



COUNTY OF ORANGE HEALTH CARE AGENCY

PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES

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Recommendations for Handling Suspicious Letters or Packages

Some characteristics of suspicious packages and envelopes include:

- Inappropriate or unusual labeling, such as
 - Excessive postage
 - Handwritten or poorly typed addresses
 - Misspellings of common words
 - Strange return address or no return address
 - Incorrect titles or title without a name
 - Not addressed to a specific person
 - Marked with restrictions, such as “Personal,” “Confidential,” or “Do not x-ray”
 - Marked with any threatening language
 - Postmarked from a city or state that does not match the return address
- Unusual Appearance
 - Powdery substance felt through or appearing on the package or envelope
 - Oily stains, discolorations, or odor
 - Lopsided or uneven envelope
 - Excessive packaging material such as masking tape, string, etc.
- Other suspicious signs
 - Excessive weight
 - Ticking sound
 - Protruding wires or aluminum foil

If a package or envelope appears suspicious, do not open it.

Handling of Suspicious Packages or Envelopes

- Do not shake or empty the contents of any suspicious package or envelope.
- Do not carry the package or envelope, show it to others or allow others to examine it.
- If possible, put the package or envelope in a plastic bag to prevent leakage of the contents. If a bag or container is not available, cover the envelope with a trash can or box.
- Do not sniff, touch, taste, or look closely at it or at any contents that may have spilled.
- Alert others in the area about the suspicious item. Leave the area, close any doors, and take actions to prevent others from entering. Shut off fans and the ventilation system.
- Wash your hands with soap and water.
- Notify your local law enforcement agency or follow other procedures established for this situation. If at work, also notify your supervisor.
- Make a list of everyone who was in the room or area when this suspicious letter or package was recognized and a list of those who may have handled this package or letter. Give this list to law enforcement officials and local public health authorities.