



TRAVELLING LIGHT

Farewelling their well-paying corporate careers in Sydney two years ago, NZMCA members Paul Ryken and Sandra Rosenau (#76198) have since made it their mission to help others 'experience more by living with less'.

On their website www.minimalistjourneys.com, the couple provides practical advice and simple, tested tools for a more values-based, minimalist approach to life - whether at home or on the road.

If they are not off exploring other parts of the world, you can find Paul (who is Kiwi born) and Sandra (who was born in East Germany) house sitting or travelling in their campervan around New Zealand.

Here's the couple's good advice on one of the issues they have confronted since hitting the road; what to do with your physical mail if you travel long-term and/or have no fixed abode.



WORDS BY PAUL RYKEN & SANDRA ROSENAU (#76198)

While we all get a lot less physical mail than we used to before the internet and email came along, we still get it occasionally. As NZMCA members, we all travel – some do short trips every now and then, others live on the road long-term/fulltime. Especially those in the latter group: What do you do with your physical mail?

Options for letters

If you keep your home while travelling long-term, the easiest choice would be to continue to receive physical mail in your letterbox and get a neighbour, friend or family member to empty it occasionally.

If your home is tenanted while you're away, you need to ask yourself; would you be happy for your mail to be mixed with your tenants'?

If the answer is NO or you've taken to the road fulltime and no longer have a fixed abode, you could ask friends or relatives to use their home address.

You'd need to notify anyone you might still get physical mail from, but once that's done, all you need to do is provide your friends/relatives with instructions as to what to do when mail arrives. Enlisting them doesn't cost you anything, apart from a gesture of appreciation from time to time.

A word on Post Office boxes

You may wonder, what about Post Office (PO) boxes? Of course, you could use a PO Box to receive your mail – for an annual fee.

While New Zealand Post offers a free PO Box notification service, you are only notified that mail has arrived. You won't be told whom the mail is from. The notification service also only works at selected PO box lobbies.

With or without notification, you still need someone to collect your mail from time to time, unless your travels take you past your PO box every once in a while. If you don't have anyone to do that or can't do it yourself, New Zealand Post can arrange a courier service for you – again for a fee. Sounds too cumbersome? Agreed.

There is another reason why PO boxes are less useful when you travel long-term, particularly if you no longer have a fixed abode; many institutions require (proof of) residential address to access their services, and for obvious reasons, you can't use a PO Box to prove your residential address.

For further information go to:

- PO Box rental – www.nzpost.co.nz/business/receiving-mail/po-box-private-bags
- PO box lobbies with notification service – www.nzpost.co.nz/poboxoffer

Enlisting professional help

If PO boxes are not the way to go, and you don't want to impose on friends or relatives, what's left? You could use the services of a professional mail scanning and forwarding company.

No idea what we're talking about? Well, it's pretty simple; instead of tasking a friend or family member to handle your mail in your absence, you use a company – at a cost, of course.

Mail scanning and forwarding companies usually offer some or all of the following services:

- Provision of a street address
- Physical mail scanning
- Access to scanned mail via email or online
- Physical mail storage
- Physical mail forwarding
- Online mail management

How do services in New Zealand compare?

There are only two companies that fit the above description (at least to some degree) in New Zealand – New Zealand Post and Private Box. Several others have gone out of business.

| | New Zealand Post (Hold/Redirect) | Private Box |
|--------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|
| Street address | No | Yes |
| Physical mail scanning | No | Yes |
| Access to scanned mail via email or online | No | Yes |
| Physical mail forwarding (to any address) | via Redirect to one address at a time (min. charges apply) | Yes |
| Physical mail storage | via Hold | Yes |
| Online mail management | Yes | Yes |

New Zealand Post (Hold/Redirect)

Company name: New Zealand Post Limited

Website: www.nzpost.com

Provides services to individuals, businesses or both: Both

New Zealand Post may be your provider of choice if you are looking for someone to hold your mail while you're away or want your mail to be redirected to another address (in New Zealand or internationally) for a period of time.

You can only redirect though (from your home address) to one address at a time. If you tiki tour around the country and plan to stay with friends or family for a few weeks at a time, you could set up a redirect to their address and change it whenever you move on. But if that sounds cumbersome (and costly) – it is!

However, there is a silver lining for senior citizens; the holding service is free for up to four weeks and the redirect for up to two months (within New Zealand).

One thing to note; New Zealand Post does not open/scan your mail. If that's what you need New Zealand Post's Hold or Redirect services are not for you. If you don't have a fixed abode but need a residential



address, New Zealand Post also won't be able to help you.

For further information go to:

- Hold mail – www.nzpost.co.nz/tools/mail-delivery-services/hold-mail
- Redirect mail – www.nzpost.co.nz/tools/mail-delivery-services/redirection

Private Box

Company name: Private Box Limited

Website: www.privatebox.co.nz

Business type: Private Limited Liability Company

Established: 2005

Provides services to individuals, businesses or both: Both

Private Box provides a street address which is accepted by most institutions as a residential address. The only time you can't use it is when you register on the electoral roll.

When you enlist with Private Box you still need to notify anyone you might get physical mail from. But once that's done, all your mail goes to your Private Box suite. Mail that requires signing will be signed on your behalf.

You are notified via email who sent you mail and how heavy it is and can then decide what should happen with your item:

- Open and scan your mail, and receive a PDF copy via email or access your scanned mail securely online.
- Physically store (30 days free of charge) or forward your mail to any nominated address anywhere in the world – including any participating New Zealand Post Shop, Parcel Collect location or Private Box branch – for personal pick-up.

Managing your mail is easy via the Private Box online mail management

system, where you can customise things to suit your needs. Most orders are processed the same day. Any physical mail you don't want is destroyed safely and free of charge, and all waste is 100% recycled.

If you are planning to run a business while on the road, Private Box offers virtual office services via its Business Plan, including:

- A Registered Office service which supplies a universally accepted street address to register your company and securely stores your company documents (constitution, share register etc); and
- A phone answering service.

For further information go to minimalistjourneys.com/privateboxoffer/

Options for parcels

Whether you use friends, family or professional help, forwarding mail costs money and forwarding parcels won't come cheap. If you receive parcels while travelling long-term/full-time, the quickest, cheapest and most convenient way would be to use New Zealand Post's Parcel Collect or Parcel Pod services.

With Parcel Collect, you can get your parcel delivered to any participating New Zealand Post Retailer, Countdown or Z Service Station – free of charge. Parcel Pod delivers your parcel to a locker at one of five locations (Auckland, Hamilton, Tauranga, Wellington and Christchurch) for a fee.

For further information go to:

- Parcel Collect – www.nzpost.co.nz/personal/receiving-mail-parcels/receiving-your-parcels/parcel-collect
- Parcel Pod – www.nzpost.co.nz/personal/receiving-mail/parcelpod

For more tips to help you make the most of life on the road check out Paul and Sandra's Minimalist Journeys' website – www.minimalistjourneys.com

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