

535 Maintenance Service Contracts

535.1 General

535.11 Use

535.111 Postal Equipment. Maintenance of postal equipment should be performed by USPS personnel, whenever possible. *Exceptions:*

- a. Where capable personnel are not available, or
- b. When a piece of equipment is a prototype or experimental model or unusually complex, so that a commercial firm is the only practical source of required maintenance expertise.

535.112 Facility and Plant Equipment. Contract service is encouraged for USPS-operated facility and plant equipment maintenance, when economically advantageous.

535.12 Procurement of Contracts

535.121 Authority. All service contract procurement must comply with delegated contracting authority and procurement regulations for service contracts specified in Pub. 41. These are also subject to funds availability.

535.122 Divisional Approval

- a. Pub. 41 requires Divisional approval of proposed solicitations under certain circumstances.
- b. When proposing a major revision to provisions of an existing contract, consider submitting the proposal to the Procurement and Materiel Management Service Center/Office (P&MMSC0/0).

535.13 National Agreement Considerations. Installation heads must be knowledgeable about Article 32, Subcontracting, of the National Agreement with the postal unions, before considering contract maintenance service.

535.2 Contract Criteria

535.21 Removal of Ashes and Rubbish. Contract service may be authorized when the municipality or lessor is not obligated to provide removal services. When contractors are required to use USPS-owned equipment, such as crane hoists or elevators, to remove ashes and rubbish from the premises, they must use the equipment according to safety rules established by the postmaster. The postmaster must have this equipment inspected periodically to ensure its safe operating condition.

535.22 Cloth and Laundry Service. Contract service may be authorized when necessary.

535.23 Window Cleaning and Snow and Ice Removal. Contract service may be authorized only when the work cannot be done expediently by the existing maintenance workforce. Lobby windows are washed weekly. Other exterior windows are washed as scheduled.

535.24 Air Conditioning Service. Contract service may be authorized for facilities in which the USPS is responsible for operating and maintaining certain

types of air conditioning equipment. Handbook MS-24, *Heating, Cooling, and Ventilating*, specifies instructions for use of air conditioning contract maintenance service. This handbook:

- a. Must be followed by post offices with central air conditioning systems using chillers, water cooling towers, and air handlers.
- b. Is available to offices with self-contained units with compressors rated at 5 tons or above, if the USPS is responsible for maintenance of the air conditioning equipment.

535.25 Elevator, Escalator, and Dumbwaiter Service

535.251 Contract service may be authorized for facilities in which the USPS is responsible for operating and maintaining elevators, escalators, or dumbwaiters. The Postal Service has this responsibility in all USPS-owned facilities. In leased facilities, the USPS generally has routine maintenance responsibility and sometimes has repair and replacement responsibility. In questionable cases, review the lease.

535.252 Routine maintenance of this equipment (inspection, adjusting, cleaning, oiling, and greasing) requires highly technical skills. Post offices that do not have employees with these skills should request authority to procure the necessary maintenance service under contract with a qualified elevator maintenance company.

535.26 Cleaning Services

535.261 Authorization

- a. When a vacancy as a result of an employee's voluntary attrition is identified in an independent installation with 39 hours or less of custodial cleaning per week, the following sequential actions will be taken:
 - (1) A cost ascertainment study will be undertaken to determine if it is more economical to utilize a contract cleaning service or a career maintenance employee to perform the required work.
 - (2) For purposes of the comparison, the salary of \$19,960 and the benefits appropriate to that salary will be utilized.
 - (3) If the determination is made to utilize a contract cleaning service, the local APWU President will be provided a copy of the cost comparison and management's determination.
- b. When a vacancy as a result of an employee's voluntary attrition is identified in a station and/or branch of an independent installation with 39 hours or less of custodial cleaning, the following sequential actions will be taken:
 - (1) Before proceeding to ascertain whether custodial cleaning services can be contracted, local management shall ascertain whether, consistent with the needs of the Service, the work hours of the vacated position can be combined with that of another career service maintenance employee's position to constitute either a full-time regular or expanded part-time regular maintenance position.