

## Mail Payments

### Resources:

- Section 01-06.00 [Separation of Duties](#) requirements.
- Section 02-03.2 Forms and Instructions or Section 16 Forms, [16-01 Accounting Forms](#) for an example of a Mail log.
- Section 02 Receipting, [02-03.01 Reconciliation of Mail Payments](#)
- [Court Learning Management System](#) (LMS)

### Policy:

1. A mail log clerk and mail log witness must open and log mail together.
2. Payments obtained from a drop box are to be recorded on a mail log.
3. Payments delivered to the court (i.e. jail checks) should be recorded on a mail log.
4. A manual "Mail Log" of payments received by mail must be kept, recording at a minimum the following information:
  - a. the date received
  - b. the type of payment (check, cash, money order, or Credit Card).
  - c. all digits of the check or money order number
  - d. the amount of each payment
  - e. the total amount of payments received
  - f. in order of priority: the case/citation number (if available), or case name (if available), and payer's name
  - g. agency checks received in behalf of an individual (i.e. Finder/tax Intercept, Jail Bail) should reflect the entity and individual name.
  - h. the initials/signatures of the person preparing the Mail Log
  - i. the initials/signatures of the person witnessing the opening and logging of the mail
  - j. the initials/signatures of the person that reconciled the manual Mail Log to the corresponding computer receipt
  - k. the words "sole clerk" written on the witness signature line, if one clerk must open and log mail payments alone.
  - l. if a check is not receipted (i.e. check to be forwarded to AOC), indicate the action taken and process according to local policy.
  - m. if a miscellaneous payment (copies/tapes) for another court site will be receipted, both the transaction ID (computer receipt #) and the court site/case number are recorded on the mail log form. Entering a case note in both systems is recommended.

5. All payments received in the mail, with the exception of out-of-state attorney fees, must be listed on the manual mail log.
6. Undeliverable juror/witness checks must be listed on the manual mail log. Record on the log whether the check was re-mailed or added to the "Undeliverable Jury & Witness Log." If the check isn't immediately re-mailed, the mail log preparer together with the witness shall give the check to the designated employee.
7. All mail payments must be logged, and receipted within 24 hours (excluding weekends and holidays) of being received by the court. Exceptions should be noted on the mail log. **(Note: Documents should reflect the date/time stamp of the actual date it was received.)**
8. No copy of the check should be made and retained.
9. Unidentified court payments that can't be receipted to an actual case in the District and Juvenile system are receipted to trust type "Trust without a case."
10. If a payment is received and the case has been sent to OSDC, the check should be returned to the issuer informing them where the case now resides. When cash is received through the mail, the receiving court should receipt the cash payment to Trust Without a Case. A trust check should be issued and mailed back to the person.
11. Error corrections on the daily Mail Log are to be made by drawing a line through the incorrect entry and writing the correct information next to the error. Correction fluid/tape is not to be used. A clerk and the accountant are to initial the form so the original log and any copies can be reconciled. In smaller court sites where accountant duties cannot be separated, a clerk that prepared or witnessed the mail log preparation should initial to verify the correction.
12. A system payment should not be reversed solely because a cashier did NOT select the Mail Payment box. Since the payment will not be listed on the system Mail Log Report, the reconciler will need to verify the payment was receipted by other means. ([See Section 02-03.01 Reconciliation of Mail Payments.](#))
13. All checks received by mail must be restrictively endorsed by applying either the revenue or trust account stamp, as soon as the cashier clerk identifies the payment type.
14. Tax Intercept/Finder checks (made out to the defendant) are to be endorsed to the court and may be receipted to cash bail or the trust type "Finders/Tax Intercept." See also chart relating to [Trust Types](#).
15. A trust check written by the court returned through the mail as "undeliverable" shall be recorded on the log whether it was immediately re-mailed (had a forwarding address) or was requiring additional research (two weeks).
16. An employee, other than the check writer or accountant, must secure the check while researching a good address. If a good address is not located, the employee removes the signatures before giving the check to the check writer to void.
17. The courts should not accept two party checks because of the difficulty in collection of returned items. In special circumstances, the court may receive

authorization from the AOC Finance Department, who will contact the bank to verify funds prior to giving approval.

18. The Daily Mail Log must be reconciled to the accounting records by a clerk other than either the cashier who prepares the manual Mail Log or the cashier who issues receipts. The Reconciler should sign the "Reconciled by" line on the manual Mail Log after the reconciliation is completed. See [02-03.01 Reconciliation](#).

## **Procedures:**

### **Responsible Action**

#### **Appellate/District/Juvenile Courts Mail Log Clerk**

1. Record all payments received in the mail/drop box by creating a manual Mail Log, as per policy.
2. Give the original copy of the manual mail log to the accountant for reconciliation. Give the duplicate copy of the manual mail log with the mail payments to a cashier.
3. If an undeliverable jury/witness check is included on a mail log, a copy of the mail log along with the check needs to be provided to the employee designated as the custodian. See Section 10 Jury & Witness, [10-04 Undeliverable Jury Checks](#).
4. If an undeliverable trust check is included on the mail log, attempt to locate a new address for 2 weeks. Indicate on the log the outcome and turn a copy of the log to the accountant who will also inform the check writer of the new address to update on the computer.
5. If an address of a trust check is not found within 2 weeks,
  - a. tear off the signatures of the trust check (or blacken) before giving the check to the check writer to void. See Section 06 Trust, [06-03 Lost and Void Checks](#))
  - b. note the outcome on the mail log and turn a copy of the log to the accountant.

#### **Cashier**

1. A cashier will create a receipt for each payment in the batch by selecting the mail payment box. If both the Mail Log Preparer and Witness sign the Mail Log attesting to the accuracy of the payments listed, either employee can receipt mail payments on the computer if s/he is a Cashier. See Section 01 General Information, [01-06 Separation of Duties Section](#).
2. Restrictively endorse all checks received by mail as soon as the payment is identified by applying the standard stamp.

3. Identify items on the duplicate Mail Log which cannot be receipted, noting the reason and action taken. Possible reasons for not entering payments would include account currently paid in full, a payment which should go to another court, or insufficient information to receipt. When returning a payment to the payer, record contact information on the mail log. **No copy of the check should be made and retained.** If questions related to the payment arise at a later date, this information can be used to contact the payer.
4. All copies of the mail log to account for mail payments must be turned in to the accountant for reconciliation.

### **Juror/Witness Custodian**

1. Sign the mail log documenting the receipt of the undeliverable check.
2. Secure the log and check in a locked device pending re-mailing or voiding.
3. Provide a copy of the undeliverable check to the FINET payables clerk to find a current address.
4. If an address is found within 2 weeks,
  - a. mail the check
  - b. note the outcome on the mail log copy and turn in the log to the accountant.
5. If an address of a juror/witness check is not found within 2 weeks,
6. the custodian records the check on an Undeliverable Juror/Witness Payment Log and secures the check. See Section 10 Jury & Witness, [10-04 Undeliverable Jury Checks](#) for specific recording/handling).
  - a. Along with the FINET payables clerk, note the outcome on the mail log and turn in the log to the accountant