

TOWNS OF MAPLETON, CASTLE HILL, AND CHAPMAN MAILBOX REPLACEMENT POLICY

I. PURPOSE

During snowplowing operations, Towns of Mapleton, Castle Hill, and Chapman plows may damage or destroy privately owned mailboxes located in the street right of way. While there is no legal requirement for the Towns to replace these boxes, and the State of Maine and many municipalities do not, it has been the long-standing practice of the Towns to do so. In recent years, property owners have begun to install more expensive decorative mailboxes and support structures and have requested the Towns to install similar replacement mailboxes at a higher cost. In addition, the use of plastic mailboxes that are more easily damaged has increased. The purpose of this policy is to outline the circumstances under which the Towns will replace private mailboxes or reimburse owners who wish to purchase more expensive replacements than the Towns will provide.

II. ELIGIBILITY FOR REIMBURSEMENT

In order to be eligible for replacement or reimbursement, the following conditions must be met:

- II.1 The damaged mailbox and/or post must meet the requirements of the United States Postal Service in regard to construction and location. Mailbox design and installation standards are available from several sources, and mailbox owners are expected to consult this information prior to undertaking any mailbox installation or replacement. The following standards have nationwide relevance and were developed in cooperation with one another:
 - The United States Postal Service (USPS) Mailbox Guidelines. The USPS defines the standards for mailbox construction, as well as the placement tolerance that must be met to accommodate postal operations. Specifics may be obtained from your local post office or online at: <https://www.usps.com/manage/mailboxes.htm>
- II.2 The damage must have been caused by direct contact with Town's equipment. The Towns will not repair or replace mailboxes or posts damaged solely by snow thrown by Towns plowing or removal equipment.
- II.3 The property owner must notify the Towns within seven days of the date the damage occurred, unless the property owner/tenant/or individual responsible for the property was out of town at the time of occurrence. If the responsible party was out of town, the damage must be reported to the Towns within seven days of that individual's return.

III. POLICY

In the event that a mailbox and/or its support post is damaged or destroyed by Town's equipment engaged in snow plowing or snow removal operations, the Towns will offer the owner of the property the choice of one of the following options:

- III.1 The Towns will furnish and install a standardized replacement post and/or mailbox selected by the Towns.
- III.2 Where a more expensive decorative mailbox/post is involved, the Towns will offer the option of reimbursing the owner in an amount equal to the cost of the standard post and/or mailbox offered by the Towns, up to a maximum of \$75.00.

IV. HIGHWAY RESPONSIBILITIES

- IV.1 The Road Commissioner shall annually establish the dollar amount of reimbursement to be provided in accordance with section III.2 above. This amount shall be based on the actual cost to the Towns of a standard post and/or mailbox.
- IV.2 The Highway Department shall install a new box and/or post for those residents eligible for this option or who request it. Where this work cannot be performed within seven days for any reason, including frozen ground, the Department shall either make temporary repairs or provide a temporary mailbox installation sufficient to allow the postal service to resume mail delivery.
- IV.3 Where reimbursement has been requested for a more expensive decorative mailbox and the presence of frozen ground can reasonably be determined to make installation impractical, the Highway Department shall also install a temporary box and/or post as outlined in section IV.2 above.
- IV.4 The Road Commissioner shall periodically review this policy and, when necessary, recommend changes or revisions to it to the Towns Manager and Joint Select Board.

V. Effective Date

This policy shall be effective as of June 14, 2022, and will remain in force indefinitely unless amended or rescinded by the Joint Select Board.