

How to Respond to Suspicious Mail and Threat Letters or Packages

The following information and recommendations (collected from various sources) are provided to help you safely and effectively handle these types of incidents.

1. All campus personnel should maintain an enhanced awareness of receipt of suspicious letters or packages.

Some common things to look for include:

- Packages with no return address or excessive postage.
- Misspellings of common words or restrictive markings such as “personal” or “confidential”.
- Items protruding from the envelope or package, wet areas, openings, or strange odors.
- Unusually heavy envelope and/or the presence of small bulges of powder or granules.

If you are concerned about a particular envelope or package, DO NOT OPEN IT. There is little risk of a release of materials or risk of exposure to you if the envelope or package remains intact. **Call 711 (University Police)** and inform them that you have a suspicious envelope or package.

2. If you open an envelope or package and you find a letter that contains a threatening message or states that you have been contaminated with anthrax or some other biological substance, and no substance is found:

- Replace the letter in the envelope and place the envelope in a plastic bag.
- Wash your hands with soap and water.
- **Call 711 (University Police)** and remain at your work location until they arrive.

3. If you open an envelope or package and you observe some type of powder, or powder spills out.

- Slowly and carefully put it on a table or the floor, **leave the material alone and Call 711 (University Police)**.
- If there is material on your clothes, do not brush it off as this may disperse material into the air. Remain in place, carefully remove your outer clothing, and leave them on the floor.
- Wash your hands with soap and water.
- Do not walk around the office to show other people or ask co-workers to come in and take a look.
- Do not clean up the material.
- Put up a sign or warn others to stay away.
- Remain near your work location until University Police arrive.

4. If there is a small explosion or release of material from a package:

- Walk out of the space immediately, close the door, and put a sign on the door to prevent others from entering.
- **Call 711 (University Police) and remain nearby** to provide information to the Police when they arrive.
- Treat yourself and your clothing as in #3, above.

People who may have been present in the room, but did not directly contact the letter or substance, are at minimal risk for exposure. Individuals not in the room at the time when the envelope or package was opened are not at risk.

- For further information, please contact UMB Police at 6-6882 or Environmental Health and Safety at 6-7055.
- These recommendations will be updated as new information is provided by national and local authorities.

