

NIH POLICY MANUAL

26101-35-1 - USE OF OFFICIAL TELEGRAPH SERVICES

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1. **Explanation of Material Transmitted:** This chapter is being revised to reflect organizational changes within the former Division of Technical Services, currently the Telecommunications Branch, Office of the Director, Office of Research Services.
2. **Filing Instructions:**

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A. Purpose:

This chapter outlines policies and procedures for official use of telegraph services by NIH personnel. Included are the types of telegraphic services available, guidelines for using the services, and references for current rate information.

B. Responsibilities:

The Telecommunications Branch (TCB), Office of Research Services (ORS), has overall responsibility for NIH telegraph services. TCB receives and forwards all charges incurred to the Office of Financial Management, Commercial Accounts Branch.

C. Definitions:

Telegraphic services include the following terms:

1. Cablegram - An international telegraphic message to an addressee outside continental North America. This service is available to all countries, usually with a one day delivery service.
2. Mailgram - A computer-generated telegraphic message to any location in the continental U.S. If transmitted before 7:00 p.m., the message will be sent to the postal service the following working day for delivery to the addressee.
3. Priority Message - A computer-generated message to any telephone number in the continental U.S. Addressee receives message by telephone as soon as it is received.
4. Telegram - A telegraphic message to any location in the U.S., Canada and Mexico. The message will be read to the addressee over the telephone, and a copy delivered the following day.
5. Telex - A domestic or international telegraphic message transmitted from an NIH Telex terminal directly to an addressee possessing a Telex Number.

D. Policy:

1. Telegraph services shall be used only when:
 - a. There is a need for a means of communication more rapid than that provided by regular, air, or express mail.
 - b. It is more economical or practical than other means of rapid communications, such as express mail and long distance telephone calls.
2. Telex is the preferred type of service to be used since, except for fax, it is generally cheaper and faster. When sending a telegraphic message, use a telex number whenever one is available. Telex numbers can be obtained either from the addressee or by calling RCA Globe Corp., 1-800-526-3969, or ACTION TELEX, 202-861-0616 using an FTS 2000 calling card.
3. All NIH organizations will be billed monthly for telegraphic services by the Office of Financial Management, Commercial Accounts Branch.
4. Messages which are estimated to cost more than \$500 must be approved in advance by the sender's Administrative Officer (AO) or by another authorized official, using Form NIH-2619 "Request for Transmission of Telegraphic Message" (Appendix 1). Use Form NIH-2619 for additional pages. Copies of Form NIH-2619 may be requested by calling the TCB at 594-9403.
5. Telegrams may be received collect only when directly related to official business (including telegrams concerning admission to the Clinical Center). Personal telegrams shall neither be sent nor accepted at Government expense. Employees who need to send personal telegrams may telephone a commercial telegraph office and charge the cost of such messages to their home telephone

number. The following are examples of personal telegrams:

- a. Messages requesting leave or an extension of leave.
- b. Messages concerning applications for positions, unless sent by Personnel Officers.
- c. Messages from employees concerning their salary checks or expense vouchers.
- d. Congratulatory or condolence messages that are not initiated by the Immediate Office of the Director, NIH, or an ICD Director.
- e. Messages concerning hotel reservations, except those stemming from conferences sponsored by the Federal Government or otherwise connected with official travel. Such messages must refer to the sponsored conference or the official business involved.

Rates:

The TCB Message Center will select the most economical form of telegraph use consistent with urgency, number of addresses, and length of message. Rates for the various types of telegraphic services may be obtained by calling the Message Center at 594-4516. Clinical Center (CC) patients should call the NIH Telephone operator, by dialing 0. The CC Agent Cashier receives the charges for telegraphic services incurred by CC patients.

F. Procedures:

1. Within the Greater Metropolitan Area:
 - a. Receiving Messages: Persons wishing to send telegraphic messages to NIH should be informed of the following numbers:

NIH Telex number: 248232-NIH-UR

(1) During regular working hours: Telegrams received during regular working hours will be telephoned to the addressee as soon as received. A copy of the message may be picked up at the TCB Message Center, Bldg. 10, Room B1A08; otherwise, it will be sent to the addressee through the NIH mail.

(2) Outside regular working hours: After regular working hours, all telegrams are received by the NIH telephone operators. Addressee will be telephoned the following working morning, and a copy of the message will be sent through the NIH mail.

Note: Telegrams which need immediate action will be telephoned to the addressee as soon as received, regardless of the time. In the event the

recipient cannot be readily reached, continued efforts will be made periodically until the message is delivered.

(3) Collect Telegrams: For billing purposes, copies of collect telegrams will be forwarded by TCB to the appropriate ICD for certification. The ICD then returns certified copy of the telegram to TCB. Only telegrams concerning admissions to the Clinical Center or other official business may be received collect.

- b. Sending Messages: All messages should be typed double space and in all capital letters on Form NIH-2619, signed by the sender and the ICD Administrative Officer (or other approving official as identified by the ICD), and delivered to the TCB Message Center, Building 10, Room B1A31. Include telex number, if known. If transmission is urgent, call 496-4516.

(1) During regular working hours (8:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.):

- (a) Submit a telegraph communication on a properly executed Form NIH-2619 and forward it to the TCB Message Center, Building 10, Room B1A31, no later than 4:30 p.m.

(b) If the telegram is URGENT and there is not sufficient time to prepare and forward Form NIH-2619, the message may be telephoned by the sender to the Message Center (496-5671) but Form NIH-2619 must be submitted the following work-morning with a note stating that the message was already sent.

(2) Outside regular working hours: For Telegrams and Cablegrams, call ACTION TELEX (202-861-0616) using an FTS 2000 calling card and give the NIH account number, sender's name, organization, and CAN number. Send a completed Form NIH-2619 to the Message Center the following work-morning with a note stating that the message was already phoned in to ACTION TELEX.

Note: The use of commercial telegraph services outside regular Government working hours incurs extra charges, and in many instances results in slower delivery. This practice should be restricted to instances of extreme urgency.

(3) NIH Personnel on Travel Status: All NIH Personnel on travel should contact ACTION TELEX (202-861-0616) using their FTS 2000 calling card and provide ACTION TELEX with the name of the Institute they represent, building and room number where they are located, and the local telephone number where they can be reached in case of any problems with the telegram. Collect messages from employees to any other address must be sent at their own expense.

When employees on travel pay for official telegrams, they may claim reimbursement for this expense on their travel voucher, according to Government travel regulations.

2. Outside the Greater Metropolitan Area: The officials in charge of field installations are responsible for the use of commercial telegraph services by their offices and laboratories. Only those individuals or their designees are authorized to obtain telegraph services for the purpose of dispatching official telegrams, cablegrams, etc.

The ICDs are liable for all telegraph services used by their field installations in connection with official business. Invoices received by the ICDs from their field installations must be sent to the TCB for certification and delivery to the Office of Financial Management, Commercial Accounts Branch.

3. Telegraph Services for Clinical Center Patients: Clinical Center patients should dial 496-3135 for assistance.
4. Telegraph Services for Guest Workers and Visitors: Guest Workers may be authorized by their respective ICD host to send official telegrams at Government expense, provided that a Form NIH-2619 is used and that it is signed by an authorized official of the host ICD.

Visitors who are informal participants in scientific activities or observers having no formal relationship with NIH must send all telegraphic messages via a commercial vendor at their own expense.

G. Additional Information:

Additional information may be obtained by calling the Message Center, TCB, ORS, at 496-4516.

H. Records Retention and Disposal:

For this chapter, records pertaining to NIH Use of Official Telegraph Services are retained and disposed of under the authority of NIH Manual [1743](#) "Keeping and Destroying Records," Appendix 1, "NIH Records Control Schedule," Item 1900-A-11.

For Appendix 1, please see paper copy.

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