



Western NY Business Service Network

Christine Kogutowski
Manager, WNY Consumer & Industry Contact

BSN Representatives

Kelly Meister
Kelly.J.Meister@usps.gov
716-842-4722

Shahriar Wahid
Shahriar.Wahid@usps.gov
716-846-2583

Important Dates to Remember

Monday, May 25th – Memorial Day
Observed – Postal Holiday

Saturday, July 4th – Independence Day
Observed – Postal Holiday

Monday, September 7th – Labor Day
Observed – Postal Holiday



Coronavirus and the Mail

Service Updates Available for Customers on USPS Website

The United States Postal Service is closely monitoring the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) situation and continues to follow strategies and measures recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and public health departments. The CDC has information available on its website at <https://www.coronavirus.gov> that provides the latest information about COVID-19. We are sharing the CDC's guidance to our employees via stand-up talks, employee news articles, messages on bulletin boards, videos and an intranet site directly to employees and within USPS workplaces.

The CDC (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/faq.html>), the World Health Organization (<https://www.who.int/news-room/q-a-detail/q-a-coronaviruses>), and the Surgeon General have indicated that there is currently no evidence that COVID-19 is being spread through the mail.

The Postal Service has so far experienced only minor operational impacts in the United States as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. We do continue to have a temporary suspension of the guarantee on Priority Mail Express International destined for China and Hong Kong, which has been effective since Monday, Feb. 10, 2020, due to widespread airline cancellations and restrictions into this area. In addition, customers may see delays in mail and packages destined to China as well as from China, as well as to and from European countries subject to restricted passenger airline travel. The Postal Service is undertaking all reasonable measures to minimize the impact to our customers.

In addition, the Postal Service is an essential service for purposes of its compliance with state or municipality shelter-in-place orders or other social distancing restrictions. The Postal Service delivers medications, social security checks, and is the leading delivery service for on-line purchases. The statute that created the Postal Service begins with the following sentence. "The United States Postal Service shall be operated as a basic and fundamental service provided to the people by the Government of the United States, authorized by the Constitution, created by an Act of Congress, and supported by the people." 39 U.S.C. §101(a).

[USPS Coronavirus Statement](#)

The United States Postal Service is proud of the work our more than 600,000 employees play in processing, transporting, and delivering mail and packages for the American public. We provide a vital public service that is a part of this nation's critical infrastructure. The Postal Service has a dedicated Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Command Response leadership team that is focusing on employee and customer safety in conjunction with operational and business continuity during this unprecedented epidemic. We continue to follow the strategies and measures recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and public health departments. The CDC has information available on its website at <https://www.coronavirus.gov> that provides the latest information about COVID-19.

To reduce health risks for our employees and customers and to safeguard our operational and business continuity, the Postal Service is doing the following:

- Ensuring millions of face coverings, including masks, gloves and cleaning and sanitizing products are available and distributed to more than 30,000 locations every day through our Postal Service supply chain. We also have opened up local purchasing authorities and sourcing options so that our employees can access additional supplies within the communities they serve. We have expanded our national sourcing of supplies and services to ensure that increasing demands are met.
- Requiring that non-public facing Postal Service employees wear face coverings while at work, when proper social distancing cannot be achieved or maintained.
- In the local and state jurisdictions where there is an ordinance for the mandatory use of face coverings, we are voluntarily aligning by requiring that our public-facing Postal Service employees use face coverings.
- Requesting customers use face coverings while in our retail facilities located in jurisdictions that have implemented orders requiring use of face coverings by individuals within those jurisdictions.
- Reinforcing workplace behaviors to ensure that contact among our employees and with our customers reflects the best guidance regarding healthy interactions, social distancing, and risk minimization. We have implemented measures at retail facilities and mail processing facilities to ensure appropriate social distancing, including through signage, floor tape, and "cough/sneeze" barriers. We have changed delivery procedures to eliminate the requirement that customers sign our Mobile Delivery Devices for delivery. For increased safety, employees will politely ask the customer to step back a safe distance or close the screen door/door so that they may leave the item in the mail receptacle or appropriate location by the customer door.
- Updated our cleaning policies to ensure that all cleaning occurs in a manner consistent with CDC guidance relating to this pandemic.
- Updated our leave policies to allow liberal use of leave and to therefore give our employees the ability to stay home whenever they feel sick, must provide dependent care, or any other qualifying factor under the Families First Coronavirus Response Act. We have entered into agreements with our unions to provide 80 hours of paid leave to non-career employees for issues related to COVID-19,

and have expanded the definition of sick leave for dependent care for covered employees to deal with the closures of primary and secondary schools across the country.

- Expanded the use of telework for those employees who are able to perform their jobs remotely.
- Issuing a daily cadence of employee talks, articles, videos, and other communications to ensure employees have the latest information and guidance.
- Leveraging localized continuity of operations plans that can be employed in the case of emergencies to help ensure that the nation's postal system continues to function for the American people. With a longstanding history of quickly adapting its operational plans to changing conditions, the Postal Service maintains steady communications with mailers during natural disasters or other events that require emergency responses and advises residential customers and business mailers with regard to postal facility disruptions that may impact delivery in an affected area via its USPS Service Alerts webpage at: <https://about.usps.com/newsroom/service-alerts/>.

The Postal Service delivers much needed medications and Social Security checks, and we are the leading delivery service for online purchases. The Postal Service is an essential service for purposes of compliance with state or municipality shelter-in-place orders or other social distancing restrictions. The statute that created the Postal Service begins with the following sentence: "The United States Postal Service shall be operated as a basic and fundamental service provided to the people by the Government of the United States, authorized by the Constitution, created by an Act of Congress, and supported by the people." 39 U.S.C. §101(a).

According to the CDC, the virus that causes COVID-19 is thought to spread mainly from person to person, mainly through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes. These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby or possibly be inhaled into the lungs. Spread is more likely when people are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet). "COVID-19 is thought to spread mainly through close contact from person-to-person in respiratory droplets from someone who is infected." (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/how-covid-spreads.html>) The CDC recognizes that while it may be possible that a person can get COVID-19 by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touching their own mouth, nose, or possibly their eyes, this is not thought to be the main way the virus spreads. (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/faq.html#How-COVID-19-Spreads>)

Help Us Serve You (Retail and Carrier Safety) – Videos Available for Your Use

While the CDC, WHO, and Surgeon General have stated there is no evidence that COVID-19 can be spread through the mail and/or packages, the U.S. Postal Service is taking these extra precautions for the safety of both customers and employees. Two video links have been embedded in this Industry Alert to help you communicate with your customers.

Retail Safety

The USPS is adapting the following Retail Office Procedures to promote social distancing. Some of the new procedures are:

- Limiting the number of customers in the retail facilities to no more than 10 at one time
- Markings on the floor to maintain the 6 feet safe distance recommendation
- Barriers at the retail counters are in place to protect both customers and employees
 - Retail Associates will ask customers to step back as they process each transaction

Carrier Safety

The USPS is adapting the following Delivery Procedures to promote social distancing. Some of the new procedures are:

- Signature Services
 - Carriers will knock on the customer's door instead of ringing the door bell
 - Carriers will maintain a safe distance by not requesting a signature – instead they will ask for the customer's first initial and last name
 - Carriers will leave package(s) in a safe place for retrieval

For more additional information, please view the videos below.

COVID-19 Help Us Serve You – Retail

<http://a248.e.akamai.net/f/248/60653/1d/usps.download.akamai.com/60653/streaming/vod/HelpUsRETAIL.mp4>

COVID-19 Help Us Serve You – Carriers

<http://a248.e.akamai.net/f/248/60653/1d/usps.download.akamai.com/60653/streaming/vod/HelpUsCARRIERS.mp4>

Centralized Accounting Processing System (CAPS) Migration to Enterprise Payment System (EPS)

In April 2019, the Postal Service announced CAPS accounts with 100% eligible products will need to migrate to EPS.

Customers requiring information on CAPS to EPS migration can attend the weekly Industry call at the link below:

<https://uspsmeetings.webex.com/uspsmeetings/j.php?MTID=md155fb6d03aa8feb7e67170eef20c328>

CAPS to EPS migration key dates:

April 3, 2020 – Cancellation of Permits linked to a CAPS account with no activity

On April 19, 2020 permits with no activity in the previous 12 months were cancelled and the CAPS account closed. CAPS accounts with remaining balances should contact the CAPS Service Center at 650-377-1334 or email address ssmctas@email.usps.gov to request a refund.

May 1, 2020 - Active CAPS Trust Permits with a Business Customer Gateway (BCG) account

Active trust customers with a BCG account can migrate to EPS until May 1, 2020. After May 1st the Postal Service will close the CAPS account and an EPS account will be created. Any remaining funds and linked permits to the CAPS account will transfer to the new EPS account.

August 1, 2020 - Active CAPS Trust Permits without a BCG account

Active trust customers who do NOT have a BCG account have until August 1, 2020 to migrate to EPS. After August 1st the CAPS account will be closed. To avoid impact to mail acceptance customers must create an EPS account and link their permits.

For information on creating a BCG account go to: [EPS Onboarding Checklist](#)

August 1, 2020 - Permits linked to a CAPS Debit account

Effective August 1, 2020 CAPS Debit permits will no longer be funded as the CAPS account will be closed. To avoid impact at acceptance an EPS account must be created and linked to the permit.

Additional Resources

- Local Business Mail Entry Units
- Email HQMailEntry@usps.com
- Mailing & Shipping Solutions Center @ **877-672-0007**

Managing Customer Returns

USPS Return Services Tips & Tools Help Reduce Costs

Make it easy for customers to return packages, whether they value speed or affordable pricing, with Priority Mail Return™ Service, Merchandise Return Service, Ground Return Service, and more. Build customer loyalty, increase sales, and control costs with flexible USPS® options.

[Contact USPS Returns® Specialist](#)



Ways to Provide Return Labels

- Include one in the original shipment box.
- Use the cloud platform.
- Integrate the returns tool on your website.
- Let customers print their own.
- Request one through [Print and Deliver Label Service](#).

Compare Return Options

USPS offers several commercial pricing methods for managing customer returns.

[Returns Services Prices](#)

	Delivery Time	Priced	Payment	Drop-off Locations	Required Return Volume/Year
Priority Mail Return™ Service	1–3 days	Per piece and # of labels scanned	Scan-based	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post Office • Collection Boxes • Package Pickup 	No minimum
First-Class Package Return® Service	2–4 days	Per piece and # of labels scanned	Scan-based	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post Office • Collection Boxes • Package Pickup 	No minimum
Ground Return Service	2–9 days	Per piece and # of labels scanned	Scan-based	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post Office • Collection Boxes • Package Pickup 	No minimum
Bulk Parcel Return Service	2–9 days	Per piece and # of labels scanned	Scan-based	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post Office • Collection Boxes • Package Pickup 	> 10,000
Merchandise Return Service	Varies by service	Based on chosen shipping option	Prepaid	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post Office • Collection Boxes • Package Pickup 	No minimum
Parcel Return Service	Varies	By weight & distance	Prepaid	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post Office • Collection Boxes 	Determined by vendor
Print and Deliver Label Service	Varies by service	By weight and chosen shipping option	Scan-based	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post Office • Collection Boxes • Package Pickup 	Determined by vendor

[Download the USPS Package Returns Comparison Checklist \(PDF 128 KB\)](#)

USPS Package Intercept

For a fee, USPS Package Intercept® lets the sender or recipient stop delivery or redirect a package, letter, or flat that is not out for delivery or already delivered. Most domestic mailings with a tracking or extra services barcode are eligible for Package Intercept. You can only request a Package Intercept online.

Commercial USPS Package Intercept is available through [Business Customer Gateway](#).



How It Works

You can request that the destination Post Office hold the item for you or have it returned to sender.

1. [Verify that your shipment is eligible](#) for Package Intercept.
2. If eligible, you can submit your request online after logging in with your [USPS.com account](#).
3. After submitting your request, you'll be provided an estimated total (intercept fee plus estimated Priority Mail® postage, if applicable). We will then attempt to intercept and redirect the shipment.
4. If the shipment is intercepted, your credit card will be charged the \$14.65 Package Intercept fee plus any applicable postage. If the actual postage is greater than estimated, any additional postage will be charged accordingly.
5. Your shipment will be redirected to the original sender or held at the local Post Office for pickup.

[Intercept a Package](#)

Paying for Package Intercept

- All intercepted items are redirected as Priority Mail. You must pay the applicable Priority Mail postage, except when the item was originally sent using Priority Mail Express®, Priority Mail, or First-Class Mail®.

USPS Package Intercept (cont.)

- Customers will not be charged if the shipment was not intercepted. If successfully intercepted, the non-refundable Package Intercept fee is applied to each intercept request.
[Package Intercept Price Information](#)
- Retail and commercial customers can also purchase additional services for the intercepted package, like Adult Signature Required, Adult Signature Restricted Delivery, Signature Confirmation™, and insurance.
[Insurance & Extra Services](#)

Determining Eligibility

USPS Package Intercept is not a guaranteed service and certain conditions apply.

What Is Eligible

- Domestic USPS mail services with a USPS Tracking® or extra services barcode [Check Your Barcode Number](#)
- Packages whose total length and girth length is not larger than 108 inches [Measuring Package Girth](#)

What Is Not Eligible

- USPS Marketing Mail® products and periodicals
- Items addressed to a Commercial Mailing Receiving Agency
- Items redirected to a PO Box™
- Nonmailable items, items with surface-only transportation markings, such as Label 127, Surface Mail Only, or items bearing other hazardous materials markings, such as Consumer Commodity ORM-D

[Information on Hazardous Materials \(Ctrl+Click to follow\)](#)



2020 MAILING PROMOTIONS CALENDAR

APPROVED 12/6/2019

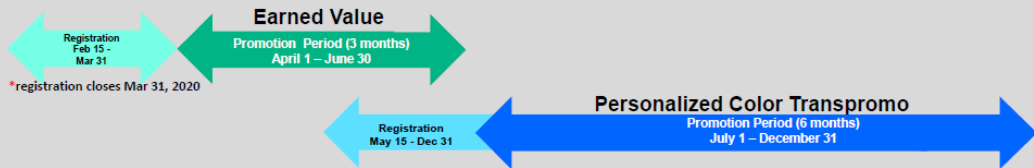
JAN – FEB – MARCH

APRIL – MAY – JUNE

JULY – AUG – SEPT

OCT – NOV – DEC

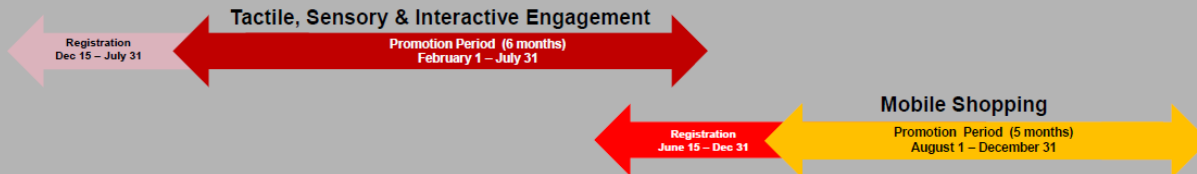
FIRST-CLASS MAIL®



MARKETING MAIL® AND FIRST-CLASS MAIL



MARKETING MAIL



2020 MAILING PROMOTIONS CALENDAR

Tactile, Sensory and Interactive Mailpiece Engagement Promotion:

Encourages mailers to enhance customer engagement with the mail through the use of advanced print innovations in paper and stock, substrates, inks, interactive elements, and finishing techniques. Regular and nonprofit Marketing Mail letters and flats, and First-Class Mail presort or automation letters, cards, and flats that meet the promotion requirements will be eligible for an upfront 2% postage discount during the promotion period.

Emerging and Advanced Technology Promotion:

Encourages mailers to incorporate emerging technologies such as AR, VR/MR, NFC, Video in Print, multichannel mail integration with digital assistants/smart speakers into their direct mailpieces. Regular and nonprofit Marketing Mail letters and flats, and First-Class Mail presort or automation letters, cards, and flats that meet the promotion requirements will be eligible for an upfront 2% postage discount during the promotion period.

Earned Value Reply Mail Promotion:

Encourages mailers to continue to distribute Business Reply Mail (BRM), Courtesy Reply Mail (CRM) and Share Mail envelopes and cards by providing a financial benefit when their customer puts those pieces back into the mailstream. New Participants will earn a \$0.02 credit per counted reply piece between April-June of 2020. Repeat participants who meet between 93-100% of their volumes counted during the same period in 2019 will earn credit at \$0.02 per piece, while repeat participants exceeding their 2019 volumes will earn credit at \$0.04 per piece. Credits may be applied to postage for First-Class Mail presort & automation cards, letters and flats and Marketing Mail letters & flats, and must be used by December 31, 2020.

Personalized Color Transpromo Promotion:

Enhances the value of First-Class Mail by encouraging mailers of bills and statements to incorporate color marketing messaging in order to foster a better connection and response from their customers. First-Class Mail presort and automation letters—bills and statements only—that meet the updated dynamic print and updated personalization requirements will be eligible for an upfront 2% postage discount during the promotion period. First-time participants must meet only the dynamic color print requirements.

Mobile Shopping Promotion:

Encourages mailers to integrate their direct mail pieces with mobile technologies that facilitate a convenient online shopping experience for consumers during the holiday season. There are many new mobile barcode formats that can be leveraged to qualify for this promotion, in addition to the use of Payment QRs, or those connected to an integrated social shopping platform to facilitate a seamless shopping/purchase experience. Regular and nonprofit Marketing Mail letters and flats that meet the promotion requirements will be eligible for an upfront 2% postage discount during the promotion period.

Informed Delivery Promotion:

Encourages mailers to continue to adopt use of the USPS' new omnichannel feature, Informed Delivery. Participants may create Informed Delivery campaigns through the Portal or submit elements through their eDoc submission, and develop campaigns that meet new best-practice requirements. Regular and nonprofit Marketing Mail letters and flats, and First-Class Mail presort or automation letters, cards, and flats that meet the promotion requirements will be eligible for an upfront 2% postage discount during the promotion.

2020 Earned Value Reply Mail Promotion Summary

The 2020 Earned Value Reply Mail Promotion is intended to help slow the decline of First-Class Mail including Business Reply Mail (BRM), Courtesy Reply Mail (CRM) and Share Mail pieces. As technology continues to disrupt mail volume, the Postal Service would like to encourage mailers to continue distributing BRM, CRM, and Share Mail pieces. Mailers who register their Mailer ID (MID) information and use eligible Intelligent Mail barcodes on their BRM, CRM, and Share Mail pieces may receive a postage credit for each mailpiece that is placed in the mailstream by the recipient and scanned during the promotion period.

The Earned Value Reply Mail Promotion will run for three months in 2020, from April 1, 2020 through June 30, 2020 (for details, see "Credit Amount" below). At the end of the promotion, the BRM, CRM, and Share Mail pieces will be totaled and the earned postage credit applied to the customer permit accounts. The mailer can apply the credit towards future mailings of First-Class Mail presort and automation cards, letters, and flats and USPS Marketing Mail letters and flats. Earned Value credits will expire on December 31, 2020.

Eligible Mail: BRM, CRM, and Share Mail (Permit Reply Mail is excluded)

NEW! Credit Amount: New Participants: \$0.02 credit for each BRM, CRM, and/or Share Mail piece counted

CY 2019 Earned Value Participants: if registered for the CY 2019 promotion, in CY 2020 must meet or exceed 93 percent of volume counted for the same CRID between April 1, 2019 and June 30, 2019 to qualify for an Earned Value credit. If 2020 volumes are equal to or exceed the established 93 percent threshold based on 2019 volumes, but do not exceed 100 percent of the 2019 threshold, mailers will be credited \$0.02 per BRM, CRM, and/or Share Mail piece counted during the promotion period. If 2020 volumes exceed 100 percent of 2019 threshold volumes, mailers will be credited \$0.04 per BRM, CRM and/or Share Mail piece counted

Registration Period: February 16 – March 31, 2020

Promotion Period: April 1 – June 30, 2020

Credit Expiration	December 31, 2020
Acceptance Period for Credits:	Credits will be released when the mailer agrees to their volumes, after the promotion ends. Agreement on volumes must be reached by September 15, 2020; otherwise the credits will be forfeited.
Credit Calculation/Application	At the end of the promotion, the applicable credit amount will be multiplied by the total BRM, CRM, and Share Mail pieces counted, for each enrolled CRID, (as long as the total count meets or exceeds the threshold for repeat participants). Once the mailer accepts their credits in the BCG, they will be applied to the Permit accounts.
Tracking	All mailpiece counts for BRM, CRM, and Share Mail pieces with qualifying barcodes that contain the registered MID(s) will be counted in the mailstream during the promotion period.
Enrollment	Mailers must register their permits and MIDs no later than March 31, 2020 and select the Permit Imprint account to which future earned credits will be applied.
Mailpiece Requirements	BRM, CRM, and Share Mail mailpieces must contain an IMb with the registered MID encoded to qualify. Postcard and letter-size BRM must be barcoded with a valid and properly used ZIP+4 code on the mailpiece, and the same ZIP+4 code must be encoded within the IMb. The IMb on all BRM, CRM, and Share Mail pieces must contain the
	barcode ID, qualifying service type ID, and correct ZIP+4 routing code. (Qualifying service type IDs include: 708, 052, 703, 050, 030, 733, 734, 070, 030, 072, and 032.) NEW! Note: STID 700 no longer qualifies for the promotion



Gorgeous Colors, Delicate Features

The Wild Orchids Forever® Stamps show off photos of stunning natural flora.



©2019 USPS

ONLINE RESOURCES

Business Customer Gateway

<https://gateway.usps.com/eAdmin/view/signin>

Zip Code

<https://tools.usps.com/go/ZipLookupAction!input.action?mode=0&refresh=true>

Quick Service Guides

<http://pe.usps.gov/text/qsg300/q000.htm>

Mail Service Updates

<http://about.usps.com/news/service-alerts/welcome.htm>

National Customer Support Center

1-800-238-3150

PostalPro

<https://postalpro.usps.com/>



As a valued mailer, we appreciate your business and look forward to providing you with exceptional customer service. If you have a question, suggestion or want to provide feedback regarding this BSN Newsletter, please press CTRL and click on the mailbox to submit your comments.

The Business Service Network: "Excellent Customer Service that Delivers Results!"