

December 31, 2024

Postal Primer: Overview of the USPS Board of Governors

The U.S. Postal Service (USPS) is under the direction of the Postal Board of Governors, which USPS describes as “comparable to a board of directors of a private corporation.” Created by the Postal Reorganization Act in 1970 (P.L. 91-375), the board consists of the postmaster general, the deputy postmaster general, and nine governors appointed by the President with the advice and consent of the Senate. This In Focus provides an overview of the board, including its statutory authorities, current members, and pending nominations.

For additional information, see CRS Report R45280, *U.S. Postal Service Board of Governors: Background, Pending Nominees, and Issues for Congress*.

Members of the Board

The board is to be composed of no more than nine governors, the postmaster general, and the deputy postmaster general. Originally, postal governors served nine-year terms, with the first nine appointees serving staggered terms of one to nine years. The 2006 Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act (PAEA, P.L. 109-435) reduced the governors’ terms to seven years, with a limit of two terms. Additionally, a governor may continue to serve an additional “holdover” year following the expiration of his or her term pending the confirmation of a successor. There are no term limits for the postmaster general or deputy postmaster general.

Appointment and Removal of the Postmaster General and Deputy Postmaster General

Unlike the heads of most other federal agencies, the postmaster general is appointed (and may be removed) by the governors rather than the President (39 U.S.C. §202(c)). Appointment and removal of the postmaster general requires “a favorable vote of an absolute majority of the Governors in office” (39 C.F.R. §6.6(a)). The postmaster general’s term is set by the governors.

The deputy postmaster general is appointed jointly by the governors and the postmaster general. Appointment or removal of the deputy requires “a favorable vote of an absolute majority of the Governors in office and the Postmaster General” (39 C.F.R. §6.6(b)). The deputy’s term is set by the governors and the postmaster general.

Appointment and Removal of the Governors

Postal governors are appointed by the President with the advice and consent of the Senate (39 U.S.C. §202(a)). The PAEA requires that governors represent the public interest and that at least four governors be chosen based on their demonstrated ability to manage organizations with at least 50,000 employees (39 U.S.C. §202(a)(1)). No more than five governors may belong to the same political party.

Table 1. Postal Governors, as of December 27, 2024

Governor	Appointed by	Term Expires
Roman Martinez IV	President Trump	December 8, 2024 (serving a holdover year that ends December 8, 2025)
Robert M. Duncan	President Trump	December 8, 2025
Amber F. McReynolds	President Biden	December 8, 2026
Daniel Mark Tangherlini	President Biden	December 8, 2027
Derek Kan	President Biden	December 8, 2028
Ronald A. Stroman	President Biden	December 8, 2028

Sources: Congress.gov; USPS, “Leadership: Members of the Board of Governors,” <https://about.usps.com/who/leadership/board-governors>.

Note: Robert M. Duncan and Ronald A. Stroman are in their second terms. All others are eligible for reappointment.

Vacancies and Pending Nomination

As of December 27, 2024, there are three vacancies for postal governor. In addition, Roman Martinez IV, whose term expired on December 8, 2024, is currently serving a holdover year until his replacement is confirmed. As of December 27, 2024, there are four pending nominations:

- Gordon Hartogensis for term ending December 8, 2031.
- Val Butler Demings for term ending December 8, 2030.
- William D. Zollars for term ending December 8, 2029. This would be his second term. He previously served as governor from June 22, 2020, until his holdover year ended on December 8, 2023.
- Anton G. Hajjar for term ending December 8, 2029. This would be his second term. He previously served as governor from June 15, 2021, until his holdover year ended on December 8, 2024.

President Biden withdrew his nomination of Martin Joseph Walsh on November 14, 2024. Three of the remaining nominees were reported favorably by the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs on November 20, 2024, and placed on the Senate calendar following their confirmation hearings. The fourth was referred to the committee on December 16, 2024.

Requirements for a Quorum

Under Title 39, Section 205, of the *U.S. Code*, vacancies do not prevent the board from conducting its business so long

as there is a quorum of members. To have a quorum, at least six members of the board must be present (either in person or via teleconference). For example, if the postmaster general, deputy postmaster general, and at least four governors are present, then the board would have a quorum for the transaction of business.

The board was without a quorum from December 8, 2014, through August 20, 2019, when the number of governors dropped to three. Immediately prior to the loss of its quorum, the board adopted a resolution delegating its authority to a Temporary Emergency Committee (TEC) in order to “provide for continuity of [postal] operations.” The TEC continued to exercise selected powers until the board had enough governors to constitute a quorum.

The board was also without a quorum from June 1, 2020, through June 18, 2020, following the resignation of the deputy postmaster general. For continuity of operations, the board again delegated its powers to the TEC.

In 2021, the board updated its bylaws regarding operations in the absence of a quorum:

When, by reason of death, incapacity, or disruption of transportation and communications, a quorum of the Board of Governors cannot reasonably be assembled, or when vacancies on the Board make it impossible for a quorum to assemble, the remaining members of the Board who are able to assemble are constituted a Temporary Emergency Committee of the Board of Governors (39 C.F.R. §6.8).

Authorities and Responsibilities of the Board and the Governors

Guided by statute and its bylaws, the board “directs the exercise of the powers of the Postal Service, reviews the practices and policies of the Postal Service, and directs and controls the expenditures of the Postal Service.” While the board decides many matters, selected matters are reserved for decision by the governors alone.

Matters for Decision by the Board

The board is responsible for setting the long-term plan of USPS, including approval of official statements on policy and on legislative proposals. The board approves the annual financial plan, operating plan, and capital plan. Authorization from the board is generally required prior to certain USPS changes to mail service standards.

Matters for Decision by the Governors

Certain responsibilities and authorities are exercised by the governors rather than by the board as a whole. For example, the governors establish rates and classes of competitive products (e.g., Priority Mail Express) and authorize rate adjustments for market dominant products (e.g., First Class Mail, Periodicals) pursuant to existing regulations and subject to review by the Postal Regulatory Commission. The governors (together with the postal commissioners) are responsible for appointment and removal of the USPS inspector general.

Committees and Activities of the Board

The board has four standing committees, established under Title 39, Section 5.1, of the *Code of Federal Regulations*, that assist in carrying out its responsibilities:

- The Audit and Finance Committee assists in the preparation of financial statements, reports, and audits.
- The Compensation and Governance Committee reviews proposals and policies related to postal compensation and USPS governance structure.
- The Election Mail Committee monitors USPS’s election cycle preparations and oversees USPS election mail processes and procedures.
- The Operations Committee monitors USPS operations and provides guidance on service performance and systemic changes to the mail network.

The board holds quarterly open board meetings on issues such as USPS’s financial status, mail volume, and service performance. In recent years, meetings included reports on the USPS Delivering for America Ten-Year Plan, USPS’s Next Generation Delivery Vehicle fleet, and the impact of the Postal Service Reform Act (P.L. 117-108) on USPS’s finances.

Funding and Compensation for the Board

Operational expenses for the board, including compensation for its members, are provided through the Postal Service Fund, a revolving fund that largely consists of revenues from the sale of postal products and services.

Compensation for Postal Governors

Pay for the governors is set by statute at \$30,000 per year plus \$300 per day for up to 42 meeting days per year. In FY2024, total pay for each governor ranged from \$35,805 to \$37,634, or an average of \$36,411.

Compensation for Postmaster General and Deputy Postmaster General

The governors set the pay for the postmaster general and deputy postmaster general. Their pay may include base salaries, bonuses, and performance-based incentives. Both the postmaster general and the deputy postmaster general are eligible for USPS pension benefits and may receive additional compensation for things such as travel expenditures and security detail services.

In FY2024, the postmaster general’s base salary was \$336,399, and his total compensation (including incentive compensation and change to pension value) was \$561,051. The deputy postmaster’s FY2024 base salary was \$323,077, and his total compensation was \$666,582, including a \$232,916 change in pension value. The current deputy postmaster general began his career at USPS in 1980 and has served in executive USPS positions since 2005, which may account for the relatively higher value of his pension.

Michelle D. Christensen, Analyst in Government Organization and Management

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