

**CITY OF HAMILTON, OHIO**

No. 402.1

**ADMINISTRATIVE DIRECTIVE**

Effective Date: 3-7-16

Supersedes No. 402 dated 10/01/07, 7/27/82

Approved by: Joshua A. Smith,  
City Manager

**SUBJECT:** SUSPICIOUS MAIL OR PACKAGES- CITY FACILITIES

**PURPOSE:** To outline steps mail-handlers should take if they discover a suspicious letter or package.

**1. Policy.**

- a. To address any suspicious mail or package received in mailroom operations or in your department area.
- b. The City of Hamilton employees at the Municipal Building at One Renaissance Center should be aware of and prepared for such possibilities by following a strategic plan, as contained within this administrative directive.

**2. Suspicious Mail or Packages.**

- a. General Mail Handling
  - Be on the lookout for suspicious envelopes or packages
  - DO NOT open suspicious mail
  - Open all non-suspicious mail with a letter opener or another method that minimizes skin contact with the mail and is least likely to disturb contents
  - Open mail with a minimum amount of movement
  - DO NOT blow into envelopes
  - Keep hands away from nose and mouth while opening mail
  - Turn off fans, portable heaters, and other equipment that may create air currents
  - Wash hands after handling mail
- b. Characteristics of Suspicious Mail or Packages (see attachment)
  - Discoloration, oily stains, or an unusual odor
  - Crystals, powder, or powder-like residue on the surface
  - Look for packages that are foreign mail, airmail, or special delivery;
  - Look for restrictive markings such as "Confidential," "Personal," etc.
  - Excessive postage
  - Handwritten, block-printed or a poorly typed address
  - Incorrect titles or title but no name
  - Misspelling of common words
  - No return address
  - Excessive postage or excessive tape
  - Rigid or bulky;
  - Lopsided or uneven package
  - Protruding wires or tinfoil
- c. If You Receive or Discover Suspicious Mail or Package
  - STOP, don't handle
  - DO NOT shake, open or empty the package or letter or otherwise disturb its contents

- Alert others nearby
  - Leave the area and gently close the door or section off area to prevent others from entering
  - Call 911 -DO NOT USE CELLULAR PHONES OR RADIOS. Report what they have observed as well as the location of the package.
- d. After Leaving the Area
- Wash hands well with soap and water;
  - Contact your supervisor, designated responder or other appropriate authority;
  - Limit movements within the building to prevent spread of substance;
  - REMOVE heavily contaminated clothing as soon as possible and place in a plastic bag, or some other container that can be sealed. This clothing should be given to the emergency responders for proper handling;
  - SHOWER with soap and water as soon as possible; and
  - If possible, list all people who were in the room or area, especially those who had actual contact with the substance. Give this list to the EMS and Fire Department authorities so that proper instruction can be given for medical follow-up, and to law enforcement officials for further investigation.