

# **WHERE IS IT IN WRITING ABOUT THE USE OF TAPE RECORDERS?**

- **Employee and Labor Relations Manual  
(ELM) Section 668.29**

- “During the course of activities related to postal employment, no postal employee will record, monitor, or otherwise intercept the oral or wire communications of any other person through the use of any electronic, mechanical, or other device, nor listen in on a telephone conversation, nor direct another to do so, unless all parties involved in the communication consent to such interception.”

**668.27 Obstructing the Mail**

*The United States Code, Title 18, Section 1701*, provides penalties for persons who knowingly and willfully obstruct or retard the mail. The statute does not afford employees immunity from arrest for violations of law.

**668.28 Giving Testimony or Campaigning for Additional Transportation Services**

Postmasters and other field officials will not furnish postal information or testimonial statements or letters which purport to reflect postal needs to civic bodies or rail or air common carriers to be used in support of applications for new or additional common carrier service at a given community. Refer such requests for postal information to Headquarters. When there are justifiable reasons for recommending changes in transportation services, furnish a complete report to the proper official at Headquarters; then await specific instructions before engaging in any local activity or hearing relative to such changes.

**668.29 Interception of Oral or Wire Communications by Postal Employees**

668.291 During the course of activities related to postal employment, no postal employee will record, monitor, or otherwise intercept the oral or wire communications of any other person through the use of any electronic, mechanical, or other device, nor listen in on a telephone conversation, nor direct another to do so, unless all parties involved in the communication consent to such interception.

668.292 This section does not apply to Postal Inspectors while acting in the course of their official duties. The conduct of Postal Inspectors in this area will be in accord with applicable federal statutes governing the interception of wire or oral communications by law enforcement officers.

668.293 For the purposes of this section, the terms oral communication, wire communication, intercept, and electronic, mechanical, or other device have the meaning used in Chapter 119, Title 18, United States Code.

**668.3 Records, Information, and Associated Processing Systems and Equipment****668.31 Purpose**

Federal law and sound business practice require compliance with certain rules over the uses and protection of information and information processing resources owned by the Postal Service. These rules apply specifically to those types of Postal Service property emphasized in the definition at 669.j. They are provided here for current and former employees' knowledge and also for management's use as a basis for ensuring compliance and taking disciplinary action, when appropriate. They supplement sections 661.414, 661.42j, 661.52, 661.73, 668.118 and 668.21 above.