time is 12:24 hours (12:24 p.m.).

The actual reading time is when either you or a telephone respondent can accurately and safely observe the sample employee's activity. This actual time must be as close as possible to the scheduled reading time. You must allow sufficient travel time to arrive in time to observe the sample employee's activity.

If the sample employee stops to ask what you are doing, tell the employee that you are conducting an IOCS reading and ask the employee to continue with the normal duties.

3-4 Using the 30-Minute Rule

The 30-minute rule allows you to take a reading within 30 minutes before or after the scheduled reading time. This rule is not for your convenience; rather, it provides leeway because the actual and scheduled reading times cannot always agree.

When multiple readings are scheduled for the same time, you can cluster the readings as closely as possible around the scheduled reading time.

Example: You have three Readings Scheduled at the same time, two for employees in the delivery barcode sorter (DBCS) area and one in the dock area. You might take the two readings in the DBCS area just before the scheduled reading time, and then proceed to the dock area for the third reading. Group the readings as closely as possible to the scheduled reading time.

You may never take a reading more than 30 minutes before or after the scheduled reading time. If the actual reading time would differ by more than 30 minutes before or after the scheduled reading time, consider the reading as a missed reading.

You must make every effort to find the sample employee and conduct the reading at the appropriate time. HQ SP uses statistical methods to determine the sample employees and the reading times for collecting data. In order to obtain statistically valid and unbiased results, you must follow all IOCS procedures. Good statistical data depends on you taking a reading on the randomly sample employee within the appropriate time frame.

3-5 Locate the Employee, Observe Activity, and Isolate Mail

3-5.1 Overview

The IOCS Readings Schedule Report provides information for locating the sample employee. This information includes the employee's name, EIN, facility finance number, city, state, ZIP Code, pay location, roster designation, and scheduled start and end times.

Before you take a reading, locate the sample employee and verify the employee's work schedule. There are two primary ways to do this:

a.   The MPFC or designee can log into TACS from the district office to verify the sample employee's actual start time and identify the pay location and operation number for where the sample employee is working.

   Note: Employees must submit an eAccess request to view information in TACS, and the local district functional system coordinator must approve this request. TACS is a useful but not a mandatory tool.

b.   Call the USPS facility where the sample employee is working to verify this information.

Before the employee's start time, verify the employee's work schedule to help reduce rescheduling rates. During the reading, verify the employee's actual start time and scheduled end time.

Once you know where the employee is working, you can conduct the reading either on-site or by telephone, as described in 3-5.2 and 3-5.3, respectively.

3-5.2 On-Site Readings

3-5.2.1 Overview

Conducting a reading on-site is the preferred method of taking IOCS readings. In this method, you are on-site to perform readings within the test facility or adjacent buildings. Determine where the sample employee is working by either checking TACS (if you have access) or asking a supervisor, and then go to that employee's work location. If the sample employee is not

there, continue searching until you find the employee or until a supervisor says that the employee is either on break or not clocked in — remember that you have up to 30 minutes to locate the employee and complete the reading. If the employee is on break while being paid, record that the employee is on break. If the employee is not clocked in and is not present (as verified with the supervisor), record the reading as a NONSCHEDULED STOP reading. If the employee is clocked in (as verified with the supervisor or TACS) but you cannot locate the employee within 30 minutes before or after the scheduled reading time, reschedule the reading.

Immediately record all IOCS data in the CODES laptop, referring to the instructions in 3-6 to begin recording the reading information.

3-5.2.2 Observe the Sample Employee

Observe the sample employee when you can meet both of the following conditions:

a.   You are close enough to identify the sample employee.

b.   You are able to safely isolate any mail or mail transportation equipment the employee handles.

When you can meet both of these conditions, observe what the employee is doing and record this activity for the reading. The CODES software directs you through a series of questions where you record the details of the activity, including the employee's work assignment and the operation the employee is clocked into.

3-5.2.3 Isolate the Appropriate Mail

Generally, set aside for sampling the appropriate mail — the appropriate mail might be every form, mailpiece, bundle of mail, or mail container that the sample employee physically handles during the observation, or it might be just one mailpiece. For example, if the employee is working in a cancellation operation, automation or mechanized operation, letter processing operation, or flats mail processing operation where mailpieces are available, set aside the first-available mailpiece from the machine's source of supply. If no mail is available from the source of supply, select the mailpiece closest to the employee's right hand. Specific rules for selecting and recording mailpiece or container information are available in the CODES software. The rules for carriers are different than for clerks or mail handlers.

3-5.3 Telephone Readings

3-5.3.1 Overview

For a telephone reading, call the sample employee's work location and ask the supervisor for an employee who can assist with Statistical Programs readings. If neither the sample employee's supervisor nor an employee who can assist with Statistical Programs readings is available, ask if someone else, preferably a supervisor, can assist you with the reading.

When you reach a telephone respondent, read the IOCS questions and instructions to the respondent over the telephone to complete the reading. Similar to on-site readings, the telephone respondent must observe the

sample employee when the respondent can meet both of the following conditions:

a. The respondent is close enough to identify the sample employee.

b. The respondent is able to safely isolate any mail or mail transportation equipment the employee handles.

Follow all CODES software instructions, policies, and procedures for conducting telephone readings.

The following are acceptable conditions for conducting a telephone reading:

a. When an on-site reading is not possible. For example, hazardous weather conditions may prevent you from going to a station, branch, or associate office, or you may have two Readings Scheduled at the same time at locations that are far apart.

b. When you expect the total time for traveling, locating the employee at the facility, taking the reading, and returning to the normal duty site exceeds 60 minutes.

c. When you cannot reach the sample employee at the employee's work location at the scheduled reading time.

3-5.3.2 Starting a Telephone Reading

To start an IOCS reading by telephone, follow these instructions:

1. *Identify yourself:* As soon as someone answers the telephone, identify yourself as a Statistical Programs data collector from the local or district office.

2. *Speak with the employee's supervisor or an IOCS respondent:* Ask to speak with the sample employee's supervisor and say that this is an IOCS telephone reading. If the employee's supervisor is not available, ask for someone else to help conduct the reading. The sample employee for the IOCS reading can be the respondent only if no other employee is available.

3. *Explain the purpose of the call:* (Complete this task if this is the first time contacting the respondent — if you've contacted them before, skip to step 4.) If the respondent is unfamiliar with the purpose of IOCS, explain the purpose and also the importance of gathering accurate IOCS data to distributing the labor costs of clerks, mail handlers, city carriers, and supervisors to the employee's activities (particularly those relating to handling mail of all classes and rate categories, as well as extra services). Explain that HQ SP uses IOCS information to develop proposals for new postal rates, assist in budget preparation, and conduct management studies. Inform the respondent that the MFPC may monitor the call and that there are penalties for falsification of data.

4. *Ask if there are any questions:* Ask if the respondent understands the explanation or has any questions, and then identify the sample employee for the reading.

3-5.3.3 **Gather Information for the Header Screen**

Ask the respondent for any information necessary to complete the Header screen and record it. Verify and, if necessary, change the reading information. This task includes verifying the employee's start and end times, including any overtime, and recalculating the reading time if the employee's schedule changes.

If the sample employee is not clocked into an operation, the End Reading screen appears. Complete the reading and proceed to 3-5.3.4, step 5.

3-5.3.4 **Record the Observation**

Ask the respondent to observe the sample employee and to provide information. If the sample employee is handling mail at the time of the reading, the respondent must have access to a scale in order to complete the reading. Ask the respondent if it is better to move to a different telephone, and if so, to do so immediately.

If the respondent is the sample employee, have the sample employee respond to the IOCS questions according to the employee's activity just before the call.

Note: Never influence the respondent's answers. For example, do not ask the respondent to get a mailpiece from the sample employee because the employee may not be handling mail during the reading.

Use the following steps to explain what the respondent must do to complete the reading:

1. *Determine the appropriate information based on the sample employee's job:*

    a. If the sample employee is a supervisor, you need to know the following:

        (1) The type of facility where the supervisor is working.

        (2) The operation that the sample supervisor is clocked into.

        (3) The supervisor's activity, including the categories of employee(s) the supervisor's activity involves, or for whom the supervisor is responsible.

        (4) The activities the supervisor's employees are performing.

    b. If the sample employee is a city carrier, you need to know the following:

        (1) If the employee is clocked into either an office or a street-time activity, and if the employee is on the premises or not.

        (2) The route assignment for the carrier.

        (3) What the carrier is doing.

        (4) Details about any forms, mailpieces, or containers that the carrier is handling.

    c. If the sample employee is a clerk or mail handler, you need to know the following:

(1) The Management Operating Data System (MODS) or the Time and Attendance Collection System (TACS) code the employee is clocked into.

(2) If the employee is on the premises or not.

(3) The operational area assignment for the employee.

(4) The employee's specific activity.

(5) Details about any forms, mailpieces, or containers the employee is handling.

2. *Continue with the reading:* Read through the IOCS questions as they appear on screen, recording the respondent's answers. Read each question as it appears, and follow the flow of the CODES software to avoid influencing the respondent's answers. You may deviate from the flow of questions in the CODES software in any of the following circumstances:

a. If the respondent either does not understand the question as you read it, or responds in a way demonstrating misunderstanding, you may rephrase the question in a way that the respondent better understands.

b. If the respondent were to answer the question during a previous answer, you may paraphrase the script to confirm that the previous question's answer is correct.

c. If the question has either many options or long options, you can substitute a nonleading general question for which the respondent can provide complete information.

   Example: Please read everything in the indicia area or read all markings on the mailpiece.

3. *Complete the reading:* After the respondent has answered all of the activity and mail characteristics questions, review the data and complete the reading.

4. *Ask for additional information:* Ask the respondent for any additional information to complete the reading, and then record the information.

5. *Complete the call:* Thank the respondent for taking the time to help complete the IOCS reading.

3-6 Complete the IOCS Header Screen and Verify Employee Information

3-6.1 Overview

When you begin recording data for an IOCS reading, the CODES software displays or requests administrative information about the reading and the sample employee. This subchapter describes how to verify, change, and enter that administrative data in the Header screen. Verify or obtain the Header screen information with the sample employee or the supervisor.

3-6.2   **Choose the Appropriate Sample Employee**

Select a reading from the Conduct Reading screen and navigate through the list until you see the reading for the sample employee on the reading date (the Status column is blank).

3-6.3   **Verify or Change the Reading Information**

Once you select a reading in the Conduct Reading screen, the CODES software automatically fills in the relevant fields in the Header screen. Verify that this screen lists the correct employee in the Scheduled Employee box.

Note: When the Header screen is complete and the CODES software continues to the next screen, you cannot navigate back to the Header screen. If you discover an error after this point, abort the reading and start the reading over.

3-6.4   **Complete the Header Screen**

3-6.4.1   **Overview**

The following sections describe each field in the Header screen in order of appearance, along with instructions for making any necessary changes.

3-6.4.2   **Scheduled Employee**

Verify that the sample employee's EIN and name match the EIN from the IOCS Readings Schedule Report. If not, press the Escape button and return to 3-6.2 to select the appropriate employee.

3-6.4.3   **Reading Date**

If the Reading Date is different from the current system date on the laptop, the CODES software displays an error message. If you are conducting a rescheduled reading, you might need to edit the Reading Date field to correspond to the rescheduled date. This is the only time that you may modify the Reading Date information.

When you enter the current date, a prompt appears and asks if the reading is rescheduled. Click on the Yes button to indicate that the reading is rescheduled. The Change Employee Start and End Times screen appears, allowing you to recalculate the reading time (see 2-4.3.4). If you indicate that this is not a rescheduled reading, reenter the current date in the Reading Date field.

Exception: When you record stop readings for Holidays on the day following the Holiday, you may conduct the reading on a day other than the Reading Date — in such a case, do not edit the Reading Date field.

Exception: If you verify early in the day that a sample employee is Terminated/Resigned/Retired or All Military/Cont. of Pay/OWCP for the entire day, you may enter this information into the laptop before the reading time. You need not check back before the scheduled reading time.

If the sample employee is Nonscheduled or is scheduled for Annual Leave, Sick Leave, Loaned to Others, or Jury Duty for the entire day, confirm with the supervisor on the day of the test that the employee will not work at any

time during that day. You may enter this information into the laptop before the reading time. You need not check back before the scheduled reading time.

3-6.4.4 Pay Period (PP)

The PP field represents the original scheduled pay period for the reading. The original scheduled pay period always remains the same — even if the reading is rescheduled many times, this field does not change.

If the displayed pay period is not current, verify that you have selected the appropriate reading in the Conduct Reading screen. Because you may load on the laptop sample information for two pay periods, an employee may be scheduled for more than one reading during that two-pay-period span. Compare the information on the IOCS Readings Schedule Report to the Conduct Reading screen to ensure that the appropriate reading is selected. If the information does not match, press the Escape button and return to 3-6.2 to select the proper reading.

3-6.4.5 Actual CAG

A remotely managed Post Office facility (RMPO) has a different CAG than its administrative Post Office facility (APO). Record the CAG of the office where the employee is working at the time of the reading.

3-6.4.6 Actual Finance Number

Record the finance number of the office where the employee is working at the time of the reading.

Exception: If the employee is working at an office that does not share the same lead finance number or APO, record the Paid/Unpaid Status as Loaned To Others or Transferred, as applicable. There is no need to update the actual finance number.

3-6.4.7 Scheduled Reading Time

The data field displays the Scheduled Reading Time, which is in the IOCS Readings Schedule information on the laptop. Verify the sample employee's actual start and end times, including any overtime hours, and compare them to the IOCS Readings Schedule Report. If the employee's start time or end time differs from the Readings Schedule, select the Recalculate the Reading Time button to display the Change Employee Start and End Times screen to recalculate the time (see 2-4.3.4). If the Scheduled Reading Time is not correct because the reading is rescheduled or because the sample employee's hours differ from the actual time, change the Scheduled Reading Time to the recalculated time.

3-6.4.8 Actual Reading Time

This field automatically displays the current system time on the laptop when the reading starts. If the Actual Reading Time is not correct, enter the correct reading time.

The Actual Reading Time must be within 30 minutes before or after the Scheduled Reading Time. If the Actual Reading Time is more than 30 minutes before or after the Scheduled Reading Time, a warning message

appears to indicate that there is a 30-minute-rule violation. Press the OK button — this highlights the Actual Reading Time field. Correct the Actual Reading Time if necessary, and when the Warning box appears for starting the scheduled IOCS reading outside the 30-minute rule, provide an explanation or reason in the Remarks field.

3-6.4.9 **Sample Method**

Choose which method you use to conduct the reading — either On Location or By Phone.

3-6.4.10 **Respondent Name**

When you select By Phone as the sample method, enter the respondent's name in the Respondent Name field (enter the respondent's last name first). As you enter the name, a display of similar names opens in a table below the field. The arrow keys allow you to move down to the appropriate name and to select it by pressing either the Tab or the Enter key, and the CODES software fills the Respondent Name field with that selected name. If the respondent's name is not available in the drop-down list, type the correct name into the Respondent Name field. When you enter the respondent's name in the Header screen, the CODES software automatically populates the End Reading screen.

3-6.4.11 **Paid/Unpaid Status**

The Paid/Unpaid Status field appears as a drop-down menu. From that menu, choose the appropriate Paid/Unpaid Status option according to the situation at the reading time. The following are the possible options:

1. *Clocked In (Not Clocked to Lunch):* Choose this option if the sample employee is working and is on the clock.

    Note: If the sample employee is an exempt supervisor working at the time of the reading, choose this option to record the time even if clock rings indicate otherwise.

2. *Clocked to Lunch:* Choose this option if, at the time of the reading, the sample employee is clocked on a scheduled lunch break or is a nonexempt craft employee working while clocked out to lunch.

    Note: As always, try to match the actual reading time with the scheduled reading time. In a reading near the employee's lunch time, start the reading before the lunch break but not after the employee has begun lunch (even if the actual starting time would be within the allowed 30-minute window). For example, if a reading is scheduled on an employee for 11:45 a.m. and the employee's scheduled lunch time begins at 12:00 noon, make every effort to locate the employee and conduct the reading before 12:00 noon.

3. *Nonscheduled:* Choose this option if the sample employee is not scheduled to work and is not at work at the time of the reading. Do not choose this option for an employee who is at lunch, even though the employee is not receiving pay while on a lunch period — in that case, choose the Clocked to Lunch option.

Example: You have a reading on a sample employee who is part-time and who works only 4 hours a day. A third reading is scheduled for this employee, but the employee's shift is complete at the time of the reading. Enter Nonscheduled.

Do not enter Nonscheduled if the employee's schedule changes and is working on the day of the reading. If the employee's scheduled start and end times change, recalculate the scheduled reading time and take the reading according to the employee's new scheduled start and end times.

4. *Annual Leave:* Choose this option if the sample employee is on annual leave at the time of the reading.

5. *Sick Leave:* Choose this option if the sample employee is on sick leave at the time of the reading.

6. *Loaned to Others:* Choose this option if the sample employee is temporarily working at a unit with a different lead finance number than the lead finance number for the unit listed in the IOCS sample file. Treat an APO finance number as the lead finance number for all RMPO's under the APO.

   Example: Post Office Alpha (lead finance number: 590100) is a CAG G office that has two stations, ALP-A1 (590101) and ALP-A2 (590102). It is also the APO for a CAG K RMPO (590175). Post Office Beta (lead finance number: 590200) is a separate CAG H office that has one station, BET-B1 (590201). Window clerk Xandra is scheduled for sampling, and the IOCS sample file lists the finance number as 590101 (ALP-A1). If Xandra is working at any of the facilities managed by Post Office Alpha — i.e., at 590100, 590101, 590102, or 590175 — then Xandra is not Loaned to Others. Using the same example, if Xandra is working at any of the facilities managed by Post Office Beta — i.e., at 590200 or 590201 — then record Xandra as Loaned to Others. To summarize: When conducting the reading, be sure to record the finance number and CAG of the unit where the sample employee is working.

7. *Guaranteed Time:* Choose this option if the employee receives pay even though the employee went home early per the supervisor and is off the clock before the end reading time.

   Example 1: A part-time clerk is guaranteed 4 hours of work. If the part-time clerk completes the assignment and is sent home after 3.5 hours, the remaining 30 minutes are guaranteed time. If you take a reading on this clerk during those 30 minutes, choose Guaranteed Time.

   Example 2: A full-time clerk is working overtime on a scheduled off-day and is guaranteed 8 hours of overtime pay. If the employee is sent home after 5 hours because there is no work, the remaining 3 hours are guaranteed time. When a reading is scheduled for this employee during those 3 hours, choose Guaranteed Time.

8. *5-Minute Leeway Time (FLSA) [Fair Labor Standards Act]:* Choose this option if the 5-Minute Leeway Time (FLSA) applies at the time of the reading, either at the beginning or end of the employee's work schedule. This leeway time allows for congestion at time clocks and other conditions that might cause delays in clocking in or out. This rule

allows a full-time or part-time regular employee to clock in up to 5 minutes before or after the employee's scheduled start time. An employee may also clock out up to 5 minutes early or late. Although this category applies to full-time or part-time regular employees, it does not apply to flexible or noncareer employees.

The 5-minute leeway rule allows an employee only 5 minutes total leeway time for the entire day. The Postal Service does not expect you to know at the reading time whether or not the employee exceeds the 5-minute allowance.

Example 1: A reading on a regular employee is scheduled for 08:02 hours. The employee is scheduled to report to work at 08:00 hours. At 08:02 hours, the employee is either waiting to clock in or is just coming in and has not yet clocked in. In either case, choose 5-Minute Leeway Time (FLSA).

Example 2: A first reading is scheduled for 09:59 hours on a regular employee, whose start time is 08:00 hours and who clocked in at 07:56 hours. The four minutes before the 08:00 hours start time is 5-minute leeway time. Do not change the first reading to 07:59 hours because the start time did not actually change. Instead, take the first reading at 09:59 hours. No rescheduling is necessary.

Example 3: A last reading is scheduled for 16:26 hours on a regular employee whose end time is 16:30 hours and who clocked out at 16:25 hours. Because the five minutes before 16:30 hours is 5-minute leeway time, choose 5-Minute Leeway Time (FLSA).

9. *All Military/Continuation of Pay/OWCP:* Choose this option if the sample employee's absence is due to service in the National Guard, due to service as a reservist of the Armed Forces, or due to a disabling, job-related injury.

10. *Jury Duty/Court Leave:* Choose this option if the sample employee's absence is due either to jury duty or to attendance in a judicial proceeding in a nonofficial capacity as a witness.

11. *Other Paid Leave:* Choose this option only if the sample employee is receiving administrative leave, holiday leave, blood donor leave, relocation leave, act-of-God leave, wounded warrior leave, or any other paid leave that is not individually identified in the CODES software drop-down menu.

12. *Terminated, Resigned, or Retired:* Choose this option if, on the reading day, the sample employee is terminated, has resigned, or is retired.

13. *Transferred:* Choose this option if, on the reading day, the sample employee has a permanent assignment to another facility under another finance number.

Exception 1: If an employee's finance number does change but the employee is continuing to perform exactly the same job assignments as before, complete the reading as scheduled.

Exception 2: Do not choose this option for an employee who works among stations belonging to one parent Post Office (e.g., pool clerks or

substitutes), even if the employee changes both facility and finance numbers.

14. *Leave Without Pay (including Union Leave):* Choose this option if the employee does not report to work and does not request annual, sick, or other leave for the day. If you receive other appropriate and relevant information regarding the employee's leave status at the reading time, you may choose another appropriate option.

    Note: Union Leave falls under Leave Without Pay.

15. *Split Shift:* Choose this option if the employee works a split shift and is scheduled for more than one start and end time within a 24-hour period.

    Exception 1: Do not choose this option for a CAG K or CAG L clerk who is between shifts and is not on the clock at the reading time.

    Exception 2: Do not choose this option if an employee's schedule includes a 2-hour lunch break, which is not considered a split-shift. In such a case, choose Clocked to Lunch.

    Example: A split-shift employee's work schedule is 07:00 hours to 11:00 hours and 13:00 hours to 17:30 hours. If the random start time on the reading day is 00:59 hours and it is a first reading, the employee's scheduled reading time is 08:59 hours. If the reading is a second reading, the employee's scheduled reading time is 10:59 hours. If it is a third reading, the scheduled reading time is 12:59 hours — however, because of the split shift, the employee is not on the clock for the third reading. This is the only situation for which you choose this option. If there is a last reading available, the scheduled reading time is 16:59 hours. If a first, second, or last reading is scheduled, conduct a normal reading on the employee's activity.

3-6.4.12 **Roster Designation and Activity Codes**

The roster designation appears along with the activity code. Use these fields to determine whether the reading involves a clerk, mail handler, city carrier, or supervisor. See IOCS RG 3-1.10 for roster designation and activity codes.

You can see the employee's roster designation and activity codes in the IOCS Readings Schedule on the laptop. Because IOCS generates the sample several weeks in advance, the roster designation and activity codes may change by the scheduled reading time. Therefore, verify the employee's current roster designation and activity codes, and record changes if they differ from those codes appearing in the screen.

Note: A roster designation or activity change occurs when a supervisor asks an employee to clock in to a MODS operation of a different craft than that in the IOCS Readings Schedule for that employee.

Even though the employee's rate of pay may not change, update the roster designation to reflect the craft to which the employee is assigned. Use IOCS RG 3-1.10 to identify the roster designation of the assigned craft that is most similar to the employee's base.

Example 1: A supervisor in a delivery unit is on detail to another facility. An IOCS reading is scheduled on a craft employee who is serving as acting

supervisor in the regular supervisor's absence. When this employee's normal roster designation appears in the Header screen, change the employee's roster designation to 09 to reflect the sample employee's position at the reading time.

Example 2: An IOCS reading is scheduled on a carrier on light or limited duty who is working as a clerk. When this employee's normal roster designation appears in the Header screen, change the carrier's roster designation to record the current work assignment at the reading time using the similar employee type column for the new employee category (e.g., 13-4 becomes 11-0, 43-4 becomes 41-0, 84-4 becomes 81-0).

Conduct IOCS readings for clerks, mail handlers, city carriers, or supervisors only — exclude all other crafts. If the IOCS software does not initially include the roster designation, the CODES software continues to the End Reading screen, where you can enter a roster designation.

3-6.4.13 Title

Once you verify or enter the roster designation and activity codes, see the appropriate designation or activity text in the Title field. The screen also displays the employee's craft, but you cannot edit this field.

3-6.4.14 Occupation Title

For a supervisor reading, the screen automatically displays the occupation title. If you change the roster designation from its initial value to "09" or "19," or if the occupation title is incorrect, ask the employee for the appropriate occupation title and record the title.

3-7 Continue the Reading

Record and verify all information in the Header screen. If the employee's Paid/Unpaid Status is Clocked In (Not Clocked to Lunch), the CODES software moves to the appropriate question.

If, at the time of the reading, the sample employee does not report for work and the supervisor does not know how to charge the employee's time, enter the best-available information at the time of the reading.

Example: You learn that the employee is receiving leave without pay, so that is what you enter as the best-available information. However, the supervisor later grants the employee sick leave or annual leave — but because you did not know this at the time of the reading, the entry of Leave Without Pay is correct.

If the sample employee is in a paid/unpaid status and is not clocked in (Not Clocked to Lunch), the CODES software proceeds to the End Reading screen.

If you are unable to conduct the reading, abort the reading and return to the IOCS Main Menu screen. When you abort a reading, the CODES software will not save modifications made to the Header screen information.

4 Activity Questions for Supervisors and Other Technical Personnel

4-1 Overview

After you enter the administrative data in the Header screen, the CODES software asks a series of questions about the sample employee. These questions are based on the sample employee's roster designation shown on the Header screen.

This chapter describes how to answer IOCS questions when conducting a reading on a supervisor, an acting supervisor, or another technical employee, such as an analyst, specialist, or administrative employee working in other noncraft positions at the time of the reading. (USPS technical personnel may work in administrative or professional support functions.) These employees have a roster designation of "09" or "19." Refer to employees with one of these roster designations as "supervisors."

When you conduct a reading, the CODES software asks a series of questions regarding the following topics:

a. The type of facility where the employee is working.

b. The operation where the sample employee is clocked.

c. The supervisor's activity, including the category of employees that the supervisor's activity involves or for which the supervisor is responsible.

d. The work assignment of the supervisor's employees.

4-2 Facility Type

Record the type of facility or work area in which the sample employee is working at the time of the reading. Sometimes, two or more facility types are in the same building — for example, some customer service work areas are inside mail processing offices. In these situations, select the facility that describes where the employee is working. See IOCS RG 3-5 for facility types.

4-3   Operation Number

Record the 3-digit MODS or TACS operation number or code to which the sample employee is clocked to at the reading time. Always enter the code that the employee is clocked to at the reading time, regardless of whether the description from the MODS operation numbers list is consistent with the employee's assignment or actual activity at the reading time.

However, leave this question blank if you encounter any of the following conditions:

a.   If the facility does not have an electronic timekeeping system.

b.   If the employee is not clocked to an operation.

c.   If you cannot obtain the proper code.

If you bypass this question during the reading because you do not know what code to enter but can obtain this information later, the CODES software allows you to enter or change the operation number code in the End Reading screen.

4-4   Supervisor's Activity

4-4.1   **Overview**

Observe the supervisor to determine if the supervisor's activity involves employees. If a supervisor's activity does not involve employees at the time of the reading, enter information about the employee(s) for whom the supervisor is responsible, either directly or indirectly.

A supervisor's activity involves employees if the supervisor performs any of the following tasks:

a.   Has face-to-face contact with another employee.

b.   Observes the work of one or more employees.

c.   Performs work that directly relates to employees, such as signing or completing forms.

If the supervisor is not engaging in one of these activities, the supervisor's activity does not involve employees.

Example 1: A sample window clerk supervisor signs a clerk's leave slip (PS Form 3971, *Request for or Notification of Absence)* — this activity involves employees.

Example 2: A sample window clerk supervisor talks with a customer — this activity *does not* involve employees.

If the sample supervisor is not directly or indirectly responsible for any craft employees (typically technical or administrative personnel), and the activity does not involve any craft employees, record the operational area where the employee's activity occurs.

4-4.2 Activities With Craft-level Employees

Determine whether the sample supervisor's activity involves working with or observing craft-level employees for which the supervisor is responsible.

Example 1: A sample platform supervisor is on the dock observing mail handlers on the platform operation as they unload a vehicle — this activity involves craft-level employees.

Example 2: A sample station manager observes a carrier casing mail at the reading time — this activity involves craft-level employees.

Example 3: A sample carrier supervisor talks to a vehicle service driver — this activity *does not* involve craft-level employees.

4-4.3 Activities With Other Supervisors

Determine whether the sample supervisor's activity involves another supervisor. A supervisor is an employee whose roster designation is "09" or "19." For this question, the reporting relationship between the two supervisors does not matter. Observe and determine if the sample supervisor's activity involves another supervisor.

Example 1: A sample carrier supervisor speaks to the station manager — this activity involves another supervisor.

Example 2: A sample carrier supervisor speaks to the postmaster — because a postmaster's roster designation is "08," this activity *does not* involve another supervisor.

Example 3: A sample manager of distribution operations reviews the mail condition report — this activity *does not* involve another supervisor.

4-4.4 Activities With Subordinate or Reporting Managers

Determine whether the other supervisor reports to the sample supervisor, either directly or through intermediate supervisors. To answer this question, ask the sample supervisor if the other supervisor is the subordinate manager (i.e., the manager who reports to the supervisor) or the reporting manager (i.e., the manager to whom the supervisor reports).

Example: You are conducting a reading on a station manager who is talking to a carrier supervisor at the station — the carrier supervisor reports to the station manager.

4-5 Categories of Craft-level Employees

4-5.1 Overview

The CODES software asks a series of questions to identify the category, or combination of categories, of craft-level employees working under the supervisor's activity, through either direct involvement or responsibility, or indirect responsibility through the subordinate supervisor.

Choose the appropriate category of craft-level employees from the following list offered by the software:

a.   Clerks and/or Mail Handlers.

b.   Carriers.

c.   Clerks and/or Mail Handlers AND Carriers.

d.   Other Craft-Level Employees.

Choose Clerks and/or Mail Handlers AND Carriers only if the supervisor is responsible for both craft categories and if, at the time of the reading, the supervisor's activity is not working specifically with one or the other craft.

Example 1: If a supervisor of city carriers prepares an overtime request for one city carrier, choose Carriers.

Example 2: If a supervisor of vehicle service drivers signs PS Form 3971 for one of the drivers, choose the option for other craft-level employees.

Answer subsequent questions depending on the activities of the specific employees that the supervisor's activity involves.

4-5.2 Carriers

If the sample supervisor activity involves city carriers, rural carriers, or both, or if the sample supervisor is responsible for city carriers, rural carriers, or both, the CODES software asks a series of questions to determine the type of delivery the carriers are performing.

Example 1: When you are taking a reading on a supervisor of city carriers and rural carriers, the supervisor talks to a rural carrier at the reading time — this activity involves rural carriers.

Example 2: When you are taking a reading on a station manager, the station manager, at the time of the reading, discusses something with a delivery supervisor of both city and rural carriers — the activity of the subordinate supervisor (i.e., the delivery supervisor) involves both city and rural carriers.

Example 3: When you are taking a reading on a supervisor who is responsible for city carriers and rural carriers, the supervisor, at the time of the reading, does not deal directly with any of those craft-level employees — choose the option for both city and rural carriers because the supervisor is responsible for both groups of carriers.

Example 4: When you are taking a reading on a supervisor of clerks and city carriers, the supervisor, at the time of the reading, talks to the carrier supervisor about city carrier activities for the day — choose the option for city carriers.

Example 5: When you are taking a reading on a supervisor of delivery and collection whose activity does not directly involve any craft-level employee at the time of the reading, the supervisor talks with the rural carrier supervisor — choose the option for rural carriers.

4-5.3 **Clerk/Mail Handler Operational Area**

If the sample supervisor activity involves clerks or mail handlers, or if the sample supervisor is responsible for clerks or mail handlers, the CODES software asks a series of questions to identify the operational areas of those employees. See IOCS RG 7-1 for clerk and mail handlers activities.

4-5.4 **Other Craft-level Employees**

If the sample supervisor activity involves other craft-level employees (such as vehicle service, maintenance service, etc.) or if the sample supervisor is responsible for other craft-level employees, select all applicable employee types.

4-6   No Craft-Level Employees

The CODES software asks a series of questions to identify the activities performed by the supervisor's employees who are not craft-level employees. To answer these questions, choose all applicable options that best describe what the supervisor is doing at the time of the reading. You may use the supervisor's job title as a guide for choosing the correct options, unless the supervisor is working in another area. If the supervisor is performing an activity that is not in the list, select None of the Above and specify the supervisor's activity at that time. See IOCS RG 4 for examples relating to categories of craft-level employees.

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5 Activity Questions for City Carriers

5-1 Overview

After you enter the administrative data on the Header screen, the CODES software asks a series of questions about the sample employee. These questions are based on the sample employee's roster designation shown on the Header screen.

This chapter describes how to answer IOCS questions when conducting a reading on an employee with a roster designation of "13," "33," "43," "63," "83", or "84" and an activity code of "4." Refer to employees with one of these roster designations as "city carriers."

In city carrier readings, activity questions and instructions focus on the following:

a.   Clocking status (in-office or on-street).

b.   Work location (on premises or not).

c.   Training status (involved in training or not).

d.   Information about the route assignment.

e.   Mailpiece availability (available or not).

f.   The carrier's specific activity at the time of the reading.

g.   Information about lunch.

5-2 Clocking Status

IOCS collects different types of information for city carriers when they are in-office or on-street. Answer a series of questions to determine whether the carrier is completing activities relating to in-office or on-street activities.

Determine whether the sample carrier is clocked into the office or into a street operation. Because the response to this question relates to the operation number that the carrier is clocked into, you must ask the sample carrier (or have the respondent ask in telephone readings) if the carrier is currently clocked into an office or street activity.

If the sample carrier is not available or if you are otherwise unsure, ask a supervisor or the telephone respondent to check the timekeeping system to determine if the operation the carrier is clocked into indicates an office activity or a street activity.

5-3   Work Location

The CODES software asks a series of questions to identify whether the sample carrier is on the premises at the reading time, regardless of whether the employee is clocked into an office activity or a street activity.

Consider the sample carrier as working on the premises if the sample carrier is anywhere in the facility or in the immediate area outside the facility, such as the loading dock or carrier vehicle area. For carriers on vehicle routes, ensure that the carrier's vehicle is not in the parking lot before indicating that the sample carrier is off the premises.

A carrier may be clocked into a street activity but still remain on the premises. For example, after loading the vehicle, the carrier may push a hamper back into the building or may address a customer's inquiry at the window.

Similarly, a carrier may be clocked into an office activity but not be on the premises. For example, a carrier could be clocked into an office activity when sorting mail at a distant location in a Vertical Improved Mail (VIM) room.

Do not assume that a carrier is not on the premises simply because you cannot find the sample carrier. You must consult with a supervisor to help determine if the sample carrier is working off the premises.

5-4   Training Status

The CODES software asks a series of questions to identify whether the carrier's activities at the reading time involve training. If the sample carrier is giving or receiving training at the time of the reading, indicate whether the training involves a specific route.

5-5   Information About the Route Assignment

5-5.1   **Overview**

If the carrier is not participating in training activities, the CODES software asks a series of questions to identify whether the carrier is completing activities related to the route.

Indicate whether the sample carrier is working on a specific route at the time of the reading. A route may or may not have a route number. See IOCS RG 5-3 for route types.

Example: The sample carrier is out of the office delivering mail on an Express Mail route — this sample carrier is working on a specific route.

If the sample carrier is not working on a specific route at the time of the reading, determine if the sample carrier is assisting another carrier. If the carrier is not assisting another carrier and is not on the premises, review and complete the reading.

5-5.2 **Route Identification**

Obtain the city carrier's route number and ZIP Code, answer questions to validate the route information, and answer questions about the carrier's route: If the carrier is not working on a route but is assisting another carrier, answer the questions relating to the route of the carrier who is receiving assistance; if the carrier is participating in training for a specific route, answer the questions according to that route.

If available, enter the carrier's 3-digit route number and 5-digit ZIP Code. If the respondent provides a 4-digit number during a telephone reading, enter a leading "0" and the last two digits of the 4-digit number. If the sample carrier is delivering multiple relays from different routes, identify the route number that the carrier is most likely delivering at the time of the reading. If there is no route number available at the reading time for the route, leave the field(s) blank.

Note: Some offices deliver mail to multiple ZIP Codes. Be sure to enter the ZIP Code corresponding to the carrier route, not the office location.

Example: The sample carrier is assisting another carrier on route 17, zone 2 at the Main Post Office in Fairfax, VA, 22030 — enter "017" for the carrier route number, and enter "22032" for the route ZIP Code.

5-5.3 **Route Information Not Found in AMS File**

5-5.3.1 **Overview**

When the route number and ZIP Code combination does not match the information in the AMS file, you must obtain from the carrier's supervisor additional information about the route (i.e., route type, transportation type, and number of deliveries). HQ statisticians use this information to categorize the route for costing purposes. Answer these questions according to the carrier's route: If the carrier is on a particular route but is assisting another carrier, answer the questions according to the other carrier's route; if the carrier is participating in training that is specific to a route, answer the questions according to that route.

If the city carrier is working with Express Mail or Express Mail delivery, record the operation number that the sample carrier is clocked into.

The following sections describe the questions relating to route information.

5-5.3.2 **Route and Post Office ZIP Codes Match**

If the route ZIP Code is the same as the Post Office ZIP Code, the CODES software asks you to validate this information. This data quality check verifies that you do not accidentally record the Post Office ZIP Code instead of the route ZIP Code.

5-5.3.3 **Route Type**

After you enter the route information, the CODES software attempts to find the same route number and ZIP Code combination in the AMS file on the CODES laptop computer. If the route number and ZIP Code combination that you enter is not in the AMS file, describe the type of route to which the carrier

is working. Choose the appropriate route type regardless of whether it is a regular or an auxiliary route.

Note: Generally, you can obtain the route type by asking the carrier supervisor. To determine the route type for city delivery routes, use PS Form 1621, *Delivery Management Report,* which shows the number of possible business and residential deliveries for the test route. This form is available in hardcopy at the delivery unit. See IOCS RG 5-3 for route types. To learn how to access this information online, ask the MFPC for assistance.

5-5.3.4   **Transportation Type**

Indicate what type of route the city carrier is working. See IOCS RG 6-2 for transportation types.

5-5.3.5   **Number of Deliveries**

Record the total number of deliveries by each category in the CODES software. The carrier's supervisor can generally provide this information. If not, you can obtain or direct the supervisor to obtain PS Form 1621, which shows the number of possible business and residential deliveries for the test route.

If the number of curb deliveries you enter is higher than the total number of deliveries in the software, the CODES software displays a warning message and prompts you to check for the correct information.

5-6   Mailpiece Availability

The CODES software asks a series of questions that focus on whether the sample carrier is handling mail, Postal Service forms, or equipment with mail. If the carrier is handling such items, you (or the telephone respondent in a telephone reading) must obtain the appropriate mailpiece or form — the one closest to the sample carrier's right hand.

Note: Although every effort is made to obtain the appropriate mailpiece or form, situations might arise when you are unable to do so. If you are unable to obtain the appropriate mailpiece or form, do not substitute another mailpiece or form.

5-7   Carrier's Activity

The CODES software asks questions regarding the carrier's activity (e.g. casing mail, loading vehicle, handling empty equipment, etc.). The specific options vary depending on whether or not the carrier is handling mail and is at the carrier's work location. Observe the carrier and select the option in the CODES software that best describes what activity the carrier is doing at the time of the reading. If the carrier is not handling mail, choose the first option that best describes what the carrier is doing at the time of the reading. See IOCS RG 6-3 for carrier activities.

5-8   Information About Lunch

You cannot directly observe a carrier who is on the street at the time of the reading. Therefore, IOCS relies on information about the carrier's scheduled lunch period to identify off-the-clock lunch time.

If the carrier is not on the premises, ask the supervisor about the scheduled time for lunch and whether the carrier takes lunch on the street. A city carrier working an 8-hour day may waive the lunch period while on the street — in this instance, the carrier is not taking lunch while out on the street. If the supervisor is unsure, enter Unknown as the appropriate response.

If the scheduled lunch times are known, enter start and end times for the lunch period using the 4-digit military time format. See IOCS RG 3-3 to determine military time.

Normally, a city carrier's start and end lunch time totals less than 45 minutes. If the scheduled lunch time exceeds 45 minutes, the CODES software displays a warning message and prompts you to provide an appropriate response.

If the carrier does not have a scheduled lunch time and the route information is found in the AMS file, review the data and complete the reading.

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6 Activity Questions for Clerks and Mail Handlers

6-1 Overview

6-1.1 Types of Employees

After you enter the clerk or mail handler data on the Header screen, the CODES software asks a series of questions about the sample employee. These questions are based on the sample employee's roster designation shown on the Header screen.

This chapter describes how to answer IOCS questions when conducting a reading on the following employees:

a. An employee with a roster designation of "11," "21," "31," "41," "61," or "81" — refer to employees with one of these roster designations as "clerks."

b. An employee with a roster designation of "12," "32," "42," "62," or "82" — refer to employees with one of these roster designations as "mail handlers."

In clerk and mail handler readings, activity questions and instructions focus on the following:

a. Facility information.

b. Operation number and work status.

c. Work assignment and actual performed activities.

6-1.2 Required Information

After recording the appropriate roster designation in the Header screen, enter the following information:

a. *MODS/TACS operation number:* This is the 3-digit MODS operation number from TACS or another timekeeping system at the facility. Record the correct operation number that the sample employee is clocked into, regardless of the actual work the sample employee is performing at the time of the reading. The CODES software compares this operation number with the operation number in MODS.

b. *Work assignment:* The work assignment describes the operation in which the sample employee is working. The work assignment might differ from the operation that the sample employee is actually clocked into. Determine and record the actual work assignment, regardless of

the clocked operation and the sample employee's activities you observe.

Example: You observe a mail handler who is working in a dispatch operation in the DBCS operation at the reading time — this employee's work assignment is the dispatch operation, not the DBCS operation.

c.   *The sample employee's activity you observe:* Most operations involve various activities. Employees may also temporarily engage in activities that are not normally part of the work operation, without moving to a new assignment or operation number.

6-1.3   Specific Questions

The specific IOCS questions you answer during a clerk or mail handler reading vary, depending on the type of facility, the employee's work assignment, the employee's specific activity at the reading time, and whether the sample employee is a clerk or mail handler. See IOCS RG 3 for information on completing the Header screen.

In conducting a clerk or mail handler reading, the CODES software asks a series of questions regarding the following topics:

a.   The type of facility or work area where the sample employee is working.

b.   The operation that the sample employee is clocked into, the employee's work status, and whether or not the employee is on the premises.

c.   The type of operation where the sample employee is working.

The following subchapters discuss information about each question and the procedures for answering clerk and mail handler activity questions.

Note: The order of questions in the CODES software might not necessarily correspond with the order in this handbook. Some questions are different for employees working in network distribution centers (NDCs), and the CODES software indicates these questions with the suffix "NDC."

6-2   Facility Information

6-2.1   Overview

Record the type of facility or work area where the sample clerk or mail handler is working at the time of the reading. The following sections describe the questions that identify the type of facility or work area.

6-2.2   Type of Facility

In the CODES software, select the option that best describes the type of facility or work area where the sample employee is working at the time of the reading.

Sometimes two or more types of facilities are in the same building — for example, some customer service work areas may be within mail processing offices. In these situations, select the option that describes the work area where the sample employee is working rather than the facility type location of the work area. See IOCS RG 3-5 for facility types.

6-2.3 **Annex**

Employees working in an annex perform functions that are a part of the main plant's processing activities. Answer a series of questions to determine whether the sample employee is working in an annex. Typically, but not always, annexes are in buildings separate from the main plant but still under the main plant finance number. However, the following facilities *are not* annexes: an official NDC, an air mail center (AMC), or a Priority Mail processing center (PMPC).

Example 1: You are taking a reading on a clerk who is working in finance number 123456 and, at the time of the reading, is keying on the small parcel and bundle sorter (SPBS) in a Priority Mail annex 4 miles from the main office — regardless of the annex's finance number, this employee's work area is at an annex.

Example 2: You are taking a reading on a mail handler who is an NDC employee, is working in the main NDC building, and is breaking down trays of letters on the main platform — this mail handler is working at an NDC, not at an annex.

6-3 Operation Number and Work Status

6-3.1 **Overview**

The sections in this subchapter provide specific information about the operation number that the sample employee is clocked into and the work status of the sample employee.

6-3.2 **MODS Operation Number**

Ask the sample employee (or have the respondent ask in telephone readings) the 3-digit operation number that the sample employee is clocked into. If the sample employee is momentarily unavailable (such as in the rest room) or if the operation number is unknown, check the timekeeping system or ask a supervisor to determine the operation number. If the operation number has more than three digits, record the first three (left-most) digits.

Always enter the operation number that the sample employee is clocked into at the time of the reading, even if the description from the MODS lookup list does not match the sample employee's assignment or actual activity at the time of the reading, because not all facilities use the MODS operation definitions. However, leave this question blank if the facility does not have an electronic timekeeping system, if the employee is not clocked into an operation, or if you cannot obtain the proper code.

Because the CODES software allows you to enter or change the code in the End Reading screen, you can bypass this question during the reading (for example, if you do not know what code to enter but can obtain the information later).

6-3.3 ## Work Status

6-3.3.1 ### Overview

From the following descriptions, choose the option that best describes the sample employee's status at the time of the reading:

a. *Working (On the Clock):* The sample employee is clocked in and is not on break, clocking in, clocking out, or moving between operations at the time of the reading.

    Note: If the sample employee is moving between operations at the time of the reading, enter "Other" at the specific activity question and specify this in the text box.

b. *On Break/Personal Needs:* The sample employee is clocked in and is on an official break, is washing up, or is on some other appropriate absence from the work area. Include all time from the moment that the sample employee leaves the work area until the sample employee returns to the work area to resume work as On Break/Personal Needs time. When the sample employee is On Break/Personal Needs, answer all subsequent questions according to the sample employee's activity immediately before the On Break/Personal Needs time.

c. *Clocking In or Out (BT/ET/OL/IL):* The sample employee is clocking in or out for the Begin Tour (BT), End Tour (ET), Out to Lunch (OL), and In from Lunch (IL) ring types. Clocking in or clocking out includes the time when the sample employee travels between the time clock and the work area, and any time while waiting in line to use the time clock.

    Note: This option is *not* appropriate if the sample employee is not yet clocked in or has already clocked out. You might need to recalculate the reading time, to reschedule the reading time, or to record the option for the 5-minute leeway in the Header screen.

If the sample employee is clocking in or out, review the data and complete the reading.

6-3.3.2 ### On the Premises

Consider the sample employee as on the premises once you locate the employee anywhere in the facility or in the immediate area outside the facility, including the loading dock or the parking lot. If the sample employee is working at a detached mail unit (DMU), record the sample employee as on the premises.

Do not assume that an employee is not working on the premises simply because you cannot locate the employee. You must consult with a supervisor to help determine if the sample employee is working off the premises.

6-3.3.3 **Off the Premises**

If the sample employee is on-duty and working off the premises, record the sample employee as *not* working on the premises.

If the sample employee is not on the premises, choose the option that best describes the type of work the sample employee is performing off the premises.

Example: You are attempting to locate a clerk for a scheduled reading, and the clerk's supervisor informs you that the clerk is out of the office on an Express Mail run at the time of the reading. Record the employee as working off the premises.

When the employee is receiving training at a facility other than the employee's normal work facility, record the employee as working off the premises.

6-4 Work Assignment and Actual Performed Activities

6-4.1 **Overview of Assigned Operational Areas**

The remaining sections in this chapter pertain to the sample employee's work assignment and the actual activities the sample employee is performing at the time of the reading.

Because of the wide variety of possible operational assignments and activities of interest for each assignment, the questions in CODES start at a general level with follow-up questions according to your responses.

In this section of the CODES software, identify the general operational area where the sample employee is working. Different questions appear depending on where the sample employee is working — either in a delivery work area or in a mail processing work area.

When answering questions, select the response that best describes the sample employee's work assignment at the time of the reading. Consider an assignment as the operational area where the sample employee is working. In some instances, an employee might work in multiple areas over the course of the employee's shift. In these situations, make sure you choose the option that corresponds to the employee's assignment at the time of the reading.

Base all responses on the sample employee's actual assignment, whether or not the assignment matches the description of the operation number that the sample employee is clocked into or the specific activity the sample employee is performing.

If the sample employee is moving between assignments at the time of the reading, answer all relevant questions according to the assignment to which the sample employee is moving. If the sample employee is on break or is attending to personal needs, answer all relevant questions according to the sample employee's assignment immediately before the break.

Because the answer to one question can determine what questions follow, it is important that you understand what range of operations each response encompasses. In addition to studying the guidelines throughout this chapter,

familiarize yourself with the CODES software and the flow of questions branching from each of the options. See IOCS RG 7-1.1 and RG 7-1.2 for operational activities.

6-4.2 **Platform and Mail Transport Operations**

Identify the specific platform (dock) or mail transportation work assignment, and choose the first category that describes the sample employee's work assignment at the time of the reading. Also, identify the sample employee's specific activity. For activities involving separating and breaking down mail, dumping or inducting mail, or sack shakeout, specify whether the mail is outgoing or incoming. There are different questions for NDCs and other mail processing facilities. If the sample employee is completing activities involving specific vehicles, you must answer a series of questions that the CODES software asks about the vehicle:

a. Indicate whether the vehicle is inbound (arriving at the facility) or outbound (departing the facility).

b. Determine if the vehicle is a highway contract route (i.e., when a contractor is transporting mail by highway between points of a route serving the Postal Service). If in doubt, check the vehicle route number, which is available from the dock expediter — the Postal Service operates Vehicle Service (VS) routes, so if the route number ends in "VS," it is *not* a highway contract route. Enter the 5-digit numerical route number for the highway contract route — if the highway contract route number is not immediately available, leave the route number field blank, and you may enter the contract route number later in the End Reading screen.

c. Describe the originating location of an inbound vehicle or the final destination of an outbound vehicle. You may want to ask the dock expediter or driver for this information.

d. Determine the Load Type and how the mail is on the vehicle — i.e., whether the mail is containerized or bedloaded:

    (1) *Containerized.* The mail is in wheeled containers or in containers on pallets.

    (2) *Bedloaded.* The mail is in sacks, trays, or parcels placed individually on the vehicle floor.

    Note: A vehicle might have both containerized and bedloaded items at the same time.

From a list of options in the CODES software, select the type of equipment the sample employee is using to load or unload items, to or from the vehicle. If the sample employee is manually pushing a container without using any powered or mechanical equipment, choose None/Manual Transport. See IOCS RG 27 for platform and mail transport operations.

6-4.3 **Collection, Cancellation, and Mail Preparation Operations**

Identify the sample employee's specific collection, cancellation, or mail preparation work assignment and the specific activity the employee is

performing at the time of the reading. If the sample employee is working in a Cancellation or Preparation Unit, describe the type of operation in which the employee is working at the time of the reading. If there are no options that describe what the sample employee is actually doing at the time of the reading, select Other to specify the employee's activity and provide a description of the activity. See IOCS RG 28 for collection, cancellation, or mail preparation work.

6-4.4 ## Accountable Mail Operations

Identify the specific accountable mail operation in which the employee is working. If the sample employee is working in an operation other than Registered Mail, business reply, or postage due, identify the specific activity the sample employee is performing. Select the option that best describes the employee's work assignment and the employee's actual activity at the time of the reading. See IOCS RG 29 for accountable mail operations.

6-4.5 ## Automation or Mechanized Mail Processing

The CODES software asks a series of questions to determine whether the sample employee is working in an automation or mechanized mail processing operation. Specify the type of equipment on which the employee is working, the type of sort scheme or sort plan in use on the distribution equipment at the time of the reading, and the employee's activity. If the sample employee is not working at an NDC, choose the option that best describes the type of automation or mechanized equipment in the operation in which the employee is working. See IOCS RG 8 for automation and mechanized mail processing equipment.

Some types of equipment are able to process several types of mail, such as parcels and bundles. When answering automation or mechanized mail processing questions, base the responses on the type of equipment, not the type of mail being processed on the equipment.

Occasionally, an automation or mechanized machine is idle (not running) or is running solely for maintenance or cleaning purposes. Respond as follows when CODES asks, "Is mail being processed through the machine?":

a.   Respond Yes if the machine is operating for purposes of processing mail or is *not* running because of a temporary jam.

b.   Respond No if the machine is idle (not running) or is running solely for maintenance or cleaning purposes.

Example 1: You observe the sample employee taking stacks of letters from the DBCS machine and placing them into letter trays on carts for dispatch (i.e., "breaking down the machine") — in this instance, the DBCS machine is idle and is not processing mail. If the sample employee is working at an NDC and is working with letter or flats processing equipment or with parcel or bundle sorting equipment, specify the type of sorting equipment in use at the employee's operation.

Note: Generally, individual NDCs do not sort letters or flats, but the NDC might possess and use sorting equipment to sort mailpieces that are loose from bundles, letter trays, or flats tubs. Also, some NDCs may

make arrangements to sort letters or flats for local mail processing facilities. If the machine is not processing mail, indicate whether there is any mail in the machine or waiting nearby for processing.

Example 2: The sample employee is working at an NDC and is dumping mail onto the Small Parcel and Bundle Sorter (SPBS) induction belt, but the machine is not running — in this instance, the machine is not processing mail, but the mail is staged nearby for processing.

Depending on whether the sample employee is working in an NDC or not, describe the sort plans or distribution schemes running on the automation or mechanized distribution equipment. See IOCS RG 8-1 for sort plans and distribution schemes.

6-4.6 Manual Distribution Activities

If the sample employee is working in a manual distribution operation, the CODES software asks a series of questions to gather information about activities relating directly to the manual distribution of letters, flats, and/or parcels. See IOCS RG 8-2 for distribution activities.

The CODES software asks different questions depending on whether the sample employee is working in an NDC facility or not. Identify the type of mail processing in the manual distribution operation in which the sample employee is working.

a. If the sample employee is not working at an NDC, choose the first applicable option to describe the type of manual distribution operation in which the employee is working at the time of the reading.

    Note: If the sample employee is working in an Express Mail or Priority Mail operation, select Express Mail or Priority Mail. If neither is applicable, select one of the remaining options.

b. If the employee is working at an NDC, indicate the primary type of mail processing in the operation in which the employee is working at the time of the reading. Choose the first applicable option. See IOCS RG 18 for determining shapes.

Most NDCs maintain separate operations for the distribution of nonmachinable outsides (NMOs). NMOs include large parcels that have greater dimensions or weights than those acceptable for machinable parcels. NMOs may include the following:

a. Articles not in boxes (such as tires).

b. Articles in metal, wood, or metal-strapped boxes.

c. Parcels containing hazardous materials.

d. Rolls longer than 26 inches.

e. High-density parcels.

6-4.7 **Other Mail Processing Operations**

If the sample employee is working in other mail processing operations, the CODES software asks different questions depending on the type of facility or work area in which the employee is working. The questions apply to mail processing facilities or work areas only, and exclude NDCs, Post Offices, stations, and branches.

Select the option that most closely describes the operation in which the employee is working at the time of the reading. Although the CODES software options include typical MODS operation numbers, select the employee's actual assignment rather than the clocked in operation number. Examples of other mail processing operations are Nixie, Empty Equipment Section, and Damage Repair/Rewrap. See IOCS RG 8-2 for distribution activities.

6-4.8 **Bulk Mail Acceptance Activity**

The CODES software asks questions relating to activities involving the acceptance and verification of bulk mail. An employee typically performs this work as part of the business mail entry unit or at a detached mail unit (DMU). Choose the option that most closely describes the activity or the operation in which the sample employee is working. Indicate whether the employee is at the DMU and is waiting for mail or waiting on a customer. Unless the reading is on-site at the DMU, call the DMU to obtain this information.

6-4.9 **Window Service and Other Retail Activities**

The CODES software asks for information about the specific activities employees perform as part of the retail or window unit within a postal facility. Choose the option that best describes the window activity that the sample employee is performing at the time of the reading. See IOCS RG 30 for window service and other retail activities.

If the sample employee's activity involves postage, specify the first applicable type of postage from the options in the CODES software. For example, if the customer is purchasing pre-stamped envelopes at a retail window, choose Plain Stamped Envelopes as the type of postage.

6-4.10 **Administrative Activities**

Administrative activities include working with claims and inquiry, time and attendance, accounting and auditing, data collection, procurement, training, quality control and revenue protection, general office work, and union business. Select the category that best describes the employee's activity at the time of the reading. See IOCS RG 31 for administrative activities.

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7 **Handling Mail Questions**

7-1   Overview

After you enter data about a sample employee's activity at the reading time, the CODES software asks a series of questions about the mail or the mail containers that the employee is handling. (If the employee is *not* handling mail at the reading time, note that in the CODES software.) The CODES software asks different questions for city carriers than for clerks or mail handlers. This chapter describes how to answer IOCS questions about any mail or equipment that the sample employee is handling.

An employee is considered to be handling mail or a container in the following situations:

a.   Holding one or more loose mailpieces or Postal Service forms.

b.   Holding or moving one or more bundles, sacks, trays, or other containers (whether or not mail is in the containers).

c.   Manually pushing a container.

d.   Moving one or more containers using mechanized transport equipment, such as a pallet jack, forklift, or tow motor.

If none of these situations apply, do not consider the employee to be handling mail or a container. In particular, do not consider the employee to be handling mail or a container if at the reading time the employee is just *monitoring* the operation of any automation or mechanized equipment (e.g., barcode sorter, flats sorting machine, or sack sorter) but not actually handling the mail being processed on the equipment, even if the machine is processing mail.

The term "mailpiece" refers to mail matter of any class, subclass, shape, rate category, or other characteristic. The term "mailpiece" also refers to a key or identification item that has a full return address along with instructions to return the item to that address and a statement guaranteeing payment of postage due on delivery.

Note: Do not consider a key or identification item *without* a full mailing address to be a mailpiece.

Note: Do not consider a package from a competitor (FedEx, UPS, etc.) as a mailpiece, and if the sample employee handles such a package, do not consider the employee to be handling a piece of mail.

Consider the terms "equipment" and "containers" to be interchangeable and to mean wheeled mail containers, pallet boxes, pallets, sacks, trays, tubs, and other types of mail containers.

The mail-related information necessary from a reading depends on the operation and activities that the sample employee is performing — e.g., whether the sample employee is handling mail or container(s) and the types of mail or containers that the employee is handling at the time of the reading. The CODES software prompts you to enter the appropriate information.

The procedures for collecting information about the handling of mail or equipment are different for a city carrier reading than for a clerk or mail handler reading, as follows:

a. For a city carrier reading, perform the following tasks:

(1) Answer a series of questions regarding the type of mail or mail container that the sample employee is handling.

(2) If the carrier is handling a container, determine if the mail in the container is identical.

(3) See IOCS RG 9 for collecting information about the mail or equipment that a sample city carrier is handling.

b. For a clerk or mail handler reading, perform the following tasks:

(1) Identify the type of mail or equipment that the sample employee is handling at the time of the reading:

(a) If the employee is handling mail or equipment, isolate the appropriate mail or container, and in certain circumstances, select a mailpiece.

(b) If the employee is handling a container, record information about the container and determine if the container consist of identical mail.

See 7-2 for instructions for isolating the appropriate mail or container, selecting a mailpiece or form when appropriate, and identifying and recording what the employee is handling.

(2) If a container (other than a bundle, letter tray, or flats tub) contains nonidentical mail, record information about the container's contents.

(3) If the clerk or mail handler is *not* handling mail and is working in an automation or mechanized sorting operation, obtain a mailpiece from the operation and record the information about that mailpiece.

7-2 Handling Mail or Equipment

7-2.1 Overview

After you answer questions about the sample employee's activity, answer a series of questions about any mail or equipment that the employee is handling at the start of the reading. See IOCS RG 9 for container types.

If the employee is handling mail or equipment containing mail, isolate the appropriate mail or container, and in certain cases select a mailpiece. You must also select a mailpiece if you indicate that the employee is not handling mail but is working in an automation or mechanized distribution operation

with mail at the machine. If the employee is handling a container, record information about the container and determine if it contains identical mail.

7-2.2   ## Isolate the Appropriate Mail or Container

The CODES software prompts you to isolate the appropriate mail or container for sampling. In some instances the CODES software also instructs you to select a mailpiece. In order to minimize the disruption to mail processing, transportation, or delivery operations, isolate only the mail or container necessary to complete the reading, and release any other mail or equipment.

Rules I-1 through I-9 here in 7-2.2 are for *isolating* the appropriate mail, whereas Rules S-1 through S-4 in 7-2.3 are for *selecting* the appropriate mailpiece. Use the first applicable rule.

Note: The CODES software integrates these rules and provides you with the appropriate instruction based on your responses to various IOCS questions.

1. *Rule I-1:* If the employee is handling a single mailpiece or a single Postal Service form, select that mailpiece or form.

2. *Rule I-2:* If the employee is handling multiple loose mailpieces or multiple loose Postal Service forms in one hand, select the top mailpiece or form from that hand. If the employee has loose mailpieces or forms in both hands, select the top piece from the right hand.

3. *Rule I-3:* If the employee is handling a form that is a postage statement, locate the mail along with the postage statement, and select one mailpiece from that mailing.

4. *Rule I-4:* If the employee is handling a single bundle, a single sack or pouch, or a single container of any other type, isolate that bundle, that sack or pouch, or that container.

5. *Rule I-5:* If the employee is handling multiple wheeled containers, pallets, or pallet boxes only, isolate the wheeled container, pallet, or pallet box that is closest to the employee.

    Note: Do not consider a container empty if it contains other empty containers such as empty sacks, trays, or tubs.

6. *Rule I-6:* If the employee is handling multiple bundles, isolate the bundle closest to the employee's right hand.

7. *Rule I-7:* If the employee is handling multiple containers from one of the following types, isolate the container that is closest to the employee's right hand:

    a.   Small parcel trays.

    b.   Flats trays, tubs, boxes, or buckets.

    c.   Letter trays.

    d.   Sacks or pouches.

    e.   CON-CONS.

    f.   Other nonwheeled containers.

8. *Rule I-8:* If the employee is handling any other combination of wheeled containers, pallets, pallet boxes, and/or other containers, isolate the

item that is closest to the employee's right hand. Also, isolate all other loose mail (i.e., mail that is not in or on a wheeled container, pallet, pallet box, or other container) that the employee is handling.

9. *Rule I-9:* If the employee is not handling mail, Postal Service forms, or any type of mail container, and is working in an automation or mechanized letter or flats processing operation with mail present, obtain the first available mailpiece from the machine's source of supply. If the machine is not processing mail but mail is nearby for processing, isolate the mailpiece from the staging area closest to the employee's right hand. If no mail is available at the source of supply or its staging area, select the piece of mail from the machine that is closest to the employee's right hand. If you are unable to obtain a mailpiece from the machine, select the piece of mail near the machine that is closest to the employee's right hand.

If the sample employee is not handling mail, you must review the data and complete the reading.

See IOCS RG 10-2 for isolation rules. If you isolate a nonempty container of mail, answer the questions to identify the type of container, the container contents, container label information, and whether or not it contains collection mail.

Note: Collection mail is mail from a collection box or lobby drop, as well as outgoing mail that letter carriers collect on their routes.

7-2.3 Selecting the Appropriate Mail or Container

Depending on your responses, obtain an individual mailpiece and record information about that mailpiece. The following rules determine whether you must obtain an individual mailpiece, and if so which mailpiece to select. Based on your responses to questions concerning the bundle or container, the CODES software prompts you with the appropriate rule(s):

1. *Rule S-1:* For identical mailpieces or forms, select any one mailpiece or form. Consider mail as identical if all of the mailpieces have the same mail class, subclass, shape, size, postage, and approximate weight. It is not necessary for the mailpieces to have the same origin or destination address. If there is only one mailpiece in the container, choose Identical Mail. Consider multiple forms of the same type identical as well.

2. *Rule S-2:* If you isolate a bundle, orient the bundle with an address side up and select the top mailpiece.

3. *Rule S-3:* If you isolate a letter tray, select the first mailpiece from the end of the tray with a destination label. If there is no destination label on the tray, select the first mailpiece with the address side facing out.

4. *Rule S-4:* If you isolate a flats tray, tub, box, or bucket, select the top mailpiece. If the mailpieces are not all facing the same way, select the first mailpiece from the side of the tray with the destination label.

If none of the above selection rules applies, do not select an individual mailpiece from the mail. Isolate this mail until you finish recording the

information about the mail. See IOCS RG 10-2 for isolating rules and IOCS RG 10-3 for selection rules.

If the employee is keying pieces or containers in a mechanized operation, do not attempt to take that specific piece. Instead, take the next available piece of the same type from the machine's ledge or feeder.

7-2.4 Noncountable Container Contents (Q21G1)

This section describes the information necessary for containers other than bundles, letter trays, and flats trays or tubs, when the select container is not empty and contains mixed (nonidentical) mail. In general, if the select container is not empty and does not contain identical mail, you must record all information about the contents of the container. The type of information you record is different for wheeled containers and combinations of containers than other single containers.

In the CODES software, click on the corresponding field and enter the percentage of the container space taken up by each mail category and container type. The CODES software calculates the total percentage. If the container is not full, the sum of the item percentages must be less than 100.

If the software asks you about the employee handling a combination of loose mail, pallet boxes, bundles, and/or other containers in addition to a wheeled container, treat all of the mail as if it were in the wheeled container. If the employee is handling a combination of loose mail and/or containers excluding a wheeled container, treat all of the mail as if it were in one large wheeled container.

If you isolate empty sacks, trays, tubs, or other empty containers within the container, record the percentage of space that each takes up by its respective category.

If the container includes several containers of various categories, but you cannot determine the percentage of the container taken up by a particular category, enter in the CODES software the letter corresponding to the item type to select the appropriate field.

Example 1: The employee is moving a hamper. One-half of the hamper contains bundles, and one-fourth contains flats trays. The container is three-fourths full. Select Bundle(s) and enter 50; select Flat Tray(s) and enter 25. The program calculates the information and displays a total of 75%.

Example 2: The employee is moving an all-purpose container containing empty orange sacks and half-filled with letter trays. Select Orange or Yellow and enter 50; select Letter Tray(s) and enter 50. The program calculates the information and displays a total of 100%.

Example 3: The employee is moving a hamper that you observe to contain a mixture of letter-shape and flat-shape pieces, but you cannot separate the pieces to determine the respective proportions. Select Loose Letter(s) and press F2; select Loose Flat(s) and press F2.

Example 4: The employee is holding loose letters in one hand and a green sack of mail in the other. The loose letters are one-fourth the size of the sack. Select Loose Letter(s) and enter 25; select Green and enter 75. The program calculates the information and displays a total of 100%.

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8 Mailpiece Characteristics Questions

8-1 Overview

After you enter data about the mail that the sample employee handles, select a mailpiece or USPS form. The CODES software asks a series of questions to collect information about the following characteristics of the selected mailpiece or the type of form:

a. Shape.

b. Weight.

c. Returned, forwarded, or otherwise undeliverable as addressed.

d. Destination.

e. Indicia and postage.

f. Mail class and rate markings.

g. Origin.

h. Barcode information.

i. Facing Identification Mark and reply mail markings.

j. Extra service markings.

k. Foreign destination.

l. Foreign origin.

Answer only the questions that apply to the characteristics of the selected mailpiece — for example, if the selected mailpiece is not undeliverable (item c) or does not have an extra service (item j), a foreign destination (item k), or a foreign origin (item l), do not answer those questions.

Note: For a damaged mailpiece enclosed in a USPS transparent cellophane envelope, record information/characteristics from the original mailpiece inside the envelope. Do not record the USPS transparent cellophane envelope as a USPS mailpiece.

8-2 Shape Information

8-2.1 Overview

Subchapter 8-2 provides information to help you gather shape information about the sample mailpiece, key, or identification item.

8-2.2 Shape of Mailpiece

Categorize sample mailpieces in an IOCS reading into one of five shape definitions:

a. Card.

b. Oversize card.

c. Letter.

d. Flat.

e. IPP/Parcel.

Note: "IPP" is an abbreviation for "irregular parcel or piece."

f. Key or identification Item.

The first five definitions primarily relate to the physical dimensions of the mailpiece. As shown in Exhibit 8-2.2, the length is the longer dimension of the mailpiece's address side (regardless of the address orientation), the height is the shorter dimension, and the thickness is the dimension perpendicular to the length and the height. If the mailpiece has uniform thickness, measure thickness anywhere along the edge; if the mailpiece does not have uniform thickness, measure thickness at the thickest point.

Exhibit 8-2.2
Mailpiece Dimensions
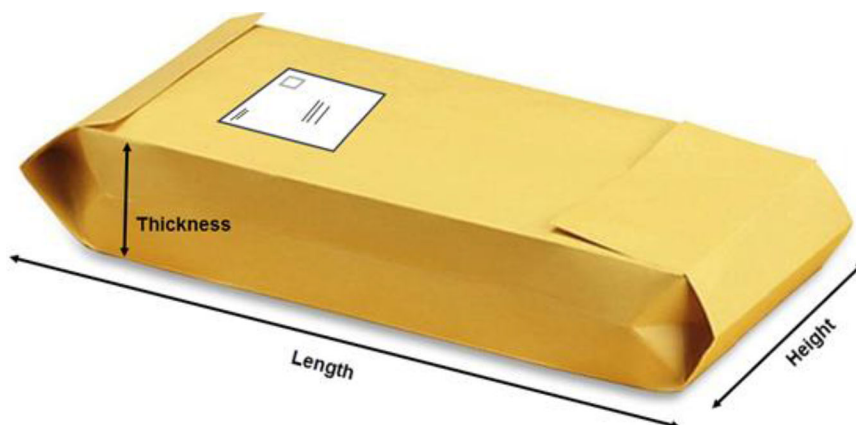
The sixth category is for keys and other identification devices returned by the Postal Service to the issuing individual or organization. Such an item must have a marking with the issuer's name and complete address, instructions to return the item if found, and a statement guaranteeing payment of postage due upon delivery of the item.

For mailpieces other than keys or identification items, choose the first applicable shape category from the CODES software:

1. First, determine if the mailpiece satisfies the criteria for a card.

2. If the mailpiece is not a card, determine if it satisfies the criteria for an oversize card.

3. If the mailpiece is not an oversize card, determine if it satisfies the criteria for a letter.

4.   If the mailpiece is not a letter, determine if it satisfies the criteria for a flat.

5.   If the mailpiece is not a flat, record it in the IPP/Parcel category. Some irregularly shaped mailpieces, such as rolls, might not have a rectangular address face. Indicate which of the options in the CODES software best describes the mailpiece.

See IOCS RG 18 for determining the shape of the mailpiece.

8-2.3 IPP/Parcel Characteristics

From the options in the CODES software, specify the characteristics of the IPP (i.e., an "irregular parcel or piece") or Parcel. However, if the available options do not apply to a characteristic of the sample mailpiece, choose None of the Above.

8-2.4 Detached Address Label

8-2.4.1 Overview

If the sample mailpiece is a card or letter, examine the mailpiece to determine if it is a detached address label (DAL). A DAL (which is also called a marriage mail card or a sample card) accompanies an unaddressed merchandise sample, an unaddressed Periodical, a USPS Marketing Mail item, or a Bound Printed Matter mailpiece. Indicate if the address side of the card bears the following exact wording: "USPS regulations require that this address label be delivered with its accompanying postage-paid mail."

8-2.4.2 Shape of DAL Parent Piece

If the sample mailpiece is a DAL, try to locate the DAL's "parent mailpiece" — i.e., the mailpiece that the DAL accompanies — and record the shape of the parent mailpiece. See IOCS RG 18 for determining the shape of the parent mailpiece. If you cannot locate an accompanying mailpiece, select the Parent Piece Unidentifiable option. Use both the DAL and the parent mailpiece to answer the remaining questions.

8-3   Weight Information

Weigh the mailpiece, and record the weight in pounds, ounces, and tenths of an ounce. For a DAL, weigh the DAL and the parent mailpiece (if available) together. If the scale you are using displays more than one digit to the right of the decimal place, record just the first digit and ignore the remaining digits. If you enter an incorrect weight, click the Clear button (F3) and then enter the correct weight.

When you enter the weight to the tenths of ounces, the CODES software displays an Error screen prompting you to "round up to the next full ounce." If you are conducting a telephone reading and the respondent does not have access to an electronic scale or is unable to report the weight to tenths of an ounce, click the Electronic Scale Unavailable button (F6) and record the weight to the closest ounce. If no electronic scale is accessible, estimate the

weight, perhaps by considering the general parameters of the mailpiece's postage, mail class, and other characteristics (for example, a letter cannot weigh more than 3.5 oz.). To enter an estimate, click the Electronic Scale Unavailable (F6) button, and when the Estimated Weight screen appears, enter the estimated weight by rounding up to the nearest ounce.

Note: The CODES software does not allow you to proceed without entering the weight or an estimated weight of the mailpiece.

8-4   Undeliverable as Addressed Mail, Returned, Forwarded

In some cases, the Postal Service cannot deliver an item as addressed — such items are known as undeliverable as addressed (UAA) mailpieces.

Depending on which class of mail and services the mailer requested with the UAA mailpiece, the Postal Service will return it to sender, forward it, or destroy it.

According to the markings appearing on the mailpiece or from the information the sample employee or supervisor provides, indicate how the Postal Service is handling the UAA mailpiece by selecting from the following options in the CODES software:

a.   *Returned:* Choose this option if the mailpiece has a stamp, yellow label, or other marking (including handwritten) indicating that the Postal Service is returning the mailpiece to the sender. Also choose this option if the Postal Service is returning this mailpiece even if it is not yet marked as such.

b.   *Forwarded:* Choose this option if the mailpiece has a stamp, yellow label, or other marking (including handwritten) indicating that the Postal Service is forwarding the mailpiece to an address other than the original delivery address. Usually, the original delivery address is crossed out or covered with a yellow forwarding label. Also choose this option if the Postal Service is forwarding the mailpiece even if it is not yet marked as such.

c.   *Other Handling as UAA:* Choose this option if the Postal Service has identified the mailpiece as UAA but has not yet identified it for return, forwarding, or destruction. Such items typically include a USPS Marketing Mail item that is not eligible for forward or return service, such as Undeliverable Bulk Business Mail.

Example 1: The words "Return for Postage, Return to Sender" are stamped on the mailpiece — select Returned.

Example 2: A clerk in the delivery unit is preparing to stamp and mark a return to sender mailpiece — select Returned.

Example 3: A clerk is preparing to photocopy and process a USPS Marketing Mail flats mailpiece marked "Address Service Requested" — because the USPS Marketing Mail flat is not eligible for forwarding and is discarded, select Other Handling as UAA.

8-5 Destination Information

8-5.1 Overview

Subchapter 8-5 provides information about the destination of the sample mailpiece. The CODES software asks separate questions depending on whether the mailpiece is identified as UAA or not.

8-5.2 Destination ZIP Code

If the sample mailpiece's original address is to a U.S. address, record the original destination ZIP Code into the Destination ZIP field. If the mailpiece does not show a ZIP Code, press either the Tab or the Enter key and enter the city name and state abbreviation in the respective fields. If you enter the wrong information or misspell the city or state abbreviation, select Clear (F3) to clear the fields and enter the correct information.

Note: Consider all U.S. territories as well as the 50 states, the District of Columbia, and U.S. military installations as U.S. addresses. See IOCS RG 15 for a list of U.S. territories and military offices — familiarize yourself with this list so you do not misidentify these locations as foreign destinations.

8-5.3 Destination Country

If the sample mailpiece's original address is to a foreign destination, record information about the destination country.

Enter the country code for the mailpiece's destination country. If you do not know the country code, begin typing the name of the destination country in the Country data field, and the corresponding country code appears. If the country does not appear or is unknown, manually type "111" in the Code field and type the name of the destination country.

8-5.4 Original Address Unknown

If you are unable to determine the original destination address of the mailpiece, choose Cannot Determine.

Note: If you are unable to see the original delivery address because it is covered by a forwarding label, choose Cannot Determine — do not attempt to peel back the forwarding label.

8-6 Indicia and Postage

8-6.1 Overview

The term "indicia" refers to the type of postage or evidence of postage payment that appears on a mailpiece. The most common postage options include stamps, permit imprints, postage meter strips, and personal computer (PC) postage products. In many instances, the amount of postage paid is not displayed on the mailpiece.

Note: Record Forever Stamp revenue as the current postage rate at the time of the reading.

Note: Do not include revenue for stamps unless either the value appears on the stamp or it is a Forever Stamp.

The following sections provide information regarding the identification and recording of indicia appearing on a sample mailpiece.

8-6.2 Presence of Indicia

Select the first applicable type of indicia option from the CODES software. Begin by examining the entire mailpiece for the first option and record it if found. If the first option is not found, examine the mailpiece for the second option, and so on. Do not select the first type of indicia that you happen to see — if more than one option applies to the mailpiece, you must choose the first applicable option from the list. See IOCS RG 22 for information on identifying indicia, and see IOCS RG 23 for examples of indicia.

8-6.3 No Indicia

8-6.3.1 Overview

Some types of mailpieces do not have indicia — examples include Periodicals and parent mailpieces from DALs. The following sections identify such mailpieces.

8-6.3.2 Periodicals

If there is no evidence of postage on the sample mailpiece, the CODES software asks you to determine if the mailpiece is a Periodical, a regularly published magazine, a newspaper, or a newsletter.

Periodicals are usually mailed without indicia by publishers or registered news agents. If "Periodicals Postage Paid" appears on the mailpiece, indicate that the mailpiece is a Periodical. In the absence of that text, locate the International Standard Serial Number (ISSN) or the USPS publication number on the mailpiece — the text "ISSN" is followed either by an eight-digit number or by a seven-digit number followed by an X, and the USPS publication number contains the text "USPS" followed by a 6-digit number.

Periodicals must contain an identification statement with the text "Periodicals Postage Paid at…," an ISSN, and/or a USPS publication number. For unbound publications, the ISSN and/or USPS publication number must appear on one of the first five pages or on the table of contents page. For bound publications, the ISSN and/or USPS publication number must appear on one of the last three nonadvertising pages inside the back cover.

Note: Some publications might look like Periodicals but are mailed at USPS Marketing Mail rates — such mailpieces must bear appropriate USPS Marketing Mail indicia. Take care to record these mailpieces appropriately in the Presence of Indicia screen.

8-6.3.3 DAL Parent Piece

If there is no evidence of postage and the sample mailpiece is not a Periodical, determine if the mailpiece is accompanied by a detached address

label (DAL), and if so, indicate in the CODES software that the sample mailpiece is a parent mailpiece accompanied by a DAL. Use both the DAL and the Parent Piece to answer the remaining questions in the CODES software.

A DAL (which is also called a marriage mail card or a sample card) accompanies an unaddressed merchandise sample, an unaddressed Periodical, a USPS Marketing Mail item, or a Bound Printed Matter mailpiece.

If the sample mailpiece or Parent Piece does not accompany a DAL, locate and select one DAL from the mailing to proceed. If the sample mailpiece is the DAL and does not accompany the Parent Piece, then locate and select one Parent Piece from the mailing to proceed.

8-6.3.4 Origin

If the sample mailpiece does not have an indicia, is not a Periodical, and is not a parent mailpiece with a DAL, try to determine the origin of the mailpiece. Indicate if the mailpiece originates from a U.S. address. If you cannot determine the origin of the mailpiece, choose Cannot Determine.

Note: Consider all U.S. territories as well as the 50 states, the District of Columbia, and U.S. military installations as U.S. addresses. See IOCS RG 15 for a list of U.S. territories and military offices — familiarize yourself with this list so you do not misidentify these locations as foreign destinations.

8-6.4 USPS Express Mail

Indicate whether the Express Mail account number begins with a "40," "41," "42," or "43."

If the mailpiece is Postal Service mail, review the data and complete the reading.

8-7   Total Revenue on Piece

Record the total amount of postage visible on the mailpiece.

If the mailpiece has any form of indicia indicating the amount of postage paid, enter the total amount of postage on the mailpiece, including all postage on the front or back of the mailpiece, and any postage due amounts marked on the mailpiece. Include all postage amounts that appear on stamps, meter impressions, or computerized postage labels. Do not include revenue for stamps unless either the value appears on the stamp or it is a Forever Stamp.

To enter the postage, type the digits of the dollar amount (if any) and two digits for the cents. If the postage amount includes any fractional cents (mills), press the right arrow key after entering the cents and type the additional digit for the mills.

8-8   Mail Class and Rate Markings

Answer all questions referring to the physical mail class markings appearing on the address side of the mailpiece. Markings often appear in or around the indicia postage area of the mailpiece. See IOCS RG 17 for mail class and rate markings.

8-9   Origin Information

If a flat, IPP, or parcel has no class or rate markings, use the origin ZIP Code in conjunction with the postage on the mailpiece to help determine class and rate category.

There are two types of origin ZIP Codes:

a.   *Origin ZIP Code — Originally Addressed:* The CODES software asks if the mailpiece is deliverable as originally addressed. Enter into the Origin ZIP field the five-digit origin ZIP Code from the return address — if no ZIP Code is available, enter the city name and state abbreviation in the respective fields. If you cannot determine the origin ZIP Code information, leave the Origin ZIP field blank.

b.   *Origin ZIP Code — Identified as Undeliverable as Addressed (UAA):* If you identify the mailpiece as UAA mail, enter into the Origin ZIP field the five-digit ZIP Code that appears in the return address — if no ZIP Code is available, enter the city name and state abbreviation in the respective fields. If you cannot determine the origin ZIP Code information, leave the Origin ZIP field blank.

8-10 Barcode Information

A barcode is a series of vertical bars and spaces that represent data in a machine-readable form. Surface Visibility barcodes provide information on the types of mail inside containers (trays, tubs, sacks, wheeled containers, pallets, and vehicles). Additional information about an individual mailpiece is available from barcodes appearing with Intelligent Mail, IBI indicia, Express Mail labels, customs forms, extra services forms, and destination ZIP Codes.

Scan all barcodes from mailpieces and mail transportation equipment.

See IOCS RG 11 for barcode scanning instructions. For more information on barcodes, press F1 at the S20 or S30 screen in the CODES software.

8-11 Facing Identification Mark (FIM) and Reply Mail Markings

The Postal Services uses a facing identification mark (FIM) to orient and separate certain types of First-Class Mail during the facing-cancelling process. A FIM consists of a pattern of bold vertical bars at the top edge of the letter to the left of the indicia — different patterns identify different types of mail: Business Reply Mail, automation-compatible courtesy reply envelopes, metered reply mail, Information-Based Indicia or PC Postage mail, and other designated types of mail.

Indicate whether a FIM is present on the mailpiece.

8-12 Ancillary Service Markings

Examine the address side of the sample mailpiece and determine if any of the ancillary service endorsements appear. If present, these endorsements appear in one of the following locations:

a.   Directly below the return address.

b.   Directly above the delivery address area (which includes an address block barcode and any relating nonaddress elements such as a keyline or optional endorsement line).

c.   Directly to the left of the postage area and below any rate marking.

d.   Directly below the postage area and below any rate marking.

The endorsement must appear exactly as listed in the CODES software screen.

Indicate if any of the ancillary service endorsements appear on the sample mailpiece.

8-13 Extra Services Markings

The CODES software asks questions to determine if a sample mailpiece is receiving extra services. Because different classes of mail are eligible for different extra services, the extra service options vary by mail class. See IOCS RG 20 for extra services.

Note: Do not confuse markings such as "Do Not Bend," "Photos," or other text on the mailpiece relating to expedited handling with the official Special Handling endorsements. Most Special Handling mailpiece parcels contain live honeybees or baby poultry, which are only mailable with the Special Handling service.

Examine the entire address side of the mailpiece and indicate which (if any) of the extra service endorsements appear on the mailpiece. Choose all of the extra service endorsements that appear on the mailpiece. If the mailpiece has no extra service, select the appropriate response.

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9 Complete the Reading

9-1 Overview

Once you answer all of the activity, handling, and mail characteristics questions, the IOCS reading is ready for completion. This section describes the process to complete a reading.

Three final steps remain for you to complete the IOCS reading:

1. Review your responses to the IOCS activity, handling, and mail characteristics questions.

2. Enter additional administrative data.

3. Save and End the reading.

9-2 Review the Data

After you answer all of the activity, handling, and mail characteristics questions, the CODES software displays the Review screen. Use the Review screen to double-check your responses.

The Review screen automatically displays a list of responses to the IOCS activity, handling, and mail characteristics questions from the reading. The Review screen automatically appears after you have provided all of the answers to the IOCS activity, handling, and mail characteristics questions.

Before completing the reading, you must review the Review screen for accuracy. Complete the following steps to perform the process:

1. *Navigate the Review screen:* Navigate the Review screen by using the arrow keys or scroll bars.

2. *Correct any errors:* If you identify an error on the Review screen, press F10. The CODES software allows you to navigate to the screen you desire either by using the left or right arrow keys or by pressing the Previous button. Once you reach the desired screen, correct the appropriate original entry as necessary. The CODES software guides you through all subsequent questions until it reaches the Review screen again. As the CODES software continues through each question, previous answers appear highlighted — as long as the answers are correct, continue through the screens. The CODES software does not allow you to skip to the end of the questions, because if you correct a response, this may change the flow of the subsequent questions.

3.   *Exit the Review screen:* Once you confirm the accuracy of the data in the Review screen, click OK to proceed to the next screen.

9-3   Enter Administrative Data on the End Reading Screen

The End Reading screen is the final screen that the CODES software displays. Record the information as follows:

1.   *Enter your data collector ID number:* Type in your unique data collector ID number. This is a mandatory field.

2.   *Enter the sample method:* Indicate which method you used to conduct the reading — either On Location or By Phone. This is a mandatory field.

3.   *Enter the number of attempted telephone calls, if applicable:* If you conduct a telephone reading, enter the number of times you attempted to contact the employee's work location to conduct the reading. For example, if you reach a telephone respondent and conduct the reading on the first telephone call, enter 01.

4.   *Select the Overtime/Out of Schedule field, if applicable:* Select this field if the employee is earning overtime or out-of-schedule pay at the reading time.

Many employees receive overtime pay for working more than 8 hours a day or 40 hours a week. If the overtime hours occur either before or after an employee's regular shift, or on the employee's scheduled day off, the employee is receiving overtime pay.

Example 1: A sample employee's regular shift is from 08:00 hours to 16:30 hours, but on the reading day, the employee is working from 06:00 hours to 16:30 hours. If a first reading is scheduled on this employee, select Overtime/Out of Schedule. If the same employee begins work at the regularly scheduled start time and stays until 18:00 hours, and has a last reading scheduled at 17:20 hours, select Overtime/Out of Schedule.

Record Overtime/Out of Schedule when the employee is receiving out-of-schedule pay at the reading time. Out-of-schedule pay occurs when Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) nonexempt supervisors, professional, administrative, and technical staff — and eligible full-time and part-time regular schedule craft employees — are working temporary schedules at management's request. An employee receives out-of-schedule pay when working either outside, or instead of, that employee's regular schedule.

Example 2: A reading is scheduled for a sample employee whose regular work schedule is from 08:00 hours to 16:30 hours. The employee is working a temporary schedule change from 06:00 hours to 14:30 hours. For the 2 hours between 06:00 hours to 07:59 hours, the employee receives out-of-schedule pay. Select Overtime/Out of

Schedule if a reading is taken on the employee during this 2-hour period.

If the employee is not receiving pay at an overtime/out of schedule rate, leave this field blank.

5. *Select the Holiday Work Pay field, if applicable:* Select this field if an employee is working on a holiday and is receiving holiday work pay at the reading time.

An employee must work on his or her designated holiday to receive holiday work pay. Holiday leave is paid time off for a holiday, which you enter as Other Paid Leave in the Paid/Unpaid Status field. Record any employee on leave as not working.

Example: An employee who works Tour I and has Sunday and Monday as regular days off is scheduled for a Saturday reading before a Monday holiday. This employee is working during a designated holiday on Saturday, so select Holiday Work Pay. Use the same rule for an employee working any other holiday. Record Holiday Work Pay as well as any other premium pay that the employee is earning.

If the employee is not earning pay at a holiday rate, leave this field blank.

6. *Select the Sunday Premium field, if applicable:* Select this field if an employee is working an entire shift on a Sunday or if any part of the employee's shift falls on a Sunday. Sunday premium occurs on a Saturday, Monday, or Sunday shift, as long as the employee works any part of the shift on Sunday.

Example: A reading is scheduled on an employee whose scheduled start time is 18:00 hours on Saturday and whose scheduled end time is 02:30 hours on Sunday. If you take the reading on Saturday night at 22:00 hours, record the employee as earning Sunday Premium, as well as Night Differential, because the employee's shift extends into Sunday.

If the employee is not receiving the Sunday premium rate, leave this field blank.

7. *Select the Light/Limited Duty field, if applicable:* Select this field when the employee is on light or limited duty at the reading time. Light duty results from an off-the-job injury and may also involve a roster designation change. Limited duty results from an on-the-job injury and may involve a roster designation/activity change.

Note: When a carrier on light/limited duty is working as a clerk, change the carrier's roster designation to record the carrier's work assignment at the reading time. If the carrier is clocked into a clerk MODS operation code, conduct a clerk reading.

If the employee is not on light or limited duty, leave this field blank.

8. *Select the Night Differential field, if applicable:* Select this field when both the reading time falls between 18:00 hours and 05:59 hours and the employee is at work or if an employee is in training during nonpremium hours and normally earns this type of pay.

Note: CODES automatically selects the Night Differential field if the reading time falls between 18:00 hours and 05:59 hours.

Example: The sample employee has a scheduled start time of 16:30 hours and a scheduled end time of 01:00 hours. If a reading is taken at 20:10 hours and the employee is at work, CODES automatically selects Night Differential.

If the employee is not receiving night differential, leave this field blank.

Note: The data fields in steps 3–7 are not mutually exclusive. An employee may earn one or more premiums — including holiday work pay, Sunday premium, and night differential — at the same time. You must select all fields that apply.

9. *Enter the total time for reading:* Enter the total time (in minutes) it took to conduct the reading. This is a mandatory field.

   The total time starts when you leave your desk or work area to observe an employee. The total time ends when the reading is complete. The total time includes any transportation time (round trip) you spent traveling to and from another facility to perform the reading, as well as the time it took to perform the reading. To answer Total Time for Reading, you can estimate transportation time back to your home office.

   If there are readings on several employees at the same scheduled reading time, compute the total time for each reading as follows:

   a. The first reading includes the travel time to the first reading.

   b. The second reading includes the time spent traveling from the location of the first reading to the second reading.

   c. The last reading includes the time spent traveling to the last reading location and an estimate of the travel time back to your home office.

10. *Enter the MODS or TACS code:* If you entered a MODS or TACS operation code at the reading time, the CODES software automatically displays the code in this field. However, if you were unable to record the operation code during the reading, or if you discover afterwards that you recorded the wrong code, enter the proper code.

11. *Enter the highway contract route, if applicable:* If you could not record a highway contract route number during the reading, or if you discover after the reading that you recorded the wrong code, enter the proper code and proceed to the Additional Remarks field.

12. *Enter any additional remarks about the reading:* Use this field to record any comments or unusual circumstances that the IOCS questions did not capture. Record any comments that are important for understanding the IOCS data.

To complete the reading, click the "OK" button in the End Reading screen — a screen appears to indicate that the reading is complete.

9-4   Suspend and End the Reading

If necessary information — such as a MODS code or highway contract route number — is unobtainable while observing the employee, suspend the reading and record this information later. You must record all mandatory information before completing the reading.

9-5   Transmitting the Reading Data

Transmit readings to the CODES WBU as soon as possible after completion. If it is not possible to transmit the reading electronically, notify the MFPC or SSP and contact CODES Support for additional help.

9-6   Receiving Sample Files and Software Updates

Load sample files directly from the CODES laptop Main Menu screen — doing so allows you to receive the current sample selection files.

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