

# Distribution Services Handbook

*Procedures and Guidelines*



**UNIVERSITY OF  
CALGARY**

**Supply Chain  
Management**

Physical Plant Building  
2500 University Drive NW  
Calgary, Alberta,  
CANADA T2N 1N4

Please refer to <https://www.ucalgary.ca/finance/finance-forms> for a listing of our Handbooks.

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# 1 Contact Information

## Supply Chain Management

### Main Campus

Hours of Operation: Monday-Friday; 8:00 am - 4:00 pm  
Physical Plant Building (West Campus)  
3838 – 24th Ave NW

### Foothills Campus

Hours of Operations: Monday-Friday; 8:00 am – 4:00 pm  
Health Sciences Centre HSB-808  
3330 Hospital Drive NW

Telephone Via UService: (403) 210-9300

Email: [distributionservices@ucalgary.ca](mailto:distributionservices@ucalgary.ca)

Web: <https://www.ucalgary.ca/finance/about/our-team/supply-chain-management-team>

If there are any questions regarding the information stated in the handbook, please contact Supply Chain Management.

## 2 Distribution Services

Distribution Services provides centralized services to the campus community. This includes receiving goods from outside the campus, movement of goods on campus, and the disposal and/or outbound movement of goods.

Services include:

- Central Receiving
- Delivery to Campus, departments off campus and coordination with Alberta Health Services
- Shipping Services
- Postal Services
- Customs and Traffic
- Disposal and repurposing of surplus goods
- Inventory Management
- Furnishing industrial gases

### 2.1 Central Receiving

Distribution Services is responsible for Central Receiving, ensuring that all centrally received Purchase Orders and Non-Purchase Order Shipments are received and reconciled in PeopleSoft and the University Package Tracking system daily.

#### 2.1.1 Purchase Order Shipments

Inbound Purchase Order Shipments received centrally, will be checked for quantity, external condition and received in PeopleSoft on behalf of the end-user.

Distribution Services will not receive any items valued at \$5,000.00 and over per line item to ensure that higher valued items are reviewed more diligently. When shipments arrive above this threshold, recipients are contacted directly and will be asked to receive the high valued items in PeopleSoft.

If shipments are perishable or/and dangerous goods, the PO line items will be received in PeopleSoft based on the packing slip. It is the responsibility of the recipient to verify the contents of the package and notify Distribution Services in a timely matter if there are any discrepancies.

#### 2.1.2 Direct Delivery Purchase Order Shipments

Inbound Purchase Order Shipments received by Faculties and Departments must be checked for quantity, condition and received in PeopleSoft in a timely manner.

#### 2.1.3 Purchase Order Capital Equipment Shipments

Shipments will be received centrally and verified for condition. The Distribution Services team will liaise

with the end user to coordinate receipt in PeopleSoft and establish special handling requirements.

#### **2.1.4 Purchase Order - Services**

Faculties and Departments are responsible for confirming completion of work for services ordered through Amount Only purchase orders and must record receipt in PeopleSoft to initiate payment.

#### **2.1.5 Oversized Purchase Order Shipments**

Coordination with Procurement and Distribution Services is required to ensure logistical issues for receipt and delivery are addressed before the purchase order is processed.

#### **2.1.6 Personal Items/Shipments**

Central Receiving is not responsible for loss or damage to personal mail or packages addressed and delivered to the University. All packages received are subject to inspection and personal items may be opened. Personal items are not to be directed through Distribution Services and may be returned to sender at the cost of the recipient.

### **2.2 Delivery**

Received shipments from couriers are processed upon arrival. Depending on sensitivity, volumes and department requirements, shipments will be delivered within two business days of receipt via super mailboxes, building or office/lab delivery.

#### **2.2.1 Priority Shipments (Perishable/Time Sensitive and Business Courier Documents)**

Priority delivery will be given to these shipments and will be delivered the same day. If a shipment cannot be delivered, it will be returned to Distribution Services and stored accordingly. (I.e fridge, freezer, or room temperature) until delivery/pick up is coordinated. If you require a status update on your time sensitive shipment, please contact Distribution Services through [distributionservices@ucalgary.ca](mailto:distributionservices@ucalgary.ca), ensuring you have a carrier tracking number, PO number and supplier name.

#### **2.2.2 Delivery requirements**

If alternate arrangements have been made with a supplier for a product delivered directly to a lab or office due to size, volume or shipment specifications, please ensure the courier is advised of the alternate delivery location and available delivery times. As these shipments bypass Distribution Services, Faculties and Departments are responsible for recording receipts in Peoplesoft.

For Foothills campus deliveries, the loading dock has a height restriction of 13 feet, and can accommodate up to a 5 ton truck.

### 2.2.3 Damage Claims

Distribution Services will inspect all shipments for external damage and note any damage on the carrier waybill and the delivery record. Recipients must inspect shipments within 24 hours and follow up directly with the supplier if issues are identified.

## 2.3 Shipping Services

### 2.3.1 Outbound shipments

Shipments from Faculties and Departments that are routed through SCM Distribution Services require an Off Campus Shipping Form to be completed prior to the shipment being picked up.

The Office Campus Shipping Request form can be found at > My work > Finance & Supply Chain > SCM service request.

To ensure your shipment is processed in a timely manner, it is mandatory that the following information is included:

- Consignor Name and Faculty/Department
- Consignee Name, Address, Phone Number
- Full description, and value of shipment
- Special Handling information i.e., Refrigeration Required and or Keep at RoomTemperature
- Indicate if the shipment is to be sent prepaid or collect
- Collect shipments require the name of the consignee's courier company and courier account number
- Include your courier account number and if applicable original purchase order number
- If your shipment contains Hazardous Goods, you must ensure the Dangerous Goods Declaration on the Off Campus Shipping Form is signed acknowledging Dangerous Goods.
- If "Payment Method" is selected by Department, ensure the Fund, Department ID and if applicable Project number is provided

Low dollar freight and courier costs for operating budgets are centrally funded, with the exception of cost recovery shipments. Any single line charge of \$500.00 and over will be billed back to the initiator's funding.

Research, FHOB and Arctic funded accounts will have all freight and courier service charges billed directly to the project accounts provided.

Reference materials, examinations, grant applications, and any other printed materials must be fully described before their value can be determined. For assistance, please contact [distributionservices@ucalgary.ca](mailto:distributionservices@ucalgary.ca) .

## **Outbound shipments to the United States**

Due to changes in US customs requirements, Distribution Services is no longer shipping to the US using Canada Post. Shipments going to the US will be shipped via UPS or FedEx.

The United States has suspended its duty-free “de minimis” threshold of \$800 USD for all countries, including Canada. As of August 29, 2025, a new U.S. executive order requires all shipments valued under \$800 USD entering the United States have duties prepaid. Shipments under \$800 USD are subject to IEPPA tariff rates.

This only applies to packages only. It is not applicable to document shipments.

What this means for the University of Calgary

- Longer delivery process: Due to possible U.S. customs delays.
- Additional data required: To be compliant, a country of origin must be provided for each item in a shipment.
- Proof that duties have been prepaid.

### **2.3.2 Hazardous/Biological/Perishable**

Distribution Services requires 24 hours’ notice prior to the shipping date for document processing. Please attach Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) form available from the manufacturer to the shipment. The form must be completed by the researcher or lab staff member directly responsible for the use or packaging of the shipment.

Hazardous/Biological/Perishable Shipments require the following information:

- Chemical/ sample name
- Quantity and/or volume
- Quantity of Dry Ice if applicable

The following dry-ice packaging quantities should be considered:

- Major cities in North America – minimum 5kg Dry-Ice
- Rural Areas – minimum 10kg Dry-Ice
- Overseas Shipments – minimum 20kg Dry-Ice

### **2.3.3 Out of Country Equipment Repairs for Canadian Goods**

Equipment sent out of the country for repair or calibration must have the following information:

- Serial number and model number
- University of Calgary tag number
- FCC identifier number (for electronics)
- Country of origin
- Consignee’s Tax Identifier number (IRS number)
- Returned goods authorization (RGA or RMA) number
- Value of the goods

This information is a requirement of both Canada and US Customs to identify the goods as being sent for repair.

### **2.3.4 Out of Country Equipment Repairs for foreign Made Goods**

- Serial number and model number
- University of Calgary tag number
- FCC identifier number (for electronics)
- Country of origin
- Consignee's Tax Identifier number (IRS number)
- Returned goods authorization (RGA or RMA) number
- Value of the goods
- Completion of a [USGR](#), declaration of foreign goods returned

This information is a requirement of both Canada and US Customs to identify the goods as being sent for repair.

## **2.4 Postal Services**

Postal Services provides pickup, sorting and distribution to Main Campus, Foothills Campus and off Campus departments, including coordination with Alberta Health Services.

- University Research Centre
- ERRB
- Olympic Volunteer Centre
- Downtown campus
- SMART Technologies Building
- High Density Library
- Spy Hill

### **2.4.1 Incoming Mail**

Inbound mail from Canada Post is received daily, sorted by Faculty, Department and Unit then delivered depending on operational capacity and priority. On Campus mail is delivered to the Supermail boxes that are strategically located across the main campus. Foothills Campus mail is delivered to Distribution Services (HS-B808), where it is then sorted accordingly and put into departmental mail slots. This mail can then be picked up by departments after 10 am daily from the Health Sciences mailroom.

To ensure timely mail delivery please inform all correspondents that all incoming mail must be addressed with your name, department and room number. Any unknown mail will be returned to the sender.

## **Main Campus**

ADDRESSEE'S NAME  
DEPARTMENT NAME  
BUILDING NAME AND ROOM NUMBER  
UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY  
2500 UNIVERSITY DRIVE N.W.  
CALGARY, AB T2N 1N4

## **Foothills Campus**

ADDRESSEE'S NAME  
DEPARTMENT NAME  
BUILDING NAME AND ROOM NUMBER  
UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY  
3330 HOSPITAL DRIVE NW.  
CALGARY, AB T2N 4N1

### **2.4.2 Business Reply Service**

For large research studies or questionnaires that requires participants to reply via Canada Post, Distribution Services provides an option to use Canada Post's Business Reply Mail service via the University. This option is cost efficient and centralized. For more information contact [distributionservices@ucalgary.ca](mailto:distributionservices@ucalgary.ca).

### **2.4.3 Outbound Mail**

Outbound mail is collected from the Super Mailboxes, Faculties and Departments daily. Mail should be sorted in two separate bundles (CDN & US, International). Ensure all mailings include a valid Chartfield string to expediate processing.

Outbound mail at Foothills Campus should be brought down to the Health Sciences Mailroom (HS-B808) and sorted into corresponding bins.

All mailing costs for Research, FHOB0 and Arctic funded accounts will be billed directly to the project accounts provided.

### **2.4.4 Personal Mail**

Personal mail may not be directed through Distribution Services and will be returned to sender.

## **3 Customs and Traffic**

The UCalgary community regularly imports goods from outside of Canada as part of the University's world-class research activity, and to support operations. As all goods imported into the country need to be cleared through the Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA), it is important to understand how we manage this process at UCalgary and when there are important changes.

Effective March 24, 2025, UCalgary transitioned solely to [Thompson Ahern International](#) customs broker who clear **all** incoming shipments on behalf of the University. This change has eliminated the in-house clearances that were made by the UCalgary Customs & Traffic team.

The physical movement of goods into Canada (as well as location tracking) is managed for UCalgary by various couriers (FedEx, Purolator, DHL etc.), but the coordination of CBSA clearance will be handled by Thompson Ahern International. The UCalgary Customs and Traffic team is the liaison between Thompson Ahern International and the campus community. All inquiries should be directed to [customstraffic@ucalgary.ca](mailto:customstraffic@ucalgary.ca).

The UCalgary Customs and Traffic team provides knowledge, guidance and support to the campus regarding Canadian Customs requirements for clearance and import permits for cross-border shipments. This includes:

- Exporting from Canada
- Clearance of goods into Canada
- Obtaining required permits
- Information for suppliers and shippers
- Shipping CDN and Foreign made goods for repairs

## **3.1 Customs**

All goods purchased for the University from outside Canada, regardless of the dollar value, must be reported to the Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) and cleared through Thompson Ahern International.

Low dollar freight and courier costs for operating budgets are centrally funded, with the exception of cost recovery shipments. Any single line charge of \$500.00 and over will be billed back to the initiator's funding.

Research, FHOB and Arctic funded accounts will have all freight and courier service charges billed directly to the project accounts provided.

### **3.1.1 Customs Broker**

Thompson Ahern International is the University of Calgary's customs broker for importing and exporting.

For more information contact [customstraffic@ucalgary.ca](mailto:customstraffic@ucalgary.ca)

### **3.1.2 Clearance Requirements**

For importing and exporting the following documentation and information is required to avoid delays in processing:

- Commercial Invoice addressed to the University
  - Purchaser of the goods - name and address of recipient at the U of C
  - Supplier name and address
  - Detailed product description including model, serial, or catalog number
  - Quantity of commodities
  - Value of commodity – broken out if more than one commodity on order
  - Country of origin (where the commodity was produced/manufactured)
  - Currency used for shipment
  - Purchase Order (PO) number - *only required for importing*
  - Name of broker – *Thompson Ahern International*

To facilitate off campus shipping, go to the UCalgary portal and under My Work click on [SCM service request forms](#).

### 3.1.3 Permits

Permits for imported or exported goods are required by the Canadian government to control certain commodities that cross our borders to ensure the safety of the environment and public health. The issuance of permits most occur prior to the commodity crossing the Canadian border to mitigate risk of refused entry or penalties.

These commodities include but are not limited to:

- Biological Shipments
- Hazardous Products
- Controlled Products

We strongly recommend you contact the Customs and Traffic team at [customstraffic@ucalgary.ca](mailto:customstraffic@ucalgary.ca) prior to having these types of products shipped to Canada to ensure compliance with regulations.

The following links provide more information on Import Permits.

- Public Health Agency of Canada - <http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/ols-bsl/index.html>
- Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) - <http://www.inspection.gc.ca>

### 3.1.4 Personal Shipments

Shipments procured using a personal credit card, or gifts of a personal nature, are not considered University business and may be returned to the sender at the cost of the purchaser.

The responsibility for the Customs formalities will rest with the purchaser and charges incurred (GST, duty, and brokerage) will be the responsibility of the employee's department. Personal shipments are not to be consigned to individuals in care of their work address at the University of Calgary as this creates confusion regarding the true Importer of Record and can create liability to the University.

## 4 Disposal & Surplus

### 4.1 Repurposing

Distribution Services provides used surplus goods to the University campus to support the University's initiatives on sustainability as well as reduce the impact on our environment.

#### 4.1.1 Surplus Requests

Distribution Services maintains a limited inventory for re-distribution on campus.

- In person - Viewing of available furniture, desks, chairs, etc. can be done on the first and third Thursdays of the month from 1:00 -2:30 p.m. at the General Services Building (GSB) located at 3876 – 24 Avenue NW.

Repurposed Inventory usually includes but not limited to:

- White Boards/Bulletin Boards
- Bookcases
- Chairs
- Desks (office and student)
- Filing cabinets
- Tables

For more information send an email to [distributionservices@ucalgary.ca](mailto:distributionservices@ucalgary.ca).

### 4.2 Disposals

Distribution Services is responsible for the removal and processing of all equipment, furniture, computers, and miscellaneous items on campus. All items for disposal are to be declared through the SCM forms located on the UCalgary portal under My Work > Finance & Supply Chain > SCM service request forms > Equipment Disposal or Surplus Request (furniture) form.

Distribution Services ensures that all campus disposals are processed centrally, aligning with the University's focus on sustainability, as received items will be repurposed, recycled, or donated while minimizing risks with hazardous goods.

#### 4.2.1 Surplus Disposal

Distribution Services provide removal support of used inventory to faculties and departments.

All requests are to be submitted through the "Surplus Request" form found on the UCalgary portal under My Work>Finance & Supply Chain>SCM service request forms > Surplus Request.

Once submitted and approved by the appropriate Department Heads, Deans or designates, the disposal team will arrange for pick-up within 10 business days. Distribution Services will only pick up items that are on the approved Disposal Request form. No other items will be picked up and will require a separate Disposal Request Form to be submitted.

Disposal requirements:

- No more than 10 items per disposal request submitted through SCM Service Forms
- No than 50 lbs. per item
- Must have easy access for Distribution Services to pick up
- Be packaged and ready for pick-up
- Sizing – one person should be able to pick up or move
- Completed paperwork to be affixed to disposal item

Disposals that exceed the above limits will be assessed based on operational capacity and may be referred to a University of Calgary [preferred moving supplier](#). The cost for this service is the responsibility of the Faculty or Department.

Note: File Cabinets, Storage Cabinets and desks must be emptied prior to removal. Accurate description and quantity of furniture is essential to ensure adequate resources are allocated to the request.

## 4.2.2 Equipment Disposal

All University of Calgary equipment purchased with university funds (Operating, Capital or Research) declared surplus by Faculties and Departments will not leave the campus without prior Supply Chain, Department Heads, Deans or designates approval.

Disposing of University of Calgary equipment by any method other than the Equipment Disposal Requisition Form is not permitted.

## 4.2.3 Equipment Disposal Form Requirements

### 4.2.3.1 *Equipment Disposal Form*

Faculties and Departments are required to complete an “Equipment Disposal” Request. The request form is located on the [UCalgary Portal](#) > My work > Finance & Supply Chain > SCM service request forms > Equipment Disposal.

Complete the “Equipment Disposal” Form in detail ensuring you provide the e-mail of an approver, which MUST be a Department Head, Dean or designate. **Distribution Services cannot process your request until the approval process is complete.**

### 4.2.3.2 *Hazardous Materials Clearance Form*

If your asset contains hazardous materials, has been in a lab environment, or has been exposed to potential chemical and or radioactive contamination, you must follow proper equipment decommissioning instructions before the asset is offered for disposal. Before disposal, the initiator must read and comply with the [Contaminated Equipment and Equipment Containing Hazardous Materials Procedures](#), as well as submit the Hazardous Material Clearance Form. The form is available through a link on the Equipment Disposal Request form found on the [SCM Service Request Forms](#).

## 4.2.4 Equipment Disposal Categories

### 4.2.4.1 *Operating Fund Purchase*

Equipment purchased with Operating funds remains the property of the University of Calgary and must be disposed of through the Equipment Disposal form.

### 4.2.4.2 *Research (Non Tri-Council) Purchase*

Prior to the disposal of equipment purchased with Research Funds other than Tri-Council Funds, Research and Trust Accounting must review the applicable trust agencies' terms and conditions to determine whether the equipment may be legally released from the University.

### 4.2.4.3 *Research (Tri-Council) Purchase*

Requests by staff to retain equipment purchased with Tri-Council Funds will be handled on a case-by-case basis and governed by appropriate University and Granting Agencies Policies and Procedures.

### 4.2.4.4 *Professional Expense Reimbursement (PER) Purchase*

As a Non-taxable Benefit, items with a useful life of more than a year will remain the property of the University.

When a staff member retires or leaves their employment with the University, they must ensure these items are returned to their department or faculty. **These assets cannot be gifted to the employee.**

### 4.2.4.5 *University Funded – External Research*

All equipment will be returned to the University of Calgary at the end of approved off-site activities. Retention of equipment for purposes of continued University related research work at an off-site location will require the following:

- The written approval of Department Head, Dean or designate
- Completion of an Authorization for off Campus Use of Equipment Form
- Asset Management module in PeopleSoft to be updated by the faculty/department

## 4.2.5 Transfer of Equipment

If a staff member/grantee is moving to another Canadian institution and wishes to move equipment purchased with grant funds, permission for such a move must be obtained from the University and the Grantor. In the event that equipment or facilities are transferred or loaned by the University of Calgary, the following arrangements may apply:

- The University of Calgary retains ownership of the equipment but may reach an agreement to relocate it. There should be a letter of agreement from the University that confirms
  - ownership of the equipment
  - the associated custodial responsibilities
  - how it will be used
  - and what access researchers from each institution will have

The University of Calgary may transfer ownership of the equipment to a Secondary Institution through a gift or sale. A written agreement detailing transfer rights and responsibilities of both parties should be in place before the transfer takes place. All applicable University and Granting Agency Policies and Procedures will be considered before the transfer is approved.

#### **4.2.6 Disposal Fund Recovery**

If a single item designated for disposal sells for \$2000.00 and over the funds will be allocated back to the department. You will be contacted by Distribution Services to provide an accounting string to which the funds should be deposited.