



Post Office Act 1953

1953 CHAPTER 36

Money orders

20 Money orders

- (1) So long as the Treasury think fit, the Postmaster-General may provide for the remission of small sums of money through post offices established by him by means of money orders, and may demand and receive for the use of Her Majesty in respect of those money orders such rates of poundage as may be fixed by Post Office regulations, and all poundage so received shall be deemed to be part of the Post Office revenue.
- (2) Post Office regulations may make provision with respect to money orders, and to the payment thereof, and to the persons by or to whom they are to be paid, and the times and places at which and otherwise as to the mode in which they are to be paid.
- (3) Subject to the said regulations, the Postmaster-General may repay the amount of any money order to the person to whom the order is issued, or his executors or administrators, whether the order remains in the possession of that person or not, and upon that repayment all liability on the part of the Postmaster-General, or any officer of the Post Office, or the Post Office revenue, or the Consolidated Fund, in respect of the money order shall, as against the payee of the money order and the holder thereof and every other person whomsoever, cease.
- (4) No interest shall be payable in respect of any money order.
- (5) No action or other legal proceeding shall be instituted against the Crown or against any officer of the Post Office or any person whomsoever in respect of any compliance with the said regulations, or otherwise in relation thereto, or in respect of the payment of any such money orders being refused or delayed by or on account of any accidental neglect, omission or mistake by or on the part of any officer of the Post Office, or for any other cause whatsoever, without fraud or wilful misbehaviour on the part of any officer of the Post Office.

21 Special provisions as to postal orders

- (1) The Postmaster-General, with the consent of the Treasury, may authorise his officers or any of them to issue money orders in a special form to be prescribed. from time to time by him, and those money orders (in this Act referred to as " postal orders ") shall be paid in the manner and subject to the conditions prescribed by Post Office regulations and the amounts for which they may be issued and the poundage payable in respect thereof shall be such as may be so prescribed:

Provided that—

- (a) the poundage payable in respect of a postal order for an amount not exceeding twenty-one shillings shall not exceed threepence;
 - (b) after the expiration of such period after the date of the issue of a postal order as may be prescribed by Post Office regulations, the order shall be payable only on payment in manner prescribed by the regulations of a commission equal to the amount of the original poundage.
- (2) If the regulations so provide, the Postmaster-General may authorise any person holding office under the Crown to issue postal orders, and a person so authorised shall, for the purpose of the issue and payment of postal orders, be deemed to be an officer of the Postmaster-General and of the Post Office within the meaning of this Act.
- (3) Any person acting as a banker in the British postal area who, in collecting in that capacity for any principal, has received payment or been allowed by the Postmaster-General in account in respect of any postal order, or of any document purporting to be a postal order, shall not incur liability to anyone except that principal by reason of having received the payment or allowance or having held or presented the order or document for payment; but this subsection shall not relieve any principal for whom any such order or document has been so held or presented of any liability in respect of his possession of the order or document or of the proceeds thereof.
- (4) The enactments relating to the punishment of offences connected with stamp duties (including the enactments relating to the punishment of fraud) shall apply in like manner as if any poundage or commission chargeable for a postal order were stamp duty, and for the purposes of this subsection sections fourteen and fifteen of the Stamp Duties Management Act, 1891 (being provisions applicable to Scotland which relate to paper used for stamp duties and implements used in the manufacture of that paper) shall have effect as if the paper used for postal orders were paper provided by the Commissioners of Inland Revenue for receiving the impression of a die.
- (5) The last foregoing subsection shall apply to the Channel Islands and to the Isle of Man as if the enactments therein mentioned extended to those islands in like manner as they extend to Scotland.

22 Issuing money orders with fraudulent intent

- (1) If any officer of the Post Office grants or issues any money order with a fraudulent intent, he shall be guilty of felony and be liable to imprisonment for a term not exceeding seven years.
- (2) If any officer of the Post Office re-issues a money order previously paid, he shall be deemed to have issued the order with a fraudulent intent for the purposes of this section.

23 Forgery and stealing of money orders

- (1) A money order shall be deemed to be an order for the payment of money and a valuable security within the meaning of this Act and of the Forgery Act, 1913, and of the Larceny Act, 1916, and of any other enactment relating to forgery or stealing which is for the time being in force in any part of the British postal area.
- (2) If any person with intent to defraud obliterates, adds to or alters any such lines or words on a money order as would, in the case of a cheque, be a crossing of that cheque, or knowingly offers, utters or disposes of any money order with such fraudulent obliteration, addition or alteration, he shall be guilty of felony and be liable to the like punishment as if the order were a cheque.

24 Arrangements with other countries as to money orders

Where an arrangement is made with a government or postal administration of any other country for the transmission of small sums through post offices under the charge of the Postmaster-General and the postal administration of the other country by means of money orders, the four last foregoing sections shall, so far as is consistent with the tenor thereof, and subject to any modifications prescribed by Post Office regulations, apply in like manner as if an order issued in pursuance of the arrangement, whether by an officer of the Post Office or by an officer of the other postal administration, were a money order within the meaning of those sections:

Provided that—

- (a) any Post Office regulations relating to any money orders issued in pursuance of any such arrangement as aforesaid may differ from the regulations relating to any other money orders; and
- (b) any money orders issued in pursuance of any such arrangements as aforesaid may be of such amount and in such form and subject to such conditions respecting poundage, commission, the periods during which they are payable, and other matters, as may be prescribed by Post Office regulations.