

ANNUAL REPORT 2024



UNITED STATES POSTAL
INSPECTION SERVICE

U.S. POSTAL
INSPECTOR

POLICE

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Who We Are and What We Do

The U.S. Postal Inspection Service® is the law enforcement, crime prevention, and security arm of the United States Postal Service®. We provide the investigative and security resources that ensure America's confidence in the U.S. Mail. It is our mission to support and protect the Postal Service and its employees, infrastructure, and customers; enforce the laws that defend the nation's mail system from illegal or dangerous use; and ensure public trust in the mail.

We serve so that American businesses can safely dispatch funds, securities, information, and physical goods through the mail; postal customers can entrust their correspondence to the mail; and postal employees can work in a safe environment.

United States postal inspectors are federal law enforcement agents who carry firearms, make arrests, execute federal search warrants, and serve subpoenas. More than 1,200 postal inspectors enforce roughly 200 federal laws covering crimes that include fraudulent use of the U.S. Mail and the postal system. Postal inspectors investigate postal-related crimes, such as postal robberies, mail theft, identity theft, mail bombs, and burglaries. They protect against the use of the mail to defraud customers, exploit children, and transport illegal drugs and drug money. They also ensure postal employees, customers, and approximately 32,000 postal facilities are safe from criminal attack.

We also have more than 400 armed, uniformed Postal Police officers assigned to protect postal facilities. And our more than 600 professional, technical, and administrative personnel support our efforts nationwide and at our National Forensic Laboratory.

Our state-of-the-art lab is staffed by highly trained forensic scientists and technical specialists who play a key role in identifying, apprehending, prosecuting, and convicting individuals responsible for postal-related criminal offenses.

Since 1775, the Postal Inspection Service has preserved the safety, security, and integrity of the nation's mail system from criminal misuse. And we are committed to serve boldly for generations to come.



Message from the Chief

Since 1775, the United States Postal Inspection Service has defended America's mail system as the law enforcement and security arm of the United States Postal Service.

As Chief Postal Inspector, it is my honor to publish this fiscal year 2024 Annual Report of Investigations. This report is a guide to the recent accomplishments of U.S. postal inspectors, Postal Police officers, and professional, technical, and administrative personnel who help keep Postal Service employees, customers, and infrastructure safe from criminal attacks and safeguard the integrity of the U.S. Mail.



This report is an accounting both of our day-to-day work and our impact as a federal law enforcement agency charged with protecting every customer and business at 168 million addresses.

We proudly work to safeguard our employees and our customers. During and after the COVID-19 pandemic, assaults on letter carriers began to tick sharply upward, which led to increased reports of mail theft and corresponding identity theft and associated fraud.

As a direct response to these escalating crimes, Project Safe Delivery was launched in May 2023 to widen the protective net for Postal Service employees and customers. Robberies and mail theft complaints were down by 32 and 20 percent, respectively, between fiscal years 2023 and 2024. The Postal Inspection Service continues to aggressively investigate robberies and mail theft complaints. Postal inspectors also made 32 percent more arrests for robberies of Postal Service employees in fiscal year 2024 than in the prior year.

Postal inspectors use the full weight of the law to investigate and arrest criminals who use violence toward letter carriers and commit mail theft, though not every threat comes in the form of robbery or assault. The presence of dangerous substances in the mail poses a

significant risk to postal employees and the public. Seizing illegal drugs and narcotics from the mailstream is a critical tool postal inspectors use to keep people and communities safe.

Our Contraband Interdictions and Investigations (CI2) Program plays a major role in dismantling drug trafficking organizations and keeping drugs out of our communities. In fiscal year 2024, postal inspectors made 2,034 arrests involving drug trafficking, seized more than 36,000 kilograms of illegal narcotics, and confiscated more than \$13.8 million in illicit proceeds. As part of our Southwest Border Initiative alone, postal inspectors seized 236 kilograms of methamphetamine, 38 kilograms of cocaine, and \$834,000 in illicit proceeds. Postal inspectors also intercepted and seized 91 kilograms of fentanyl, preventing its distribution and protecting lives and families nationwide.

Postal inspectors are determined to keep drugs out of the mail and counterfeit postage off letters and packages. The massive expansion in online shopping during the COVID-19 pandemic led to a considerable increase in the sale and use of counterfeit postage labels and stamps. Criminals often sell counterfeit postage to unwitting consumers who are simply trying to save on shipping. Counterfeit postage costs the Postal Service at least \$600 million per year. In a single, three-day joint Postal Inspection Service-U.S. Customs and Border Protection operation in Chicago in fiscal year 2024, postal inspectors identified \$950,000 in counterfeit postage on cargo before it was entered in the U.S. mail system.

The Postal Inspection Service identifies and shuts down counterfeit postage manufacturers and sellers. Postal inspectors educate the public on counterfeit postage and the dangers of its use, like the potential for putting the mailer's personal information at risk.

Postal inspectors also educate postal employees and customers about how to keep hazardous materials (HAZMAT) out of the mail. Our HAZMAT Program provided 128 trainings and 46 in-person reviews of Postal Service facilities in fiscal year 2024. These efforts equip Postal Service employees with the knowledge they need to identify these dangerous substances, safely handle them, and keep others safe in the process.

Benjamin Franklin, the American polymath and first Postmaster General, once wrote: "Without continual growth and progress, such words as improvement, achievement, and success have no meaning." The U.S. Postal Service is working to be a more nimble, forward-facing service,



redesigned for long-term viability. Through it all, the Postal Service's enduring mission to deliver vital communications will remain.

This next year, and for many years to come, the Postal Inspection Service will continue to skillfully defend against an ever-evolving arsenal of cyber and physical threats and scams, protect postal employees and customers, and ensure all mail is delivered securely.

Gary R. Barksdale
Chief Postal Inspector

Meet Our Leaders

Peter Rendina

Deputy Chief Inspector
Headquarters Operations



Carroll Harris

Acting Deputy Chief Inspector
Eastern Field Operations



Patricia Edgehill

Acting Chief Counsel
Office of Counsel



Robert Wemyss

Deputy Chief Inspector

Headquarters Operations



Rafael Nuñez

Deputy Chief Inspector

Western Field Operations



Patricia Manzolillo

Director

Business Operations



OUR MISSION PRIORITIES



MISSION PRIORITY 1

Preventing and Investigating Letter Carrier Robberies

Keeping postal employees safe is the U.S. Postal Inspection Service's number one priority. In the unfortunate event that an employee becomes the victim of a violent crime, U.S. postal inspectors respond, investigate, and arrest identified individuals. We are also committed to preventing violent crimes against letter carriers through deterrence and public-awareness campaigns.

As part of Project Safe Delivery, the partnership between the Postal Inspection Service and the Postal Service to combat attacks on postal employees and mail theft, postal inspectors conducted five mail theft and violent-crime surge operations targeting high-crime areas throughout the country, contributing to the decline in robberies of letter carriers. The Postal Inspection Service also invested in tools, technology, and data analytics to strengthen intelligence-led investigations and deploy advanced training for postal inspectors and support staff. There was a great effort to increase safety awareness among letter carriers and other USPS employees. In fiscal year 2024, as part of Project Safe Delivery, postal inspectors delivered 7,153 prevention briefings to various audiences related to violent crimes and mail theft. These briefings focused on specific threats to employees and the steps they can take to remain vigilant and keep themselves safe, in addition to mail theft and financial crime prevention tips. To further address risks to USPS employee safety and to reduce the prevalence of violent crimes, approximately 100 Postal Inspection Service personnel received advanced training in violent crimes investigations.

Though not all reports are credible, the Postal Inspection Service takes all reports of violent crime seriously and responds to every reported incident. In fiscal year 2024, postal inspectors responded to 5,563 reports of violent criminal activity ranging from threats to assaults, robberies, suicides, and homicides. Among those reports to which postal inspectors responded were 442 robberies, three homicides of on-duty USPS employees, and 5,036 assaults and threats.

Though even one robbery of a letter carrier is too many and we will remain dedicated to preventing these kinds of vicious attacks, our methods and tactics are working: In fiscal year 2024, the Postal Service saw a 27 percent decrease in robberies of letter carriers.

MEMBER OF “THREE KEYS” SOCIAL MEDIA GROUP SENTENCED FOR ARMED ROBBERY OF LETTER CARRIERS

On May 9, 2023, a mail carrier was robbed at gunpoint while on his route in Hampton, VA. By the very next day, after coordinating with the Hampton and Chesapeake Police Departments, postal inspectors identified all four subjects related to the robbery, along with the getaway vehicle.

The organizer of the robbery, O’Sirus Charles Landres Ford of Chesapeake, VA, was a member of a social media group identified by three key emojis (“Three Keys” group). Members of Three Keys conspired to steal Postal Service keys used to access some mailing stations, including blue collection boxes and apartment mailbox panels.

Three Keys members discussed in detail over social media how to commit the robberies for postal keys — including selecting targets, using firearms, and techniques to evade law enforcement and keep their identities hidden. Group members also discussed how to participate in related financial fraud and identity-theft schemes.

On the day of the robbery, Ford recruited Jayden Stukes of Suffolk, VA, to assist in the robbery. Stukes said that Ford told him: “I gotta bag somebody.” Stukes brought along Da’Twan Watson, also of Chesapeake.

Ford, Stukes, and Watson met at the rental car that Ford had used the previous day for a separate armed robbery of a letter carrier in Norfolk, VA. Ford and Watson eventually got out of the car, armed with handguns and wearing face masks, to follow a letter carrier on foot.

After robbing the letter carrier at gunpoint, Ford and Watson fled the scene. Ford took pictures of the postal key he stole and sent them to his Three Keys group handlers.

On June 6, 2023, postal inspectors from our Washington Division and members of the United States Marshals Service arrested Ford.

Watson and Stukes pleaded guilty to interfering with commerce by robbery and aiding and abetting. They were each sentenced to four years in prison.



Ford was sentenced to 12 years in prison for his role in a larger conspiracy to rob at gunpoint multiple USPS letter carriers of their postal keys.



U.S. postal inspectors execute an arrest and search warrant for O'Sirus Ford.

EIGHT-TIME MAIL ROBBERS SENTENCED TO COMBINED 21 YEARS IN PRISON

Jerrad Coleman and Louis Dixon, both 18, trawled the streets of Dallas-Fort Worth, TX, looking for Postal Service letter carriers to rob in hopes of obtaining a postal key.

In eight separate incidents, the men robbed letter carriers around the area.

After robbing the letter carriers, often at gunpoint, the men fled in getaway vehicles. They then used, sold, and/or disposed of the postal keys they stole.

Coleman and Dixon were criminally charged on April 22, 2024. Coleman was sentenced to 12 years and six months in federal prison. Dixon was sentenced to nine years in federal prison.

The U.S. Postal Inspection Service conducted the investigation with the help of the Arlington, Dallas, Fort Worth, and Frisco Police Departments.



MISSION PRIORITY 2

Enforcing the Laws that Protect the Mail from Theft

Enforcing the laws that protect the U.S. Mail from theft is a top mission priority for the U.S. Postal Inspection Service.

The American public expects their mail to arrive safe and intact. When criminals steal from the U.S. Mail, they violate the “sanctity of the seal” we have defended since the nation’s founding. We work tirelessly to identify mail thieves, locate them, and bring them to justice.

Beginning around 2020, the Postal Service experienced a significant increase in mail thieves robbing letter carriers, primarily to commit additional, financially motivated crimes. Criminals rob letter carriers for mail or postal keys, which are subsequently used to commit high-volume mail theft from neighborhood collection and delivery boxes. These thieves target financial and other sensitive documents for the purpose of committing financial crimes, such as check fraud and identity theft.

Throughout fiscal year 2024, as part of Project Safe Delivery, we conducted several surge operations, which temporarily deploy additional personnel and resources to high-crime areas. These produced significant results, including dozens of arrests, the recovery of thousands of stolen mailpieces, and hundreds of stolen and missing postal keys reclaimed.

In addition to our focus on letter carrier robberies and related mail theft, we continued investigating identity mail theft cases and other non-violent forms of mail theft.

MAIL THEFT-BANK FRAUD RING BUSTED

From October 2020 to August 2023, 11 individuals in the Los Angeles, CA, area engaged in an elaborate bank fraud scheme using third-party bank accounts and stolen checks. The conspirators solicited bank account holders through social media to provide their debit cards and account information, promising these account holders a cut of any fraudulent funds deposited into their accounts. The conspirators then rapidly depleted the fraudulently deposited funds from the accounts by making cash withdrawals, electronic transfers, and/or debit card purchases.

Nine federal search warrants were executed, resulting in the seizure of narcotics, firearms, stolen checks, credit/debit cards, and approximately \$1 million in cash. At the time of this report's publishing, postal inspectors and Internal Revenue Service Criminal Investigations agents have arrested nine conspirators charged in the 58-count federal grand jury indictment.





From left to right: Postal Inspection Service Team Leader Gerardo Ramirez, IRS Criminal Investigations Special Agent Ryan Bennett, and Postal Inspector Zera Poirier stand in front of cash seized from multiple residences during the takedown.

“OG GLASS HOUSE” SHATTERED BY JOINT INVESTIGATION

A joint investigation by the Postal Inspection Service, the U.S. Postal Service Office of the Inspector General, and IRS Criminal Investigations into the Telegram channel “OG Glass House” identified people working for the Postal Service and others who were stealing mail to commit fraud.

Between April and July 2023, mail processing clerk Nakedra Shannon conspired with Donnel Gardner and Desiray Carter to steal business checks with destination addresses mostly in the Charlotte, NC, metropolitan area. By the time of their arrests, the trio had stolen checks totaling more than \$24 million, including more than \$12 million in stolen checks posted for sale on Telegram, and more than \$8 million in stolen U.S. Treasury checks.

The three defendants were charged with one count of conspiracy to commit financial institution fraud and five counts of theft of government property. Carter and Gardner were also charged with seven counts of possession of stolen mail matter, and Shannon was charged with eight counts of theft of mail by a postal employee. The defendants pleaded guilty to one count of conspiracy to commit financial institution fraud and theft of government property.

Shannon and Carter were sentenced to 60 months and 54 months in prison, respectively, followed by two years of supervised release. Gardner was later sentenced to 54 months in prison and three years of supervised release. The defendants were also ordered to pay \$113,333.87 in restitution.

MAIL THIEF CAUGHT WITH A BACKPACK FULL OF CASH

On November 15, 2023, Olden Ellerbe III was arrested at a credit union in Richmond, VA, for withdrawing fraudulent funds from an interactive teller machine (ITM). Ellerbe had a backpack full of cash, 80 checks, a Glock hand gun, and an assortment of debit and credit cards at the time of his arrest.

Ellerbe had withdrawn funds from three separate ITMs totaling \$77,000. Using stolen postal keys, Ellerbe and co-conspirators stole mail to obtain personal and financial information of victims. The conspirators then



created fictitious checks with stolen personally identifiable information (PII), applied for loans with the stolen PII, and subsequently withdrew the funds from local financial institutions.

Ellerbe pleaded guilty to one count of conspiracy to commit bank fraud and one count of mail theft. Ellerbe was sentenced to three years of incarceration, to be followed by three years of federal supervision, and was ordered to pay restitution of \$104,000.

MAIL THEFT SCHEME IN OHIO ENDS IN CAR CHASE

A mail theft scheme involving eight people began unraveling in October 2022 when an airport police officer was notified of an unattended bag. The officer at Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky International Airport discovered the bag belonged to a “Jay Robinson,” according to the bag tag. But when the officer searched the contents of the bag, he found a wallet with paper identification for Lawrence Sherman and eight debit cards, each in a different name.

Sherman claimed the bag as his and was detained at the airport for fraudulent credit card activity. But when a further search of his bag revealed he was traveling with more than \$10,000 in cash, Sherman admitted that he sent approximately \$2,000 of his friend’s money in a package via the Postal Service.

A postal inspector and task force officer from the Postal Inspection Service Cincinnati domicile recovered that package from the Postal Service Cincinnati Processing and Distribution Center. While executing a search warrant, the postal inspector and task force officer found the package contained 13 stolen debit cards and a total of 57 checks and money orders.

Calls reporting mail theft in that area increased, including calls regarding checks and money orders stolen from Postal Service blue collection boxes all over Cincinnati. Postal inspectors discovered seven other people worked with Sherman to steal Postal Service keys, which were then used to steal mail containing checks and money orders. The conspirators then altered the checks and money orders and cashed them. The conspirators deposited the fraudulent checks into various bank accounts and used the funds later. Sherman alone stole more than \$200,000 by stealing mail.

Following his airport detention, Sherman was charged with eight counts of second-degree criminal possession of a forged instrument and booked into Boone County Jail.

Four months later, in February 2023, Sherman was again caught by law enforcement. This time, he and two co-conspirators refused to stop their car after being flagged down by police for speeding. As the three co-conspirators attempted to flee, police saw them throwing checks out the car window. Officers from the Springfield Township Police Department stopped the car using “stop sticks,” and each occupant attempted to run away on foot before officers apprehended them.

In December 2023, Sherman was sentenced to 40 months in prison for conspiring to commit mail theft. Sherman was one of more than a dozen individuals charged in the Southern District of Ohio in 2022 and 2023 with crimes related to postal robberies.





SPOTLIGHT

POSTAL POLICE

Postal Police officers (PPOs) help raise the security profile at large USPS facilities. Their uniformed presence is a deterrent to would-be criminals. Whether PPOs are securing facilities or performing other critical protective actions, their presence and professionalism play a crucial role in accomplishing the Postal Inspection Service's mission to protect the Postal Service, its employees, and infrastructure. The Postal Inspection Service deploys PPOs at facilities in 21 cities where the risk of crime is high.

PPOs provide security patrols at over 700 postal facilities, respond to burglar alarms at almost 600 stations, and are often the first to respond to emergencies, disruptions, and criminal activity reported at postal facilities.

POSTAL POLICE APPREHEND SLIPPERY SUSPECT

On November 5, 2023, Postal Police in Decatur, GA, received a late-night call from the Postal Inspection Service's National Law Enforcement Communications Center (NLECC) regarding an alarm activation at the Wesley Chapel Post Office. Two PPOs were dispatched to the location.

Upon arrival, the officers conducted an exterior search of the facility and noticed a suspicious vehicle parked alongside the back dock. The response team entered the facility and

encountered a woman handling packages in the parcel area. PPOs identified themselves and ordered her to stand still and show them her hands. Instead of complying, the woman began walking away and refused to respond to their commands. The woman refused to comply with PPO directives and ultimately tried to flee. PPOs were able to stop and detain her. They contacted postal inspectors, who responded to the scene. DeKalb County Police Department also responded and provided assistance.

The woman was interviewed and her vehicle impounded. A search of the vehicle revealed several parcels stolen from inside the facility. The individual, who was later identified as a former letter carrier at the facility, was taken to DeKalb County Jail to be processed and charged.

HOUSTON POSTAL POLICE ARREST POST OFFICE BURGLAR

On September 9, 2024, New Orleans, LA, Postal Police officers received a call from a National Law Enforcement Communications Center (NLECC) operator regarding an alarm activation at USPS's University Station in Houston, TX.

When the two PPOs arrived at the scene, they found no criminal activity in their initial search of the station's exterior and lobby. However, upon entering the facility, the officers observed a man on the workroom floor digging through a hamper of parcels. One of the officers instructed the individual to show his hands and identify himself.

When the man could not produce postal ID, provide his job title, or give the names of his postal management to the PPOs, the officers handcuffed and detained him. The man ultimately confessed to not being a postal employee.

The PPOs searched the intruder and found six postal keys, one piece of First-Class Mail, and personal items, all of which the officers secured.

Officers from the Houston Police Department (HPD) arrived and took custody of the man, charging him with burglary of a Post Office. HPD transported him to the Harris County Joint Processing Center for booking, and the PPOs finished clearing the facility, noting no other criminal activity.



MISSION PRIORITY 3

Combating Drug Trafficking

The Postal Inspection Service is committed to protecting postal employees, the American public, and the mail from dangerous and illegal contraband, specifically illicit drugs and firearms. Our strategy is to aggressively investigate and dismantle drug trafficking organizations (DTOs) and use intelligence to effectively target and seize dangerous drugs nationwide. Utilizing relationships with domestic and international law enforcement partners, we work to combat the distribution of illegal contraband through the U.S. Mail and the international postal system.

Leading that effort is our Contraband Interdiction and Investigations (CI2) Program. CI2 leverages innovative investigative methods, advanced analytical tools, and strategic partnerships both at home and abroad to eliminate opioids, other illicit drugs, and their proceeds from the U.S. Mail and the international postal system. CI2's work supports the U.S. Postal Service *Strategy for Combating Illicit Drugs in the Mail*, as well as the whole-of-government approach envisioned in the White House's National Drug Control Strategy.

In fiscal year 2024, postal inspectors made 2,034 arrests involving drug trafficking, seized more than 36,454 kilograms of illegal narcotics, and confiscated \$13,829,489 in illicit proceeds.



SPOTLIGHT

TASK FORCE OFFICER PROGRAM

The CI2 Program maintains a full-time Task Force Officer (TFO) Program that screens, trains, equips, and credentials state and local law enforcement officers to operate alongside postal inspectors in investigating drug trafficking using the mail. The TFO Program serves as a force multiplier by allowing the Postal Inspection Service to tap into the personnel and resources of state and local agencies. In return, the local jurisdictions can leverage the expertise and capabilities of the U.S. Postal Inspection Service. The CI2 Program has more than 140 sworn TFOs working alongside postal inspectors with more on the way.



ORGANIZED CRIME DRUG ENFORCEMENT TASK FORCE (OCDETF)

The Postal Inspection Service is a partner in the federal Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Force (OCDETF) targeting large-scale DTOs and transnational criminal organizations. This partnership allows us to better share and coordinate investigations and information with other federal law enforcement agencies working to dismantle criminal organizations. In fiscal year 2024, the Postal Inspection Service participated in 155 new OCDETF investigations. Of these, we sponsored 74 investigations for OCDETF law enforcement partners' attention and resources.

Our participation with OCDETF has allowed the Postal Inspection Service to go beyond our domestic borders to work with international law enforcement and our interagency partners currently stationed overseas to help dismantle some of the most prolific international drug trafficking and money laundering organizations functioning in the United States that exploit the mail.

OCDETF “FENTANYL INC” INVESTIGATION

Beginning in 2022, a joint investigation of the Postal Inspection Service and the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) Miami Field Division uncovered China-based chemical manufacturers that played a key role in manufacturing, selling, and importing huge quantities of fentanyl and methamphetamine precursors, along with synthetic opioids such as xylazine and nitazenes, into the United States by way of the U.S. Mail.

The investigation revealed the manufacturers were using commercial freight to ship the chemicals concealed within parcels bearing counterfeit domestic postage. The counterfeit postage effectively hid the overseas origin of the packages.

This joint investigation significantly disrupted the inflow of Chinese-manufactured deadly illicit drugs and drug-making chemicals into the U.S.

Three China-based manufacturers and four Chinese nationals were indicted for the manufacturing and shipping of controlled substances into the United States utilizing counterfeit Postal Service postage. Stateside, an additional indictment and arrest of co-

conspirator Will Catis resulted in the seizure of two firearms, approximately 15 kilograms of controlled substances, and approximately \$354,000. Catis pleaded guilty and was sentenced to 12 years in federal prison.

This case produced the largest single financial sanction handed down by the U.S. Office of Foreign Assets Control.

SOUTHWEST AND CARIBBEAN BORDER INITIATIVES

In fiscal year 2024, the Postal Inspection Service continued to execute a data-driven counternarcotics strategy by deploying additional interdiction, investigative, and analytical resources at major induction points for drugs entering the domestic mailstream along the Southwest border.

This fourth iteration of the Southwest Border Initiative resulted in the seizure of 236 kilograms of methamphetamine, 91 kilograms of fentanyl, 38 kilograms of cocaine, and more than \$834,000 in illicit proceeds seized in the mail.

The CI2 Program's reach is not limited to the continental United States and extends to our territories in the Caribbean region and beyond. In fiscal year 2024, the Postal Inspection Service conducted interdictions in the Caribbean corridor that netted approximately 669 kilograms of cocaine, one kilogram of fentanyl, over \$38,000 in illicit proceeds, and three firearms.

“NARCO710” DARKWEB INVESTIGATION

Beginning in 2022, the Postal Inspection Service partnered with the FBI, DEA, and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security’s Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) Los Angeles field divisions to investigate the DTO known as “Narco710,” which operated as a darknet drug vendor.

Narco710 was a vendor of pressed fentanyl and methamphetamine pills, which were distributed to customers utilizing the Postal Service.

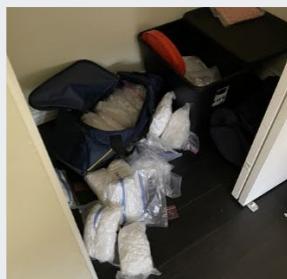


The DTO operated on at least nine different darknet marketplaces, including Archetyp Market, ASAP Market, Bohemia Market, Tor2Door Market, AlphaBay Market, Abacus Market, DarkOde Reborn Market, and ToRRez Market.

Narco710 sold millions of pills to thousands of customers and profited more than \$2 million in known sales. The investigating team used techniques including undercover drug purchases, physical surveillance, trash pulls, and cryptocurrency analysis to identify Christopher Hampton as the main operator of the vendor account and Hector Sandoval as a co-conspirator.

Search warrants for a residence associated with Hampton resulted in the seizure of six pill presses, seven firearms, more than \$120,000 in U.S. currency, and approximately 150 kilograms of controlled substances, including fentanyl, crystal methamphetamine, and Adderall.

Hampton pleaded guilty in April 2024 and is awaiting his sentencing hearing. Sandoval pleaded guilty and was sentenced to 12 years and six months in federal prison.



Seizure of multiple types of narcotics, including fentanyl and methamphetamines, packaged for distribution. The multi-agency investigation was conducted by the Postal Inspection Service, FBI, DEA, and HSI.



SPOTLIGHT

TECHNICAL SERVICES UNIT

The Technical Services Unit (TSU) provides the most innovative solutions to support Postal Inspection Service operations.

In fiscal year 2024, TSU developed strategic technologies with the Criminal Investigations Group (CIG) and Contraband Interdiction and Investigations (CI2) to combat the rise in mail theft and illegal items being sent through the mail. These collaborative efforts led to many successful prosecutions across the country.

Each year, TSU works directly with a technology company to update and design new custom tracking units to meet postal inspectors' unique investigative needs. While investigating a fiscal year 2024 robbery of a letter carrier during which a postal key was stolen, postal inspectors with the Pittsburgh Division, Cleveland, OH, Domicile strategically placed tracked packages and letters in blue collection boxes near the site of the robbery.

The tracker helped postal inspectors identify one of the conspirators when he used the stolen postal key to open the collection box and steal one of the tracked letters. Postal inspectors were also able to recover the stolen postal key. The investigative findings aided by the tracker technology helped secure prison sentences for the three conspirators ranging from one to 2 ½ years.



MISSION PRIORITY 4

Combating Counterfeit Postage

Since 2020, the Postal Inspection Service has noted an increase in the creation, sale, and use of counterfeit postage labels and counterfeit stamps.

This increase is driven largely by fraudsters who exploit the widespread use of e-commerce websites and honest, unwitting online shoppers who are only looking to save money on their shipping costs.

Fraudsters sell counterfeit postage at discounts of 50 to 75 percent on various online sites and social media platforms, leading to significant losses for the U.S. Postal Service. It is estimated that counterfeit postage costs USPS at least \$600 million per year. In one recent Postal Inspection Service case related to counterfeit labels, the suspect company was responsible for more than \$60 million in losses to USPS in a six-month period.

The Postal Inspection Service mitigates these financial losses by identifying and shutting down counterfeit postage manufacturers and sellers. Postal inspectors also issue public service announcements to Postal Service employees and customers about counterfeit postage so they can identify and report items affixed with counterfeit postage before they enter the mailstream.

In fiscal year 2024, the Postal Inspection Service's Revenue Investigations (RI) Program conducted 600 mail reviews at Postal Service facilities to identify packages affixed with counterfeit postage. The mail reviews resulted in 35 arrests and approximately \$4.5 million in loss avoidance for the Postal Service. One joint, three-day interdiction in Chicago carried out by the Postal Inspection Service's RI Program and Global Security Group, as well as U.S. Customs and Border Protection, saved the Postal Service \$950,000 by identifying cargo affixed with counterfeit postage labels prior to entry into the United States.

CRACKING DOWN ON COUNTERFEITERS

Lijuan “Angela” Chen and her husband, Chuanhua “Hugh” Hu, ran an illegal “reshipping” business that mailed stolen goods using counterfeit postage. Between 2020 and 2023, the company illegally shipped 34 million packages affixed with counterfeit shipping labels, resulting in the loss of more than \$150 million to the Postal Service.

Hu created the counterfeit labels by printing duplicate and counterfeit stamps that were purchased online from third-party vendors and printed onto adhesive paper.

Chen was the face of the company in the U.S. and interacted with hired workers. In an interview with one of the workers, postal inspectors learned that Chen carried expensive purses, owned multiple properties, and drove a Tesla. The worker also told postal inspectors that Chen sometimes gave the workers gifts, including Louis Vuitton jackets and belts and traditional red envelopes containing \$100 in cash around Chinese New Year. Despite her apparent wealth, Chen regularly intercepted mail addressed to her daughter that contained food stamps.

Chen pleaded guilty to conspiracy to defraud the United States and use of counterfeit postage. She awaits sentencing.

As part of the plea agreement, Chen agreed to forfeit funds that law enforcement seized from her bank accounts, insurance policies, and real estate properties in Walnut, Chino, Chino Hills, South El Monte, Diamond Bar, and West Covina, CA. Chen’s husband was also indicted in the scheme but is believed to be a fugitive living in China.





Postal inspectors from the Los Angeles Division, in conjunction with Internal Revenue Service Criminal Investigation, conduct a federal search warrant of Lijuan "Angela" Chen's illegal reshipping business warehouse located in City of Industry, CA. The loss in this case exceeded \$150 million.



Team Leader Diana Cavanagh and Revenue Investigations Postal Inspector Mark White review evidence during a search warrant of Lijuan Chen's business in City of Industry, CA. Chen pleaded guilty to conspiracy and utilizing counterfeit postage, and sentencing was expected on October 23, 2025.



An evidence custodian for case 2996389-RI, Team Leader Scott Robbins provides guidance to Postal Inspector Hiam Achour.

FAKE CHECKS USED FOR STAMP STEALING SCHEME IN SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

On August 8, 2023, the San Bernadino Domicile of the Postal Inspection Service's Los Angeles Division received a phone call from the Temecula, CA, Post Office. On the call, a Postal Service employee said they recognized an individual who had previously tried to use fake business checks to purchase stamps at Post Offices all over Southern California — and that individual was currently at the Temecula Post Office, attempting to buy stamps with a check.

This incident would eventually lead postal inspectors to uncover an illegal scheme involving several individuals who used fake business checks to buy stamps. The stamps would be sold at a discount to a middleman, Tigran Kivranyan, who would then sell the stolen stamps he purchased at a discount and would pocket the difference. This scheme resulted in more than \$600,000 in losses to the Postal Service.

Landon Widerburg was the individual at the Temecula Post Office on August 8, 2023. Widerburg used at least five different bank account numbers on the checks. The checks would later be returned unpaid because of insufficient funds, they were found to be altered or outright fake, or the associated account had been closed.

Widerburg also used a variety of stolen identities, in addition to his own, to complete the fraudulent transactions and make off with the stolen stamps. He obtained one false identity by breaking into a person's car and stealing their credit cards.

On June 7, 2023, Postal Service employees recognized one of Widerburg's co-conspirators, Alexander Peters, from a Postal Inspection Service alert bulletin. As a result, the employees refused the \$37,800 check Peters attempted to use to buy stamps and saved the Postal Service thousands in loss that day.

Between August 2022 and November 2023, Widerburg stole stamps at more than 45 Post Offices throughout the U.S., including Los Angeles, CA, Tucson, AZ, El Paso, TX, Las Vegas, NV, and St. Louis, MO.

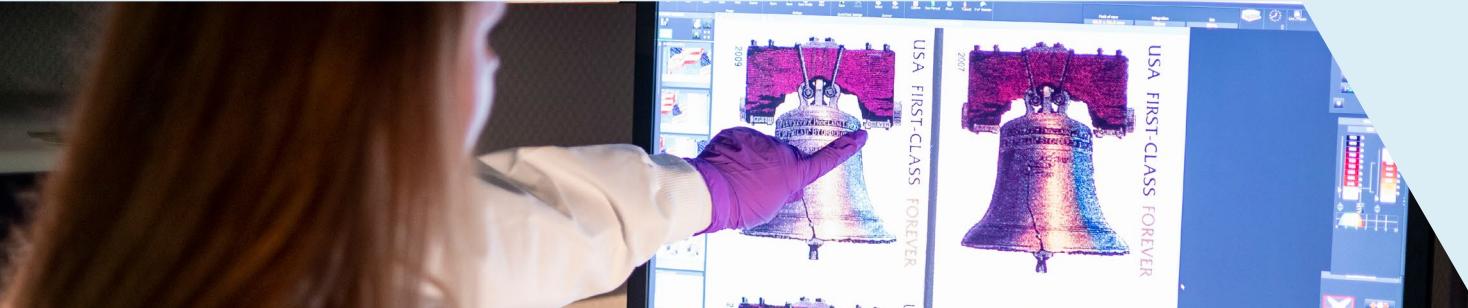
Postal inspectors arrested Widerburg for theft of property and passing counterfeit checks to the Postal Service. Widerburg was sentenced to 30 months in federal prison and ordered to pay restitution of \$623,373.



Peters was arrested for conspiracy, embezzlement, theft, and fraud and awaits trial. Kivranyan was indicted and given a notice to appear for conspiracy and theft of government property.



Los Angeles Division Team Leader Derek Baker and Postal Inspection Service Task Force Officer Jennifer Mehr stand in front of more than \$167,000 in fraudulently obtained and stolen stamps seized after conducting a search warrant on Tigran Kivranyan's residence in Burbank, CA. Kivranyan was a "fence" — a middleman who purchased stolen stamps and sold them to unwitting postal customers for profit.



SPOTLIGHT

FORENSIC LAB SERVICES

At our National Forensic Laboratory in Dulles, VA, and 19 Digital Evidence Unit locations around the United States, highly trained forensic scientists and technical specialists provide instrumental expertise in Postal Inspection Service criminal and security investigations. Our lab personnel play a critical role in helping postal inspectors identify and apprehend individuals responsible for postal-related criminal offenses. The work of our lab personnel also plays an important role in prosecuting and convicting these wrongdoers.

Postal inspectors rely on high-quality work from the four units of Forensic Laboratory Services (FLS) — Questioned Documents and Imaging, Fingerprints and Automated Fingerprint Identification System, Physical Sciences, and Digital Evidence — to solve postal crimes.

As an example of lab specialists' vital contributions in fiscal year 2024, one forensic latent print analyst identified four individuals being investigated by our Los Angeles, Detroit, and Atlanta Divisions as major drug distributors. This work helped secure a conviction for each of the four individuals identified. All of our FLS analysts make similar contributions in cases across the country, every day, that help secure justice for victims of postal crimes.



MISSION PRIORITY 5

Keeping the Mail Safe from Hazardous Materials

Preventing hazardous materials from improperly entering the mailstream is a critical part of our mission to protect Postal Service employees and facilities. Our success in this area is also an important measurement of the public's trust that their mail will be delivered safely.

With the continuous enormous growth of e-commerce and corresponding expansions to our domestic supply chain, the risk of improperly prepared or undeclared hazardous materials making their way into the mailstream continues to grow and shift. Our Hazardous Materials (HAZMAT) Program works to keep dangerous substances out of the mail by focusing on prevention — making sure that Postal Service employees and customers know what is not permitted to be mailed and what to do if they encounter hazardous materials.

Our HAZMAT-focused postal inspectors who work as part of our Aviation Security Team have special partners in their canine officer companions, provided by the Third Party K9 (3PK9) Program. These trained explosive-detection dogs and their handlers screen mail before it is loaded on commercial airplanes at 37 domestic airports and four international service centers. Over the course of fiscal year 2024, the K9 officers alerted their handlers to suspicious materials 225 times, and each instance was resolved during the secondary screening process. In fiscal year 2024, the Postal Inspection Service brought on new canine companies at 28 different sites and activated the 3PK9 Program in our Guam Domicile.

Additionally, each of our 16 field divisions throughout the country has homeland security coordinators who train and prepare Postal Service employees to recognize the presence of hazardous materials in the mailstream and how to then handle these incidents properly. In fiscal year 2024, our homeland security coordinators and postal inspectors provided 128 trainings and 46 in-person reviews of Postal Service facilities.

In fiscal year 2024, the Postal Inspection Service opened 1,700 investigations regarding customer attempts to send hazardous materials through the mail, including fireworks and other dangerous goods and harmful substances.

FIREWORKS IN PITTSBURGH

When a tip came to postal inspectors in Pittsburgh, PA, about an individual sending shipments of fireworks from Scottsdale, PA, postal inspectors secured search warrants for four packages and opened them that same day.

Each of the four packages — all bound for Hawaii — weighed roughly 30 pounds and contained fireworks, which are considered prohibited mail. Postal inspectors stopped the packages from leaving the state.

In reviewing law enforcement databases and records, postal inspectors identified the mailer as John Allan Jr., who between 2018 and 2022 mailed 254 packages to Hawaii matching the same description as the four packages containing fireworks.

Additional investigative actions revealed Allan had received approximately \$750,000 in payments for mailing fireworks and did not report any of that money to the IRS.

Allan pleaded guilty to mailing dangerous, prohibited materials and federal tax evasion and was sentenced to two years of probation. Additionally, he was ordered to pay \$136,037.41 in restitution to the IRS.





Postal Inspection Service HAZMAT team members and dogs from the 3PK9 Program examine mail for hazardous materials.





SPOTLIGHT

FRAUD PREVENTION AND CONSUMER PROTECTION

Throughout fiscal year 2024, the Postal Inspection Service furthered our commitment to protecting our primary customer — the American public — from fraud schemes that exploit the U.S. Mail. Scammers never cease in their attempts to exploit a crisis, such as the COVID-19 pandemic. Teaching the public how to recognize and avoid these and other types of scams may prevent many crimes before they occur.

Postal inspectors have found that educating people about crime is the best way to prevent them from becoming victims. Armed with the right knowledge, almost anyone can recognize a fraudulent scheme and make the right decision — to stay away.

During fiscal year 2024, the Postal Inspection Service's Mail Fraud Program worked with our Communications, Governance, and Strategy Group to release nine public service announcement (PSA) videos alerting the public to the dangers of scams that involve identity fraud and tax fraud, and even romance scams that dupe a victim into sending money to a criminal who falsely professed their love. Our prevention messaging appeared in newspaper articles, radio announcements, podcasts, billboards, posters, and bus advertising nationwide.



We also participate each year in National Consumer Protection Week (NCPW). Our campaign's theme for March 2024 was investment scams. We filmed four PSAs and posted them on our external social media channels, reaching more than 1.6 million people.

The work to prevent crimes against or involving the U.S. Mail is a continuous endeavor for the Postal Inspection Service. We remain engaged and resolute in our efforts to educate the American public, stop crimes before they happen, and ensure the safety of our customers and the mail.

**Making Money Out
of the Blue?
It's Almost Always
Too Good to be True!**

Beware of Investment Scams

National Consumer Protection Week
March 3-9, 2024
www.uspis.gov/NCPW2024

UNITED STATES POSTAL INSPECTION SERVICE
National Consumer Protection Week 2024

**Making Money Out
of the Blue?
It's Almost Always
Too Good to be True!**

Beware of Investment Scams

NATIONAL CONSUMER PROTECTION WEEK: MARCH 3-9, 2024

If you receive a pitch by phone, mail, or computer that claims you'll get rich quick, receive high returns with a low risk, or that you must invest now - watch out! Investment opportunities or "get rich quick" schemes are a form of fraud.

► Protect yourself from investment scams:
 Take your time deciding to invest - don't rush into accepting these "high-profit, low risk" offers;
 Get all information in writing before you consider investing;
 Check out the firm by calling the Better Business Bureau, state Attorney General, or consumer protection agency.

► Common investment scams include:
 Stocks, Commodities, Securities
Gold/Silver, Gems, Oil & Gas
Franchises, Real Estate

For more information about investment scams and other topics, visit www.uspis.gov/NCPW2024.

uspis.gov
1-877-876-2455

**NATIONAL
CONSUMER
PROTECTION
WEEK 2024**

**Beware of
Investment Scams**

**PROTECT YOURSELF FROM
INVESTMENTS SCAMS**

uspis.gov/NCPW2024

 TAKE YOUR TIME
deciding to invest - don't
rush into accepting these
"high-profit, low risk" offers;

 GET ALL INFORMATION
in writing before you
consider investing;

 CHECK OUT THE FIRM
by calling the Better Business
Bureau, state Attorney General
or consumer protection agency.

**COMMON INVESTMENT
SCAMS INCLUDE:**

 STOCKS,
COMMODITIES,
SECURITIES

 GOLD/SILVER,
GEMS,
OIL & GAS

 FRANCHISES
REAL ESTATES

UNITED STATES POSTAL
INSPECTION SERVICE



 **NCPW
2024**

Highlights from the 2024 National Consumer Protection Week campaign to raise awareness of investment scams.

OUR BUSINESS PRIORITIES



OPTIMIZING OUR WORKFORCE, PROCESSES, AND OPERATIONS

Our business priorities — to optimize our workforce and modernize our processes and systems — enable the U.S. Postal Inspection Service to fulfill our law enforcement mission and ensure peak performance.

The U.S. Postal Inspection Service's Business Operations is composed of 130 employees and contractors who provide technical and administrative support to the missions of the Postal Service and the Postal Inspection Service. At our National Headquarters, the Administrative Services, Budget and Finance, Complement and Staffing, Medical Services, and Leadership Development Teams provide subject-matter expertise essential to maintaining and supporting administrative functions across our agency. The Security Investigations Service Center in Memphis, TN, provides background investigation and security-clearance processing for the Postal Inspection Service, the Postal Service, and the USPS Office of Inspector General.

Postal Inspection Service Business Operations has continuously pivoted to support our agency's mission of protecting USPS employees, facilities, mail, and customers. The Business Operations teams' dedication to ongoing learning, process improvements, and service to the Postal Inspection Service allows for exceptional support to agency initiatives and programs, year after year.

ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES

In fiscal year 2024, the Administrative Services Team focused on providing education and materials to assist the agency in compliance, planning, and performance. This team supported six national compliance reviews and, for the first time, conducted the administrative review process for Forensic Laboratory Services. They continued to monitor pay adjustments and created training materials that resulted in a 4.7 percent reduction in the number of pay adjustments agencywide compared to the same period the previous fiscal year. Administrative Services partnered with Inspection Service field divisions and Postal Service Supply Management to complete the annual law enforcement vehicle order four months early. More than 100 vehicles were excessed and ordered to ensure postal inspectors and Postal Police officers have up-to-date and safe vehicles to use in the performance of their duties.

BUDGET AND FINANCE

The Budget and Finance Team supported the Postal Inspection Service mission by financing and administratively supporting capital and expense procurements and national events. In fiscal year 2024, the Budget and Finance Team managed expense and program budgets totaling \$147 million and capital budgets totaling \$37 million.

The team supported investments of new body-worn cameras and rifles, along with training and domicile improvements.

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

As the Postal Inspection Service balanced external law enforcement challenges with internal organizational needs, we worked to build a stronger, more agile, and more resilient agency focused on fulfilling our law enforcement mission with operational excellence.

In fiscal year 2024, the Postal Inspection Service continued to integrate our leadership principles — serve boldly, unleash potential, and partner for excellence — with agencywide initiatives and training.

The Leadership Development Team conducted 64 post-detail assessments in fiscal year 2024, which provide employees with critical and timely feedback to fuel their growth and advancement. Fifty-seven Postal Inspection Service employees completed Postal Service leadership programs, including the Advanced Leadership Program, Managerial Leadership Program, and Center for Creative Leadership and Executive Foundations.

Finally, the team completed phase one of a Career Pathways Project, reviewing all position descriptions and creating new paths toward executive leadership positions for postal inspectors, Postal Police officers, and professional, technical, and administrative staff.



MEDICAL SERVICES

Postal Inspection Service Medical Services is a small but effective team dedicated to the safety and well-being of Postal Inspection Service employees. Medical Services strives to create a culture of fitness, wellness, and preparedness to inspire people to perform their best at work and to enjoy their best life at home. In fiscal year 2024, the Operational Medical Support Program (OMSP) continued to develop and deploy EMTs, medical equipment, and medical training across the agency. As a result, OMSP EMTs assessed and treated 37 individuals and provided medical monitoring, stand-by support, and/or deployed equipment more than 630 times — more than double the same period in the previous year. OMSP coordinated and conducted trainings for 1,845 employees, including basic first aid/CPR/AED, tactical emergency casualty care, law enforcement responder, and protective medicine for executive protection detail.

In support of employment and hiring, Medical Services managed the pre-employment medical testing for all Postal Inspection Service applicants and employees. Medical Services responsibilities expanded in 2024 as new pre-hire examinations for postal inspectors and Postal Police officers were implemented.

To support employee wellness, the team deployed resources and programs with 40 presentations, the new Medical Services website, and a six-month Pilot Health and Wellness Program series.

SECURITY INVESTIGATIONS SERVICE CENTER

The objective of the Security Investigations Service Center (SISC) is to provide prompt and reliable security investigation services for the Postal Service, the Postal Inspection Service, and USPS Office of Inspector General, ensuring all potential employees are properly vetted before joining the workforce. In fiscal year 2024, the SISC processed more than 250,800 clearances and 206,700 national agency checks with inquiries (NACIs) applications.

Background investigative service-level agreements were maintained throughout USPS peak hiring season, as the SISC approved 148,000 interims and completed over 176,000 favorable adjudications of NACIs. Since surface transportation supplier employees require access to the

U.S. Mail and to processing facilities, the SISC screened these individuals, totaling over 8,853 background investigations in fiscal year 2024.

To ensure the continued security of the mail, the SISC also processed background investigations for employees of United Parcel Service (UPS), FedEx, Amazon, Terminal Handler Services (THS), and all commercial airlines, in accordance with established contracts. These background investigations exceeded 51,000.

In fiscal year 2024, SISC continued to review and streamline the background investigation (BI) processes. In addition to increasing the use of technology and electronic applications, SISC removed redundant documentation, evaluated and reduced no-value steps, added contract resources for case management, and cross-trained personnel. This resulted in significantly reduced time to hire for Basic Inspector Training candidates and Criminal Investigation Series 1811 transfers, allowing us to fill the three Basic Inspector classes, hire 50 Office of Personnel Management-designated Series 1811 postal inspector transfers, and grant 458 top secret/SCI clearances. In addition to the continuous improvements and ongoing process changes, the SISC held three critical location application portals for postal inspector candidates.

COMPLEMENT AND STAFFING

In fiscal year 2024, law enforcement nationwide experienced challenges in hiring and retention. In spite of these challenges, the Postal Inspection Service continues to receive a high level of interest from law enforcement applicants. The Complement and Staffing Team supported the recruitment and hiring of 130 postal inspectors, 52 Postal Police officers, and 131 professional, technical, and administrative personnel. In June 2024, Complement and Staffing partnered with USPS to complete a realignment of all Postal Inspection Service National Headquarters groups, involving over 260 positions, to align Postal Inspection Service programs to better protect USPS personnel, customers, and assets.





SPOTLIGHT

CAREER DEVELOPMENT UNIT

The Postal Inspection Service's Career Development Unit (CDU) oversees the functions of our National Training Academy, Basic Inspector Training, and Basic Postal Police Officer Training Programs.

CDU has maintained its Federal Law Enforcement Training Accreditation (FLETA) status since 2005. Our academy is one of only 16 FLETA accredited training centers in the nation.

CDU also oversees the Assessment Center process for postal inspector applicants, who travel to CDU and are assessed through an in-box exercise, panel interview, and group exercise where they are required to demonstrate the necessary knowledge, skills, and abilities to be a postal inspector. They are also required to undergo a polygraph administration.

In addition to assessing postal inspector applicants, our polygraph examiners also conduct criminal examinations in support of field investigations.

CDU also manages the Postal Inspection Service's In-Service Training Program, conducting in-person, specialized training on Mail Theft, Narcotics, Threat Management, Dangerous Mail Investigations, and more.

Fiscal Year 2024

Investigative Statistics

PROGRAM	CASES INITIATED	ARRESTS *	CONVICTIONS *
ASSAULT	398	202	156
BURGLARY	268	63	39
CHILD EXPLOITATION	29	8	4
MAIL FRAUD	447	439	436
MAIL THEFT	1,487	1,353	1,259
PROHIBITED MAIL NARCOTICS	2,299	2,034	1,920
MONEY LAUNDERING	33	24	32
NONMAILABLE, RESTRICTED	3	7	6
REVENUE INVESTIGATIONS	86	35	21
ROBBERY	477	255	177
SUSPICIOUS SUBSTANCES (includes bombs, explosives, threats, hazardous items, non-threatening items, and hoax CBRNE**)	38	20	22
SECURITY AND CRIME PREVENTION	312	N/A	N/A
TOTALS	5,877	4,440	4,072

* Arrests and convictions reported in this period may be related to cases initiated in prior reporting periods. Convictions include pretrial diversions.

** CBRNE refers to chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear, and explosive material.



Fiscal Year 2024

Mail Covers Statistics

A mail cover is the process by which a nonconsensual record is made of any data appearing on the outside cover of any sealed or unsealed class of mail matter, or by which a record is made of the contents of any unsealed class of mail matter as allowed by law, to obtain information in order to: (i) Protect national security, (ii) Locate a fugitive, (iii) Obtain evidence of commission or attempted commission of a crime, (iv) Obtain evidence of a violation or attempted violation of a postal statute, or (v) Assist in the identification of property, proceeds, or assets forfeitable under law.

USPIS REQUESTED	3,429
USPIS APPROVED	3,291
EXTERNAL FEDERAL REQUESTED	2,042
EXTERNAL FEDERAL APPROVED	1,977
EXTERNAL NON-FEDERAL REQUESTED	239
EXTERNAL NON-FEDERAL APPROVED	208
TOTAL REQUESTED	5,710
TOTAL APPROVED	5,476



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