

Chapter 500 Receipt and Handling of Mail and Papers

- 501 Papers Received by Mail Branch
- 502 Depositing Papers
- 503 Serial Number and Filing Receipt
- 504 Register of Applications
- 505 "Office Date" Stamp of Receipt
- 506 Completeness of Original Application
- 506.01 Return of Incomplete Application
- 507 Drafting Branch
- 508 Distribution
- 508.01 Papers Sent to Wrong Group
- 508.02 Papers Received After Patenting or Abandonment

501 Papers Received by Mail Branch

All communications are received by the Incoming-Mail Section of the Correspondence and Mail Branch, which opens and distributes all official mail.

502 Depositing Papers

The application having been prepared and executed, it can be sent to the Patent Office by mail or express, or may be delivered by hand.

Amendments and other papers reach the Office by mail, or in Washington they may be deposited in the Mail Branch or in a box which is kept at the Patent Office for this purpose.

The previous practice of hand delivery of officially date-stamped papers has been discontinued. A duplicate copy of such papers may be hand delivered. See 104, 710.02(e) and 713.01.

Rule 6. Receipt of letters and papers. (a) Letters and other papers received in the Patent Office are stamped with the date of receipt. No papers are received in the Patent Office on Saturdays, Sundays or holidays within the District of Columbia.

(b) Mail placed in the Patent Office pouch up to midnight on weekdays, excepting holidays, by the post office at Washington, D.C., serving the Patent Office, is considered as having been received in the Patent Office on the day it was so placed in the pouch.

(c) In addition to being mailed or delivered by hand during office hours, letters and other papers may be deposited up to midnight in a box provided at the guard's desk at the 14th and E Street entrance of the Patent Office on weekdays except Saturdays and holi-

days, and all papers deposited therein are considered as received in the Patent Office on the day of deposit.

503 Serial Number and Filing Receipt

It is most important that the Group number be typed on amendments and other communications relating to pending applications in order to expedite the handling of mail. The number of the Group should be placed on the right-hand side, opposite the Serial Number or name of applicant. In view of the vast amount of mail, continued careful attention to these details will do much toward avoiding delay in handling of mail.

In the Application Branch each application which meets the formal requirements as to completeness is immediately given a serial number and a filing date. Since the serial numbers are limited to six digits, a new series is started from time to time. The current series was started in 1960. It is therefore important, when referring to application files, to identify them by their filing dates as well as by serial numbers.

The Application Branch mails a receipt to the attorney or agent, if any, otherwise to the applicant, for each application filed, giving the serial number, filing date, and group to which assigned. The filing receipt may contain notations of apparent omissions. See 506.

In the Application Branch the application papers, with the exception of the drawing, are placed in a jacket and the data listed in 717.02 are placed thereon.

504 Register of Applications

The Application Branch assigns the application to the examining group to which it appears to belong. A list of all applications arranged by serial numbers as well as an alphabetically arranged card index of the applicants is kept by the Application Branch and the identification of the group to which each application is sent is made part of this record.

505 "Office Date" Stamp of Receipt

In whatever manner an application or any part thereof, or an amendment, letter, or other

