Yellow tape surrounded the front of the Champion Post Office early Tuesday morning, after an alleged attempted robbery and assault of an employee was reported Monday.

By Jan Schultz

The Imperial Republican

U.S. Postal Inspectors are in Champion and the area this week following a reported attempted robbery and assault late Monday morning at the Champion Post Office.

While the Chase County Sheriff's Office conducted a preliminary investigation after Monday morning's incident, Sheriff Kevin Mueller said the case has now been turned over to the U.S. Postal Inspection Service.

Mueller said Marjie Buls, 44, an employee of the post office, made a 911 call at 11:20 a.m. stating she needed help at the post office in Champion, located about seven miles southwest

of Imperial.

Deputy Dave Ridlen was first on the scene, and found Buls locked inside a bathroom in the post office, where she had made the call on a cordless phone.

Sheriff Mueller said she stated that a male in his early 30s, 5'5" in height, wearing black jeans and a gray shirt and with a mustache had entered the post office, jumped the counter, threw her to the ground and demanded money.

She alleged he held a box cutter to her throat and made a two-inch slash to her neck before she got away and he left the building.

Mueller said Buls was transported by Imperial EMS to the Chase County Community Hospital in Imperial, where she was treated and released. The wound was not life-threatening, he said.

The sheriff said no money was taken. No arrests had been made or suspects found before the investigation was turned over to the USPS Inspection Service.

Steve Ryan, a public information officer with the U.S. Postal Inspection Service in Kansas City, said Tuesday the inspectors are following up on leads, conducting interviews and canvassing the area for a suspect matching Buls' description.

Ryan said his office took over the investigation because it occurred on property that houses a U.S. Postal Service operation.

He said anyone with leads or information relative to the case should call the Postal Inspection Service toll-free at 1-877-876-2455 and reference "Champion, Nebraska."