SOP: Inspection Protocol for Suspicious or Damaged Mail

This SOP establishes a standardized **inspection protocol for suspicious or damaged mail** to ensure the safety and security of personnel and property. It includes procedures for initial identification, handling and containment, use of personal protective equipment, notification of appropriate authorities, documentation and reporting, and guidelines for further investigation and disposal of hazardous materials. The goal is to minimize risk and effectively respond to potential threats posed by suspicious mail items.

1. Purpose

To outline procedures for safely inspecting, containing, and reporting suspicious or damaged mail to minimize risk to personnel and property.

2. Scope

This SOP applies to all personnel responsible for receiving, inspecting, or handling incoming mail at the facility.

3. Definitions

Term	Definition
Suspicious Mail	Mail exhibiting unusual characteristics (e.g., excessive postage, no return address, stains, strange odors) or contents that may pose a threat.
Damaged Mail	Mail that appears torn, crushed, leaking, or otherwise compromised.
PPE	Personal Protective Equipment such as gloves, masks, and eye protection.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

- **Mailroom Staff:** Identify and report suspicious/damaged mail, execute initial containment.
- **Security/Safety Personnel:** Assess threats and coordinate with authorities.
- **Facility Manager:** Ensure SOP compliance and staff training.

5. Procedure

1. **Initial Identification**
   - Visually inspect all mail for unusual markings, odors, stains, protrusions, or excessive packaging.
   - Do not open any mail that appears suspicious or is damaged.
2. **Handling and Containment**
   - Isolate the item and prevent others from handling it.
   - Do not shake, bump, or excessively handle the mail.
   - Place the item in a sealable bag or container if possible, or cover it with a box or basket.
3. **PPE Use**
   - Wear disposable gloves and masks as a precaution.
   - Avoid touching face and wash hands thoroughly after handling suspicious items.
4. **Notification**
   - Immediately notify security personnel and the facility manager.
   - If a threat is present, call emergency services (e.g., 911).

5. **Documentation and Reporting**
    - Record details: date, time, description of the item, name of staff involved, actions taken.
    - Photograph the item if safe to do so.
    - Complete an incident report and submit to security/management.
6. **Investigation and Disposal**
    - Cooperate fully with authorities during investigation.
    - Do not attempt to open or further inspect the item unless directed by professionals.
    - Dispose of hazardous items only following guidance from authorized personnel or hazardous materials teams.

6. Training

All staff involved in handling mail must receive annual training on this SOP and emergency procedures for suspicious items.

7. Review and Update

This SOP shall be reviewed annually and updated as necessary based on changes in risk, procedures, or regulations.