

false, or assumed name, title, or address in conducting, promoting, or carrying on or assisting therein, by means of the postal services of the United States, an activity in violation of sections 1302, 1341, and 1342 of title 18, it may—

(1) withhold mail so addressed from delivery; and

(2) require the party claiming the mail to furnish proof to it of the claimant's identity and right to receive the mail.

(b) The Postal Service may issue an order directing that mail, covered by subsection (a) of this section, be forwarded to a dead letter office as fictitious matter, or be returned to the sender when—

(1) the party claiming the mail fails to furnish proof of his identity and right to receive the mail; or

(2) the Postal Service determines that the mail is addressed to a fictitious, false, or assumed name, title, or address.

(Pub. L. 91-375, Aug. 12, 1970, 84 Stat. 746.)

Statutory Notes and Related Subsidiaries

EFFECTIVE DATE

Section effective July 1, 1971, pursuant to Resolution No. 71-9 of the Board of Governors. See section 15(a) of Pub. L. 91-375, set out as a note preceding section 101 of this title.

§ 3004. Delivery of mail to persons not residents of the place of address

Whenever the Postal Service determines that letters or parcels sent in the mail are addressed to places not the residence or regular business address of the person for whom they are intended, to enable the person to escape identification, the Postal Service may deliver the mail only upon identification of the person so addressed.

(Pub. L. 91-375, Aug. 12, 1970, 84 Stat. 747.)

Statutory Notes and Related Subsidiaries

EFFECTIVE DATE

Section effective July 1, 1971, pursuant to Resolution No. 71-9 of the Board of Governors. See section 15(a) of Pub. L. 91-375, set out as a note preceding section 101 of this title.

§ 3005. False representations; lotteries

(a) Upon evidence satisfactory to the Postal Service that any person is engaged in conducting a scheme or device for obtaining money or property through the mail by means of false representations, including the mailing of matter which is nonmailable under section 3001(d), (h), (i), (j), or (k) of this title, or is engaged in conducting a lottery, gift enterprise, or scheme for the distribution of money or of real or personal property, by lottery, chance, or drawing of any kind, the Postal Service may issue an order which—

(1) directs the postmaster of the post office at which mail arrives, addressed to such a person or to his representative, to return such mail to the sender appropriately marked as in violation of this section, if the person, or his representative, is first notified and given rea-

sonable opportunity to be present at the receiving post office to survey the mail before the postmaster returns the mail to the sender;

(2) forbids the payment by a postmaster to the person or his representative of any money order or postal note drawn to the order of either and provides for the return to the remitter of the sum named in the money order or postal note; and

(3) requires the person or his representative to cease and desist from engaging in any such scheme, device, lottery, or gift enterprise.

For purposes of the preceding sentence, the mailing of matter which is nonmailable under such section 3001(d), (h), (i), (j), or (k) by any person shall constitute prima facie evidence that such person is engaged in conducting a scheme or device for obtaining money or property through the mail by false representations.

(b) The public advertisement by a person engaged in activities covered by subsection (a) of this section, that remittances may be made by mail to a person named in the advertisement, is prima facie evidence that the latter is the agent or representative of the advertiser for the receipt of remittances on behalf of the advertiser. The Postal Service may ascertain the existence of the agency in any other legal way satisfactory to it.

(c) As used in this section, the term "representative" includes an agent or representative acting as an individual or as a firm, bank, corporation, or association of any kind.

(d) Nothing in this section shall prohibit the mailing of (1) publications containing advertisements, lists of prizes, or information concerning a lottery, which are exempt, pursuant to section 1307 of title 18 of the United States Code, from the provisions of sections 1301, 1302, 1303, and 1304 of title 18 of the United States Code, (2) tickets or other materials concerning such a lottery within that State to addresses within that State, or (3) an advertisement promoting the sale of a book or other publication, or a solicitation to purchase, or a purchase order for any such publication, if (A) such advertisement, solicitation, or purchase order is not materially false or misleading in its description of the publication; (B) such advertisement, solicitation, or purchase order contains no material misrepresentation of fact: *Provided, however,* That no statement quoted or derived from the publication shall constitute a misrepresentation of fact as long as such statement complies with the requirements of subparagraphs (A) and (C); and (C) the advertisement, solicitation, or purchase order accurately discloses the source of any statements quoted or derived from the publication. Paragraph (3) shall not be applicable to any publication, advertisement, solicitation, or purchase order which is used to sell some other product in which the publisher or author has a financial interest as part of a commercial scheme. For the purposes of this subsection, "State" means a State of the United States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and any territory or possession of the United States.

(e)(1) In conducting an investigation to determine if a person is engaged in any of the activities covered by subsection (a) of this section, the

Postmaster General (or any duly authorized agent of the Postmaster General) may tender, at any reasonable time and by any reasonable means, the price advertised or otherwise requested for any article or service that such person has offered to provide through the mails.

(2) A failure to provide the article or service offered after the Postmaster General or his agent has tendered the price advertised or otherwise requested in the manner described in paragraph (1) of this subsection, and any reasons for such failure, may be considered in a proceeding held under section 3007 of this title to determine if there is probable cause to believe that a violation of this section has occurred.

(3) The Postmaster General shall prescribe regulations under which any individual seeking to make a purchase on behalf of the Postal Service under this subsection from any person shall—

(A) identify himself as an employee or authorized agent of the Postal Service, as the case may be;

(B) state the nature of the conduct under investigation; and

(C) inform such person that the failure to complete the transaction may be considered in a proceeding under section 3007 of this title to determine probable cause, in accordance with paragraph (2) of this subsection.

(Pub. L. 91-375, Aug. 12, 1970, 84 Stat. 747; Pub. L. 93-583, §4, Jan. 2, 1975, 88 Stat. 1916; Pub. L. 94-525, §2, Oct. 17, 1976, 90 Stat. 2478; Pub. L. 95-360, Sept. 9, 1978, 92 Stat. 594; Pub. L. 98-186, §2, Nov. 30, 1983, 97 Stat. 1315; Pub. L. 100-625, §2(c), Nov. 7, 1988, 102 Stat. 3205; Pub. L. 101-524, §2(b), Nov. 6, 1990, 104 Stat. 2302; Pub. L. 102-71, §2(2), July 10, 1991, 105 Stat. 330; Pub. L. 106-168, title I, §§104, 105(b)(2)(A), Dec. 12, 1999, 113 Stat. 1810, 1811; Pub. L. 109-435, title X, §1010(g)(3), Dec. 20, 2006, 120 Stat. 3262.)

Editorial Notes

AMENDMENTS

2006—Subsec. (a). Pub. L. 109-435 substituted “under section 3001(d),” for “under 3001(d),” in introductory provisions and “under such section 3001(d),” for “under such 3001(d),” in concluding provisions.

1999—Subsec. (a). Pub. L. 106-168, §104, in two places, struck out “or” after “(h),” and inserted “, (j), or (k)” after “(i)”.

Subsec. (c). Pub. L. 106-168, §105(b)(2)(A), substituted “section,” for “section and section 3006 of this title.”

1991—Subsec. (a). Pub. L. 102-71 substituted “3001(d), (h), or (i)” for “section 3001(d), (f), or (g)” in two places.

1990—Subsec. (a). Pub. L. 101-524 substituted “section 3001(d), (f), or (g)” for “section 3001(d)” in two places.

1988—Subsec. (d)(1). Pub. L. 100-625 amended cl. (1) generally. Prior to amendment, cl. (1) read as follows: “a newspaper of general circulation containing advertisements, lists of prizes, or information concerning a lottery conducted by a State acting under authority of State law, published in that State, or in an adjacent State which conducts such a lottery.”

1983—Subsec. (a)(3). Pub. L. 98-186, §2(a), added par. (3).

Subsec. (d). Pub. L. 98-186, §2(b), struck out “or” before “(2)”, inserted “or” before “(3)”, and inserted cl. (3) and provision relating to applicability of cl. (3).

Subsec. (e). Pub. L. 98-186, §2(c), added subsec. (e).

1978—Subsec. (a). Pub. L. 95-360 inserted provisions relating to nonmailable matter under section 3001(d) of this title.

1976—Subsec. (d). Pub. L. 94-525 substituted “a newspaper of general circulation containing advertisements, lists of prizes, or information concerning a lottery conducted by a State acting under authority of State law, published in that State, or in an adjacent State which conducts such a lottery,” for “a newspaper of general circulation published in a State containing advertisements, lists of prizes, or information concerning a lottery conducted by that State acting under authority of State law.”

1975—Subsec. (d). Pub. L. 93-583 added subsec. (d).

Statutory Notes and Related Subsidiaries

EFFECTIVE DATE OF 1999 AMENDMENT

Amendment by Pub. L. 106-168 effective 120 days after Dec. 12, 1999, see section 111 of Pub. L. 106-168, set out as a note under section 3001 of this title.

EFFECTIVE DATE OF 1990 AMENDMENT

Amendment by Pub. L. 101-524 effective Nov. 6, 1990, and applicable to matter deposited for mailing and delivery on or after 180 days after Nov. 6, 1990, see section 6 of Pub. L. 101-524, set out as a note under section 3001 of this title.

EFFECTIVE DATE OF 1988 AMENDMENT

Amendment by Pub. L. 100-625 effective 18 months after Nov. 7, 1988, see section 5 of Pub. L. 100-625, set out as a note under section 1304 of Title 18, Crimes and Criminal Procedure.

EFFECTIVE DATE

Section effective July 1, 1971, pursuant to Resolution No. 71-9 of the Board of Governors. See section 15(a) of Pub. L. 91-375, set out as a note preceding section 101 of this title.

CONSUMER EDUCATION PROGRAM ON SCHEMES INVOLVING FALSE REPRESENTATIONS

Pub. L. 98-186, §4, Nov. 30, 1983, 97 Stat. 1317, as amended by Pub. L. 104-66, title II, §2211(a), Dec. 21, 1995, 109 Stat. 732; Pub. L. 117-286, §4(b)(68), Dec. 27, 2022, 136 Stat. 4350, provided that:

“(a) As soon as practicable after the date of enactment of this Act [Nov. 30, 1983], the Postmaster General or his designee, following consultation with representatives of the mail order industry, shall develop and carry out a program designed to provide consumer education to the public on schemes involving false representations through use of the mails, including the dissemination of information on recognizing practices commonly associated with such schemes, as well as appropriate measures which an individual may take upon receiving mail matter which the individual believes may be part of such a scheme.

“(b) A summary of the activities carried out under subsection (a) shall be included in the first semiannual report submitted each year as required under section 405 of title 5, United States Code.”

§ 3006. Repealed. Pub. L. 106-168, title I, § 105(b)(1), Dec. 12, 1999, 113 Stat. 1811

Section, Pub. L. 91-375, Aug. 12, 1970, 84 Stat. 747, prohibited persons from obtaining or attempting to obtain remittances of money or property of any kind through the mail for an obscene, lewd, lascivious, indecent, filthy, or vile thing.

Statutory Notes and Related Subsidiaries

EFFECTIVE DATE OF REPEAL

Repeal effective 120 days after Dec. 12, 1999, see section 111 of Pub. L. 106-168, set out as an Effective Date of 1999 Amendment note under section 3001 of this title.

§ 3007. Detention of mail for temporary periods

(a)(1) In preparation for or during the pendency of proceedings under section 3005, the Post-