

GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION  
Washington, DC 20405

January 30, 1991

FIRMR BULLETIN B-4

TO: Heads of Federal agencies

SUBJECT: Selecting and using stationery and related forms

1. Purpose. This bulletin provides guidance to help Federal agencies acquire, stock, and use stationery efficiently and cost-effectively.
2. Expiration date. This bulletin contains information of a continuing nature and will remain in effect until canceled.
3. Contents.

Topic	Paragraph
Related material.....	4
Information and assistance.....	5
Definitions.....	6
Acronyms.....	7
Purpose of stationery standards.....	8
FIRMR requirement.....	9
Agency actions.....	10
Procedures.....	11
Procuring and stocking stationery.....	11 a
Designing letterhead stationery.....	11 b
Preparing correspondence.....	11 c
Determining the number of copies.....	11 d
Envelopes and post cards.....	11 e
Stationery-related forms.....	11 f
Table of Standard Specifications.....	Attachment A

4. Related material.
  - a. FIRMR 201-9.1
  - b. 44 U.S.C. 2901-09, 3101-06
  - c. U.S. Government Correspondence Manual

TC 90-1

Attachment

FIRMR Bulletin B-4

5. Information and assistance.

General Services Administration  
Records Management Branch (KMPH)  
18th and F Streets, NW  
Washington, DC 20405

Telephone: FTS 241-0299 or (202) 501-0299.

6. Definition. "Stationery" means blank or printed paper products used in correspondence. Stationery includes but is not limited to: letterhead, carbon paper, envelopes, post cards, etc.

7. Acronyms.

OMB Office of Management and Budget  
USPS United States Postal Service

8. Purpose of stationery standards. The Budget and Accounting Act of 1921 established authority for OMB and GSA to issue regulations and guidelines for stationery. Agency implementation of standard practices for the purchase, stocking, and use of stationery supplies and equipment is essential for economy and efficiency.

9. FIRMR requirement. FIRMR 201-9.103(f) requires each agency to standardize stationery in terms of size, letterhead design, color (of originals, record copies, and envelopes), markings that are permitted on envelopes and post cards, and number of stationery styles permitted. Agencies must consider the voluntary stationery standards contained in the Table of Standard Specifications attached to this bulletin.

10. Agency actions. To achieve the objectives of 44 U.S.C. 2901-09 and 3101-06, for economy and efficiency in the selection and use of supplies, agencies should:

- a. Procure and stock stationery economically and efficiently.
- b. Design letterhead stationery that is economical to print and use.
- c. Prepare and handle formal letterhead and memorandum stationery with the most economical application of labor, equipment, and materials and ensure that memoranda are the principal letterhead used in written, intra- and interagency correspondence.

## FIRMR Bulletin B-4

- d. Ensure that copies are created only when needed.
- e. Ensure that envelopes and post cards, except for self-mailers, bear no extraneous printing, and are mailed using the most economical service consistent with delivery needs.
- f. Ensure that printed items on envelopes and post cards are located according to USPS regulations and guides for mailability.
- g. Use appropriate stationery-related forms.

### 11. Procedures.

- a. Procuring and stocking stationery. Agencies should:
  - (1) Procure stationery through normal supply channels, such as the U.S. Government Printing Office and the Federal Supply Service of GSA.
  - (2) Keep adequate, but not excessive, amounts of stationery consistent with need. The usual stock level is 1-year's supply.
  - (3) Distribute stationery to avoid unneeded transportation and storage costs, stock loss due to deterioration, and obsolescence due to geographical, organizational, name, and design changes.
  - (4) Limit stationery styles and sizes to only those needed to ensure operations.
  - (5) Ensure that all reasonable, orderly, and economical means are used to deplete obsolete stationery.
  - (6) Avoid procuring printed stationery having any: (i) embossing, (ii) telephone numbers, (iii) advertising by or for any private person or group, (iv) illustrations, except the official agency logo, or (v) personal names, except those memorialized on buildings or institutions.
- b. Designing letterhead stationery. Agencies should:
  - (1) Select proper materials according to the Specifications Table attached to this bulletin.
  - (2) Place the letterhead across the 8.5-inch top edge to support the economical use of labor and materials and the proper use of window envelopes.

## FIRMR Bulletin B-4

(3) Use readily available type fonts for which there is no additional charge.

(4) Limit the letterhead content to the agency identifier (name, logo and/or seal) and only mailing information required by the U.S. Postal Service (USPS).

(5) Have no printing below the letterhead, or on subsequent pages, except for guide marks and what is required for preprinted form letters. To avoid possible mishandling and delay, agency elements with a unique five-digit ZIP Code should not print letterhead addresses containing street address or similar information. Sample letterhead and other information can be found in the U.S. Government Correspondence Manual or on Optional Form 10, U.S. Government Memorandum.

c. Preparing correspondence. For non-automated correspondence preparation, agencies should use only yellow stock for official file copies filed in paper form. Yellow is the traditional Federal "flag" for records. Record copies in other colors may cause loss of official agency records and more costly disposition. White stock should be used for all other purposes, unless color will aid in processing, identification, or disposition.

d. Determining the number of copies. Agencies should use manifold (tissue) sets for non-automated production of correspondence. A substitute for tissue sheets should only be used when equal or better copy quality is maintained and labor and material costs to produce the substitution are no greater than those for tissue preparation.

e. Envelopes and post cards. Agencies should:

(1) Use non-kraft "flat" envelopes only when the material plus postage cost of these envelopes is less than the material plus postage cost of kraft envelopes.

(2) Ensure that envelopes and post cards processed by USPS meet mailing requirements for the most economical mail service.

(3) Use lettersize window envelopes except for mailing of material that: (i) involves national security, (ii) is confidential, (iii) is uneconomical to mail in window envelopes, or (iv) is sent to high level officials in Government or the private sector.

## FIRMR Bulletin B-4

(4) Ensure that, except for USPS-required items, no printed, stamped, or affixed marking will be on envelopes or on the front of post cards unless it will either: (i) reduce agency costs, (ii) expedite mail delivery or handling, (iii) aid in the delivery of services to the public, or (iv) promote a program or activity having major national impact. For optimum agency awareness and control, only the head of the agency should approve such marking.

### f. Stationery-related forms.

(1) Standard Forms. The following standard forms are mandatory for use by Federal agencies:

(i) Standard Form 63, Memorandum of Call.

(ii) Standard Form 65, U.S. Government Messenger Envelope. However, agencies shall not use Standard Form 65 to transmit unenveloped sensitive material or material covered by the Privacy Act, or use it for mailing through the U.S. Postal System.

(2) Optional Forms:

(i) Optional Form 10, U.S. Government Memorandum, should be used by agencies whose needs can be met by a single format and whose identification and data requirements, if any, do not justify agency designed letterhead. Agency name and address may be overprinted at the top.

(ii) Optional Form 27, United States Government 2-Way Memo.

(iii) Optional Form 41, Routing and Transmittal Slip, should be used to transmit brief informal messages or documents, but should not be used as a record of approvals, concurrences, disposals, clearances, or similar actions.

Thomas J. Buckholtz  
Commissioner  
Information Resources  
Management Service

FIRMR Bulletin B-4  
Attachment A

TABLE OF STANDARD SPECIFICATIONS

Color	Size	Paper quality not to exceed	Inches	Millimeters#	Substance	-----Grams
Item	Paper	Printing	(width X length)	Grade	Pounds@	(g/m2)
STATIONERY						
Letterhead stationery designed for window envelopes	White	One color	8.5x11	216x279	50% rag	16 60
			8.5x7.3	216x185	or	
			8.5x5.5	216x140	25% rag	20 75
Continuation sheets	Match agency letterhead	None	8.5x11	216x279	50% rag	16 60
					or	
					25% rag	20 75
Manifold (tissue)	White agency letterhead	Match	8.5x11	216x279	25% rag	9 34
Manifold (tissue)	Yellow & white(b)	None				
Memorandum stationery designed for window envelopes	White agency letterhead	Match	8.5x11	216x279	CW* (writing)	20 75
			8.5x7.3	216x185	or	
			8.5x5.5	216x140	25% rag	16 60
Continuation sheets	Match memo stationery	None	8.5x11	216x279	CW* (writing)	20 75
					or	
					25% rag	16 60
Manifold (tissue)	Yellow & white(b)	None	8.5x11	216x279	25% rag	9 34
	White agency letterhead color and style	Match (c) (c)			Deter- mined by FSS	24 90
Envelopes	Brown in agency	Black ink (c) (c)			Kraft	28 105

letterhead style  
/green ink in agency  
style if diamond  
borders used.

FIRMR Bulletin B-4  
Attachment A

TABLE OF STANDARD SPECIFICATIONS

Item	Paper	Color		Size		Paper quality not to exceed		Substance	-----Grams
		Printing	Grade	Inches	Millimeters	#	@		
United States Government memorandum (OF10)	White	Black	8.5x11	216x279	CW*	20	75		
			8.5x5.5	216x140	(writing)				
Memorandum of call [SF63 (pads)]	(d)	(d)	4x5.2	102x132	(d)	(d)	(d)		
U.S. Government Messenger Envelope:									
(SF65A)	Brown	Dark brown	4.25x9.5	108x241	Kraft	24	90		
(SF65B)	Brown	Dark brown	9.75x12	248x305	Kraft	24	90		
(SF65C)	Brown	Dark brown	12x16	305x406	Kraft	24	90		
Routing and Transmittal Slip (OF41)	(d)	(d)	8x5.25	203x133	(d)	(d)	(d)		
U.S. Government Memo (OF 27)	White/ Yellow/ Pink	Black	8.5x11	216x279	Chemical transfer	9	32		

FOOTNOTES

# All millimeters sizes are rounded to a whole millimeter.

\* CW = Chemical Wood.

@ The weight in pounds is per 500, 17" x 22' sheets.

(a) The weight per sheet, is per square meter.

(b) For paper, other colors may be used but paper quality shall not exceed 25 percent rag, 9 lbs (34 grams per square meter).

(c) Use the smallest possible.

(d) At the discretion of GPO.



