

Stamp subject selection criteria

The U.S. Postal Service and the members of the Citizens' Stamp Advisory Committee (CSAC) have set certain basic criteria used in determining the eligibility of subjects for commemoration on all U.S. stamps and stationery.

1. U.S. postage stamps and stationery will primarily feature American or American-related subjects. Other subjects may be considered if the subject had significant impact on American history, culture or environment.
2. The Postal Service will honor extraordinary and enduring contributions to American society, history, culture or environment.
3. U.S. stamp programs are planned and developed two to three years in advance. In order to be considered, subject matter suggestions should be submitted three or more years in advance of the proposed stamp.
4. Living people will not be considered at the present time. Beginning in 2018, proposals for a deceased individual will be considered three years following his/her death.
5. A memorial stamp will be issued honoring U.S. presidents after they are deceased.
6. Events of historical significance shall be considered for commemoration on anniversaries in multiples of 50 years.
7. A balance of stamp subjects that includes themes of widespread national appeal and significance will be considered for commemoration. Official postal cancellations, which may be arranged through the local postmaster, may be requested for significant local events or commemorations.
8. Commemorative postage stamps will be issued at intervals of 50 years from the date of the state's first entry into the Union.
9. The stamp program commemorates positive contributions to American life, history, culture and environment; therefore, negative occurrences and disasters will not be commemorated on U.S. postage stamps or stationery.
10. Due to the limitations placed on annual postal programs and the vast number of locales, organizations and institutions in existence, it would be difficult to single out any one of the following for commemoration: government agencies, localities, non-profit organizations, associations, and similar entities. Stamps or stationery items will not be issued to honor religious institutions or individuals whose principal achievements are associated with religious undertakings or beliefs. However, these subjects may be recognized with commemorative postmarks.
11. Stamps may be issued for the five active-duty branches – Air Force, Army, Navy, Marines, and Coast Guard. This includes Reserve/Guard components of the current organizational structure. Stamps for the major service academies will be considered on a case-by-case basis for 50-year anniversaries (or multiples thereof).