

RE: [EXTERNAL] Questions about mail in your are...

Subject: RE: [EXTERNAL] Questions about mail in your area, as related to mail-in election ballots

From: "Abdul-Razzaaq, Desai O - Tampa, FL" <Desai.O.Abdul-Razzaaq@usps.gov>

Date: 9/1/20, 4:56 PM

To: Chris Coyle <chris@lebtown.com>

Good afternoon Mr. Coyle,

Thank you for your interest in the United States Postal Service.

I cover all USPS media relations for Western New York and Central Pennsylvania.

The Postal Service is committed to delivering Election Mail in a timely manner. We employ a robust and proven process to ensure proper handling of all Election Mail, including ballots. This includes close coordination and partnerships with election officials at the local and state levels. As we anticipate that many voters may choose to use the mail to participate in the upcoming elections due to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, we are conducting and will continue to proactively conduct outreach with state and local election officials and Secretaries of State so that they can make informed decisions and educate the public about what they can expect when using the mail to vote. As part of these outreach efforts, we will discuss our delivery processes and will consult with election officials about how they can design their mailings in a manner that comports with postal regulations, improves mailpiece visibility, and ensures efficient and cost-effective processing and delivery.

Customers who opt to vote through the U.S. Mail must understand their local jurisdiction's requirements for timely submission of absentee ballots, including postmarking requirements. Voters must use First-Class Mail or an expedited level of service to return their completed ballots. In order to allow sufficient time for voters to receive, complete and return ballots via the mail, and to facilitate timely receipt of completed ballots by election officials, the Postal Service strongly recommends that jurisdictions immediately communicate and advise voters to request ballots at the earliest point allowable but no later than 15 days prior to the election date. The Postal Service recommends that domestic, non-military voters mail their ballots at least one week prior to their state's due date to allow for timely receipt by election officials. The Postal Service also recommends that voters contact local election officials for information about deadlines.

In Pennsylvania and nationally, the Postal Service is committed to delivering Election Mail in a timely manner. We just posted this new fact sheet to clear up some misinformation we are seeing:

<https://about.usps.com/newsroom/statements/082120-just-the-facts-six-things-to-know-about-the-usps.htm>

Specifically, please see this section:

1. The Postal Service has more than enough capacity to handle election mail volume. The Postal Service is ready to handle whatever volume of election mail it receives.

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Postmaster General DeJoy's number one priority is to deliver election mail on-time and within the Postal Service's well-established standards. Effective October 1, he is committed to engage standby resources in all areas of Postal Service operations, including transportation, to satisfy any unforeseen demand.

To put it in context, the Postal Service delivers 433 million pieces of mail a day. Even if all Americans were to vote by mail this year, 330 million ballots over the course of the election would be only three-quarters of what the Postal Service delivers in one single day.

The Postal Service has more than enough capacity, including collection boxes and processing equipment, to handle all election mail this year, which is predicted to amount to less than 2% of total mail volume from mid-September to Election Day.

In addition, I refer you to Postmaster General Louis DeJoy's testimony about the suspension of certain actions until after the November election.

<https://about.usps.com/newsroom/national-releases/2020/0824-oral-statement-of-pmg-louis-dejoy-before-the-house-committee-on-oversight-and-reform.htm>

specifically,

"...To be clear, we will do everything we can to handle and deliver Election Mail in a manner consistent with the proven processes and procedures that we have relied on for years.

Nevertheless, I encourage all Americans who choose to vote by mail to request their ballots early and to vote early, as a common sense best practice.

As part of this conversation, there are many inaccuracies about my actions that I wish to again correct.

First, I did not direct the removal of blue collection boxes or the removal of mail processing equipment.

Second, I did not direct the cut back on hours at any of our post offices.

Finally, I did not direct the elimination or any cutback in overtime.

I did however suspend these practices, to remove any misperceptions about our commitment to delivering the nation's election mail.

Any further assertions by the media or elected officials is furthering a false narrative to the American People...."

Regarding how many ballots are expected in the general election, you should check with the Boards of Election in your county of concern.

Respectfully,

Desai Abdul-Razzaq,

Strategic Communications

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Western NY & Central PA Districts

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From: Chris Coyle <chris@lebtown.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 1, 2020 10:16 AM
To: Abdul-Razzaaq, Desai O - Tampa, FL <Desai.O.Abdul-Razzaaq@usps.gov>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Questions about mail in your area, as related to mail-in election ballots

CAUTION: This email originated from outside USPS. **STOP and CONSIDER** before responding, clicking on links, or opening attachments.

Dear Mr. Abdul-Razzaaq:

Thanks again for speaking to me by phone this morning. As I told you, I am a reporter for LebTown.com, an online news site covering Lebanon County. We are covering the upcoming election in November.

I have a few questions that I hope you can answer for our readers. Please feel free to fill in your answers after each:

1. What counties are you assigned to?
2. In the past year, in the area you are assigned to, has there been any reduction in work force - full time, part time, contract workers - at any USPS facility, including any facility in Lebanon County?
3. In the past year, in the area you are assigned to, has there been any removal of, or reduction in the amount of, equipment at any USPS facility that could be used to process November election ballots, including any such reductions or removals at Lebanon County post offices?
4. Referring to the June, 2020 primary election, how many mail-in ballots were handled by (1) post offices in Lebanon County, and (2) by all post offices combined in the area you are assigned to?
5. Referring to the November, 2020 general election, does USPS have an estimate of how many mail-in ballots it will process in (1) Lebanon County post offices, and (2) at all post offices combined in the area you are assigned to?

6. Am I correct that every item dropped in any mailbox located in Lebanon County (1) first goes to that locality's local post office, and (2) from there gets sent to a facility or facilities in the Harrisburg area, and (3) from there gets sent to the addressee's local post office for delivery?

Thanks for helping us help our readers understand how things work.

--

Chris Coyle

Reporter

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