

SUSPICIOUS PACKAGE GUIDE

Version	Date	Comments
1	April, 2009	Initial <i>Suspicious Package Guide</i>
2	April, 2012	Routine review
3	February, 2015	Routine review

A. INTRODUCTION

This Guide is designed to aid George Mason University students and employees in the identification of and appropriate responses to a suspicious package.

B. SCOPE

Suspicious packages may be received by faculty, staff, or students and should be treated with caution. Packages and letters have been used by terrorists, activists, disgruntled employees, and jilted acquaintances to expose their target to biological agents, toxins, and explosives.

C. IDENTIFICATION

All students and employees should be aware of the possible indicators of a suspicious package. The presence of one or more of the following features should be cause for concern:

- Unexpected mail with foreign postmarks, airmail, or uncharacteristic or abnormal delivery markings.
- Postage irregularities, including excessive postage, no postage, or unusual stamps.
- Return address irregularities such as: no return address, a return address that does not match the postmark, or a return address that is not familiar to the person to whom the package is addressed.
- No postmark. (may indicate hand delivery)
- Delivery address irregularities such as: a title without a name, an incorrect title with a name, or a generic title that is not used at George Mason University.
- Badly typed, misspelled, or poorly written addresses and markings.
- Restrictive markings or special handling instructions, such as "Personal," "Confidential," "Special Delivery," or "Open by Addressee only".
- Visual distractions on the package such as drawings, statements, or handmade postage.
- Rigid or bulky envelope.
- Oddly shaped, unevenly-weighted, lopsided, or lumpy package.
- An odor is emitted from the package.
- Stains or discoloration on the package.
- Protruding wires, tinfoil, or other conductive materials.
- Over-wrapping with excessive paper, tape, or string.
- A package left by unknown person.

D. RESPONSE

If you discover or receive a suspicious letter the following procedures are to be followed:

- Do not attempt to open the package.
- If the package is stained, discolored, or emits an odor do not attempt to identify the substance. If you come in contact with a leaking substance, wash hands and exposed skin vigorously with soap and flowing water for at least 15 minutes.
- Do not handle, shake, or move the package or letter.
- Calmly notify others in the immediate area, relocate to another room, and close the door behind you.
- Contact University Police as soon as you are able and safety permits.
- Take no further action until advised to do so by the University Police.

Responding University Police Officers will assess the threat and advise people in the vicinity if it is necessary to evacuate the building and/or area. University Police will contact local, state, and federal authorities, as appropriate if the package warrants further investigation or special handling.