

505 Return Services

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1.0 Business Reply Mail (BRM)

1.1 Business Reply Mail (BRM) Prices and Fees

1.1.1 Basic BRM

For basic BRM, an annual permit fee is required. A per-piece fee is applied to each mailpiece in addition to the applicable First-Class Mail or Priority Mail postage. See [Notice 123—Price List](#) for applicable prices and fees.

1.1.2 High-Volume BRM

For high-volume BRM, an annual permit fee and annual account maintenance fee are required. A per-piece fee is applied to each mailpiece in addition to the applicable First-Class Mail or Priority Mail postage. See [Notice 123—Price List](#) for applicable prices and fees.

1.1.3 Basic Qualified BRM

For basic qualified BRM, an annual permit fee and annual account maintenance fee are required. A per-piece fee is applied to each mailpiece in addition to the applicable First-Class Mail QBRM postage. See [Notice 123—Price List](#) for applicable prices and fees.

1.1.4 High-Volume Qualified BRM

For high-volume qualified BRM, an annual permit fee, an annual account maintenance fee, and a quarterly fee are required. A per-piece fee is applied to each mailpiece in addition to the applicable First-Class Mail QBRM postage. See [Notice 123—Price List](#) for applicable prices and fees.

1.1.5 Bulk Weight Averaged Nonletter-Size BRM

For bulk weight average nonletter-size BRM, an annual permit fee, an annual account maintenance fee (for advanced deposit accounts), and a monthly fee are required. A per-piece fee is applied to each mailpiece in addition to the applicable First-Class Mail or Priority Mail postage. See [Notice 123—Price List](#) for applicable prices and fees.

1.1.6 Special Standards for BRM Pieces with an Optical Disc

[7-5-11] A letter-size BRM piece containing one standard optical disc will not be charged a nonmachinable surcharge if the piece meets the standards in 233.2.8. A flat-size BRM piece containing one standard optical disc and weighing no more than 2 ounces will be charged postage applicable for a 1-ounce First-Class Mail flat if the piece meets the standards in 333.2.7.

1.2 Qualified Business Reply Mail (QBRM) Prices**1.2.1 Cards**

See [Notice 123—Price List](#) for QBRM card prices and fees.

1.2.2 Letters

See [Notice 123—Price List](#) for QBRM letter prices and fees.

1.3 Qualified Business Reply Mail (QBRM) Basic Standards**1.3.1 Description**

Qualified Business Reply Mail (QBRM) is First-Class Mail that:

- a. Is letter-size and is prepared to meet the automation compatibility requirements in 201.3.0 (except 201.3.13.1, *Use*).
- b. Meets all the Business Reply Mail (BRM) standards in 1.4 through 1.12.
- c. Has postage and per piece charges deducted from a BRM advance deposit account.
- d. Is authorized to mail at QBRM prices and fees under 1.3.2. During the authorization process, the mailer is assigned a unique ZIP+4 code for each price category of QBRM to be returned under the system (one for card-price pieces, one for letter-size pieces weighing 1 ounce or less, and one for letter-size pieces weighing over 1 ounce up to and including 2 ounces) and has the option of using either an Intelligent Mail barcode or POSTNET barcode to encode the assigned ZIP +4 code.
- e. Bears the proper ZIP+4 code, assigned by USPS for the appropriate price category, in the address of each piece. The ZIP+4 codes assigned for this program must be used only on the organization's appropriate QBRM pieces.
- f. Bears the correct Intelligent Mail barcode or POSTNET barcode that corresponds to the unique ZIP+4 code in the address on each piece distributed. The barcode must be correctly prepared under 1.9 and 708.4.0.
- g. Bears a properly prepared facing identification mark (FIM) C on each piece distributed (see 708.9.0).

1.3.2 Authorization

To participate in QBRM, a mailer must have a valid BRM permit, must pay the annual account maintenance fee, and must submit Form 6805 to the postmaster or manager, Business Mail Entry at the Post Office to which the QBRM pieces are to be returned. The USPS reviews Form 6805 and preproduction samples provided by the mailer for compliance with relevant standards. If the mailer's request is approved, the USPS issues the mailer an authorization via the approved Form 6805.

1.3.3 QBRM Postage

The single-piece postage prices for QBRM First-Class Mail are applied to each returned piece as follows:

- a. The QBRM price for cards in [1.2.1](#) applies to a card meeting the applicable standards in [1.3.1](#) and [201.1.0](#).
- b. The QBRM price for letters in [1.2.2](#) applies to a letter meeting the applicable standards in [1.3.1](#) that is not eligible for and claimed at the QBRM price for cards.

1.3.4 QBRM Per Piece Charges

Each piece of returned QBRM is charged the per piece charge in [1.1](#).

1.3.5 QBRM Fees

The following fees apply to QBRM First-Class Mail:

- a. The annual BRM permit fee.
- b. The annual BRM account maintenance fee.
- c. At the mailer's option, a quarterly fee.

1.4 General Information**1.4.1 Description**

Business Reply Mail (BRM) service enables a permit holder to receive First-Class Mail and Priority Mail back from customers and pay postage and a per piece fee only for the pieces returned. BRM cards, envelopes, self-mailers, cartons, and labels may be distributed by a BRM permit holder in any quantity for return to any Post Office in the United States and its territories and possessions, including military Post Offices overseas. Qualified Business Reply Mail (QBRM) is a subset of BRM available for specific automation-compatible letter-size pieces that qualify for an automation postage price and a reduced per piece fee (see [1.10](#)). Domestic BRM may not be distributed to foreign countries. Standards for International Business Reply Service (IBRS) are in the [International Mail Manual](#).

1.4.2 Payment Guarantee

The permit holder guarantees payment of the applicable First-Class Mail or Priority Mail postage, plus a per piece fee, on all returned BRM. This includes any incomplete, blank, or empty BRM cards and envelopes and any mailable matter with a BRM label affixed.

1.4.3 Services

No extra services (e.g., Certified Mail, insurance, Registered Mail) are permitted with BRM.

1.4.4 Address

The delivery address on a piece of BRM may not be altered to redirect the mailpiece to any address other than the one preprinted on the piece.

1.4.5 Official Mail

Authorized users of official (penalty) mail may distribute BRM subject to the additional standards in [703.7.0](#), which supersede any conflicting standards in [1.0](#).

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1.4.6 Intentions of the Permit Holder

BRM may not be used for any purpose other than that intended by the permit holder, even when postage is affixed. In cases where a BRM card or letter is used improperly as a label, the USPS treats the item as waste.

1.4.7 Samples

Prior to printing, permit holders are encouraged, but not required, to submit preproduction samples of BRM to the USPS for approval. QBRM pieces require USPS approval (1.3).

1.4.8 Error Notification

If the USPS discovers a BRM format error, the responsible permit holder or authorized agent receives written notification of the error. The permit holder must correct the error and make sure that all future BRM pieces meet appropriate specifications. The repeated distribution of BRM with format errors is grounds for revoking a BRM permit (1.5.5).

1.5 Permits**1.5.1 Required**

Any mailer who wants to distribute BRM must apply for and receive a permit. The permit number, city, and state where the permit is held must appear on all pieces of BRM.

1.5.2 Application Process

The mailer may apply for a BRM permit by submitting a completed Form 3615 to the Post Office issuing the permit and paying the annual permit fee. If a completed Form 3615 is already on file for the mailer for other permits at that office, then the mailer must submit the annual BRM permit fee and the USPS amends Form 3615 by adding the BRM authorization. Annual Permit Fee

A permit fee must be paid once each 12-month period at each Post Office where a BRM permit is held. Payment of the permit fee is based on the anniversary date of the permit's issuance. The fee may be paid in advance only for the next 12 months and only during the last 60 days of the current service period. The fee charged is that which is in effect on the date of payment. Agents authorized by a permit holder under 1.11 are not required to pay an annual permit fee at the Post Office where their BRM is received.

1.5.3 Renewal of Annual Permit Fee

An annual renewal notice is provided to each BRM permit holder by the USPS. The notice and the payment for the next 12 months must be returned by the expiration date to the Post Office that issued the permit. After the expiration date, if the permit holder has not paid the annual permit fee, then returned BRM pieces are treated as follows:

- a. Postcards of no obvious value are treated as waste and disposed of at the delivery unit.
- b. Pieces (excluding postcards) with a return address are endorsed "Business Reply Permit Canceled" and are returned to the sender.
- c. Pieces without a return address are endorsed "Business Reply Permit Canceled" and forwarded to the mail recovery center for handling.

1.5.4 Other Post Offices

A permit holder may distribute BRM through any Post Office for delivery at any Post Office under [1.11](#).

1.5.5 Revocation of a Permit

The USPS may revoke a BRM permit because of format errors or for refusal to pay permit fees (annual, accounting, quarterly, or monthly), postage, or per piece fees. If the permit was revoked due to format errors, then a former permit holder may obtain a new permit and permit number by completing and submitting a new Form 3615, paying the required BRM annual permit fee, paying a new annual account maintenance fee (if applicable), and, for the next 2 years, submitting two samples of each BRM format to the appropriate Post Office for approval.

1.6 Postage, Per Piece Fees, and Account Maintenance Fees**1.6.1 Postage**

Each piece of returned BRM is charged the applicable single-piece First-Class Mail or Priority Mail postage ([423.1.0, *Prices and Fees*](#), and [133.1.0, *First-Class Mail Prices and Fees*](#)). Cards must meet the standards in [201.1.0](#) to qualify for card price postage. Any card larger than those dimensions is charged the applicable First-Class Mail letter price. For Priority Mail if the zone cannot be determined from a return address or cancellation, then the permit holder is charged zone 4 postage for the weight of the piece. For QBRM, see [1.10](#).

1.6.2 Per Piece Fees

Per piece fees listed in [1.1](#) are charged for each piece of returned BRM (in addition to postage in [1.6.1](#)). If a permit holder has not paid an annual account maintenance fee and established a BRM advance deposit account, then the basic (higher) BRM per piece fee must be paid. If a permit holder has paid the annual account maintenance fee and has established a BRM advance deposit account, then the high-volume (lower) BRM per piece fee is paid. For QBRM, see [1.10](#).

1.6.3 Advance Deposit Account and Annual Account Maintenance Fee

A permit holder may choose to pay an annual account maintenance fee and establish an advance deposit account, which qualifies returned BRM pieces for the high-volume per piece fee. The account maintenance fee must be paid once each 12-month period at each Post Office where a permit holder holds an advance deposit account. Payment of the account maintenance fee is based on the anniversary date of the initial payment. The fee may be paid in advance only for the next 12-month period and only during the last 60 days of the current 12-month period. The fee charged is that which is in effect on the date of payment. A separate advance deposit account solely for BRM is not required. An advance deposit account can be used for BRM under these conditions:

- a. For each withdrawal, only one statement is provided for each annual account maintenance fee paid.
- b. If a permit holder distributes BRM with different addresses (including Post Office box numbers) under the same permit number going to the same delivery unit and has only one business reply account, then the BRM is separated by each different address but only one statement is provided and only one annual account maintenance fee is paid.

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- c. The permit holder must pay an annual account maintenance fee for each separate statement (accounting) requested. If only one annual account maintenance fee is paid, then the permit holder receives only one statement.
- d. The permit holder must maintain a balance in the BRM advance deposit account that is sufficient to cover postage and per piece fees for returned mailpieces. The permit holder is notified if funds are insufficient. After 3 calendar days, if no funds are deposited, then BRM on hand is charged the basic BRM per piece fee and postage and charges are collected from the permit holder (e.g., in cash) prior to delivery.
- e. BRM addressed to several different firms at the same delivery unit may be delivered to an agent authorized by a valid BRM permit holder. The agent pays one annual account maintenance fee for all the firms represented by the agent in the same delivery unit. If the agent, or any of the firms represented by the agent, wants a separation of charges, then separate (additional) account maintenance fees must be paid.

1.6.4 Renewal of Annual Account Maintenance Fee

An annual renewal notice is provided to each BRM permit holder with a BRM advance deposit account. The notice and the payment for the next 12 months must be returned by the expiration date to the Post Office that holds the advance deposit account. After the expiration date, if the permit holder has not paid the annual account maintenance fee but still has a valid BRM permit, returned BRM pieces no longer qualify for the high-volume BRM per piece fee and are charged the basic BRM per piece fee in [1.1.1](#).

1.6.5 Combined Pieces as a Single Item

Two or more BRM pieces may be mailed as a single piece if the BRM pieces are identically addressed and prepared for mailing in accordance with [201.1.0](#). The permit holder is charged postage based on the total weight of the combined piece plus one per piece fee. If the combined pieces become separated, then the permit holder must pay postage and a per piece fee for each individual piece. Combined pieces are not eligible for QBRM postage prices or per piece fees.

1.6.6 With Postage Affixed

BRM with postage affixed is handled the same as other BRM. No effort is made to identify or separate BRM pieces with postage affixed. The amount of affixed postage is not deducted from the postage or per piece fees owed. The permit holder may request a refund or credit for postage affixed to BRM under [604.9.2.10](#).

1.6.7 Payment Options

Permit holders may pay for postage and per piece fees on returned pieces by cash or check upon delivery, through a regular postage due account ([604.6.3](#)), or through a BRM advance deposit account. A regular postage due account does not qualify the permit holder for high-volume BRM per piece fees, and no annual account maintenance fee is charged to maintain the account.

1.7 Mailpiece Characteristics

1.7.1 Paper Weight

BRM paper envelopes must have a minimum basis weight of 20 pounds (500 17- by 22-inch sheets). Other pieces (cards and self-mailers) must meet the basis weight requirements in [201.3.0](#).

1.7.2 Nonpaper Envelopes

USPS Engineering must approve nonpaper envelopes for mailability. See [201.3.0](#).

1.7.3 Envelope Reflectance

Envelope material must not have a red fluorescence exceeding 4.0 phosphor meter units.

1.7.4 Sealing and Edges

BRM pieces must be rectangular, with four square corners, and parallel opposite sides, but may have finished corners as described in [201.1.0](#) for letter-sized pieces or [301.1.0](#) for flat-sized pieces. BRM pieces are not mailable if they are sealed with wax, clasps, string, staples, or buttons.

1.7.5 Window Envelopes

The following standards apply to BRM prepared in an open-panel or a covered window envelope:

- a. All window envelopes:
 1. When a mailpiece has a barcode in the address block, the mailpiece must meet the applicable standards in [202.5.7](#) for letters or [302.5.6](#) for flats.
 2. The address showing through the window must be that of the permit holder or an authorized representative.
 3. The facing identification mark (FIM) must be printed on the envelope as specified in [708.9.0](#).
 4. See [601.6.4](#) for required clearances for information showing within a window envelope.
- b. Covered window envelopes:
 1. The “No Postage Necessary” imprint, the business reply legend, and the horizontal bars must be printed either directly on the envelope or on the insert appearing through the covered window. The minimum size of the information appearing in the covered window is 2 inches high and 4-1/4 inches long. Horizontal bars may be omitted only on letter-size BRM bearing Intelligent Mail barcodes.
 2. The window cover must be of a nontinted clear or transparent material (e.g., cellophane or polystyrene) that permits the barcode and its background, as viewed through the window material, to meet the reflectance standards in [708.4.4](#). The edges of the window cover must be securely glued to the envelope.
- c. Open panel window envelopes:

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1. The “No Postage Necessary” imprint, the business reply legend, and the horizontal bars must be printed directly on the envelope. Horizontal bars may be omitted only on letter-size BRM bearing Intelligent Mail barcodes.
2. Other required and optional elements in [1.8](#) may be printed on the insert appearing through the address window.

1.7.6 Self-Mailers and Reusable Mailpieces

In addition to the standards in [1.7](#) and [1.8](#), self-mailers and reusable mailpieces must meet the standards in [201.3.14](#) and [601.6.5](#). Permit holders must provide instructions to the user for re-folding and sealing (see [601.6.5](#)) so that upon return the piece meets sealing and folding requirements in [201.3.0](#).

1.7.7 Cards

Cards must meet the standards in [201.1.2](#).

1.7.8 Labels

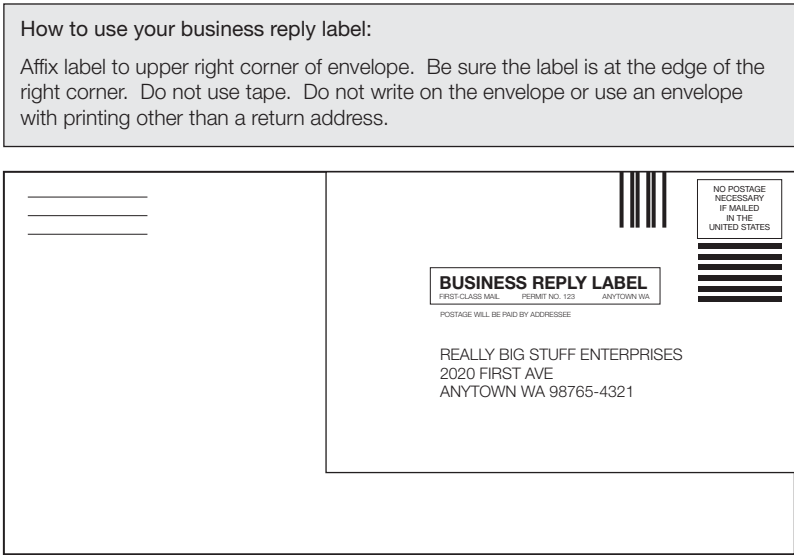
For general use, the minimum size of a BRM label is 2 inches high and 3 inches long. BRM labels are not required to have a FIM or a ZIP+4 barcode, but all other format standards in [1.8](#) must be met. In cases where a BRM card or letter is used improperly as a label, the USPS treats the item as waste. See [1.7.9](#) for labels for letter-size pieces.

1.7.9 Labels for Letter-Size Pieces

The following standards apply to BRM labels for use on letter-size pieces:

- a. The minimum size of a BRM label is 2-5/8 inches high and 4-1/4 inches long. All format elements, including a FIM, must be printed on the label. *Exception:* The vertical series of horizontal bars must be at least 3/4-inch high. *Exception:* The vertical series of horizontal bars must be at least 3/4-inch high. Horizontal bars may be omitted on BRM letter-size pieces bearing Intelligent Mail barcodes. The back of the label must be coated with a permanent adhesive strong enough to firmly attach the label to an envelope.
- b. The permit holder must provide instructions to the user describing how the label should be applied to a mailpiece and what precautions must be observed when applying the label (see [Exhibit 1.7.9](#)). A pictorial diagram showing proper placement of the label must be included with the instructions. At a minimum, the instructions must include the following directions:
 1. Place the label squarely in the upper right corner of the envelope.
 2. Do not write on the envelope or label.
 3. Do not use a window envelope, an envelope that is less than 1 inch higher than the label an envelope that is more than 4-1/2 inches high, or an envelope with any printing other than a return address.
 4. Do not use tape to affix the label.
- c. When the label is affixed to an envelope, the address must be placed within the OCR read area (see [202.2.1](#)).
- d. Pieces with business reply labels cannot qualify for QBRM prices.

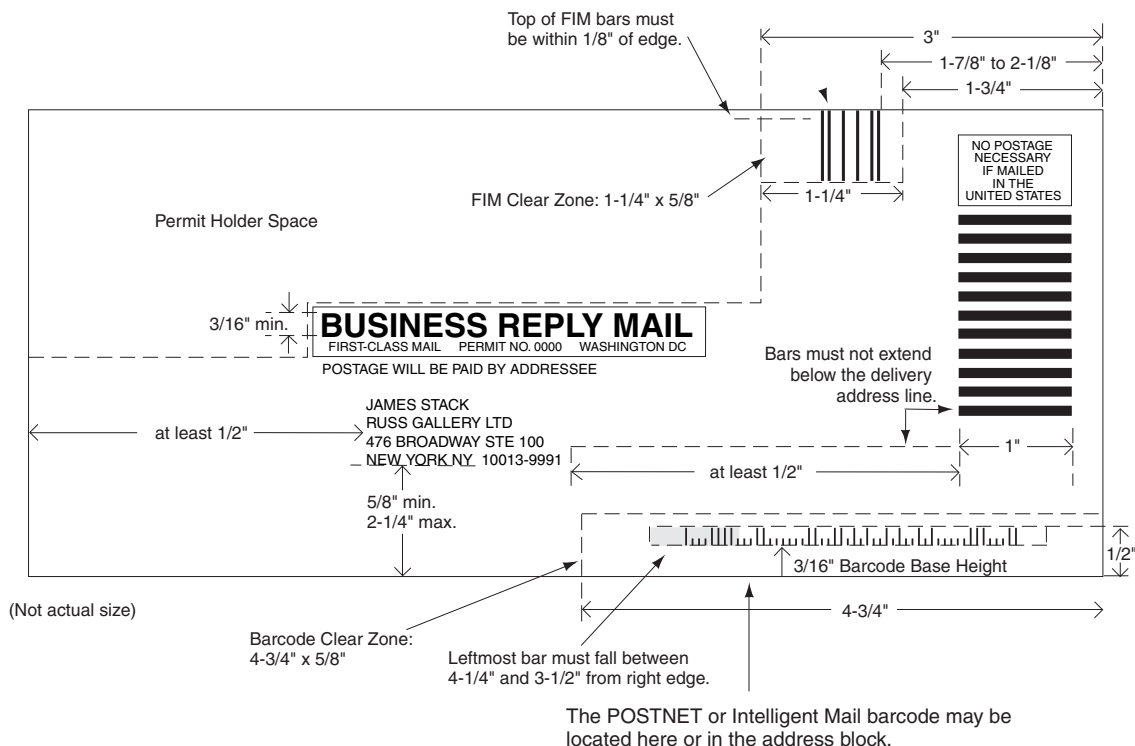
Exhibit 1.7.9 Instructions for Affixing Business Reply Label



1.8 Format Elements

1.8.1 General

All pieces of BRM are subject to these format elements. Pieces of QBRM and bulk weight averaged nonletter-size BRM are subject to additional format standards listed in 1.10 and 1.12, respectively. BRM format elements are shown in Exhibit 1.8.1.

Exhibit 1.8.1 Business Reply Mail Format**1.8.2 Printing and Print Reflectance**

All forms of printing are permissible if legible to the satisfaction of the USPS. Handwriting, typewriting, and handstamping may not be used to prepare BRM. Printed borders are not permitted on letter-size BRM, but are permitted on business reply labels and cartons and envelopes greater than $6\frac{1}{8}$ inches high or $11\frac{1}{2}$ inches long or $\frac{1}{4}$ inch thick. All ink colors are acceptable if the piece meets the appropriate reflectance standards in [708.4.4](#).

1.8.3 "No Postage Necessary" Imprint

The imprint "NO POSTAGE NECESSARY IF MAILED IN THE UNITED STATES" must be printed in the upper right corner of the address side of the piece, except as allowed under [601.6.6](#) for reusable mailpieces with outgoing permit imprint indicia. The "NO POSTAGE NECESSARY" imprint must not extend more than $1\frac{3}{4}$ inches from the right edge of the piece.

1.8.4 Business Reply Legend

The legend "BUSINESS REPLY MAIL" or "BUSINESS REPLY LABEL," as appropriate, must appear on all pieces. This legend must appear above the address in capital letters at least $\frac{3}{16}$ inch high. At the permit holder's discretion, the business reply legend may be surrounded by a rule or border.

1.8.5 Permit Number and Postage Endorsement

Directly below the business reply legend, the words “FIRST-CLASS MAIL PERMIT NO. [NO., CITY, STATE]” (representing the permit holder's number and Post Office that issued the permit) must appear in capital letters. Directly below that, the endorsement “POSTAGE WILL BE PAID BY ADDRESSEE” must appear in capital letters. At the permit holder's discretion, the permit number and postage endorsement may be surrounded by a rule or border.

1.8.6 Delivery Address

The complete address (including the permit holder's name, delivery address, city, state, and BRM ZIP Code) must be printed directly on the piece, except as allowed under [1.7.5](#) or under item a below, subject to these conditions:

- a. Preprinted labels with only delivery address information (including an Intelligent Mail barcode or POSTNET ZIP+4 barcode under [1.9](#)) are permitted, but the permit holder's name and other required elements must be printed directly on the BRM piece.
- b. On letter-size pieces, the complete delivery address must appear within the OCR read area (see [202.2.1](#)).
- c. There must be at least a 1/2-inch clearance between the ZIP Code and the horizontal bars.
- d. A unique ZIP Code (i.e., firm ZIP Code) must not be used for BRM unless the ZIP Code has been assigned specifically for BRM. A unique 4-digit add-on to denote BRM may not be used with a unique 5-digit ZIP Code not specifically assigned to BRM.

1.8.7 Horizontal Bars

A vertical series of horizontal bars parallel to the length of the piece must be printed directly below the imprint “NO POSTAGE NECESSARY IF MAILED IN THE UNITED STATES.” The bars must be uniform in length, at least 1 inch long and 1/16 inch to 3/16 inch thick, and evenly spaced. On letter-size nonbarcoded BRM, the bars must not extend below the delivery address line (the line above the line containing the ZIP Code). On barcoded BRM, the bars must not extend lower than 5/8 inch from the bottom edge of the piece. Horizontal bars may be omitted on BRM letter-size and cards bearing Intelligent Mail barcodes.

1.8.8 Facing Identification Mark (FIM)

A FIM must be printed on all letter-size BRM and on business reply labels affixed to letter-size mail (see [1.7.9](#)). FIM B must be used with BRM without a barcode. FIM C must be used with any BRM printed with a barcode. The FIM must meet the physical standards in [708.9.0](#).

1.8.9 Company Logo

A company logo is permitted:

- a. On nonbarcoded BRM, if it is placed outside the OCR read area (see [202.2.1](#)).
- b. On letter-size barcoded BRM, if it is placed no lower than 5/8 inch from the bottom edge of the piece.
- c. On any piece, if the logo does not interfere with any required format elements.

1.9 Additional Standards for Letter-Size and Flat-Size BRM

In addition to the format standards in [1.8](#), letter-size BRM enclosed in automation mailings and all QBRM must be barcoded with a ZIP+4 POSTNET barcode or an Intelligent Mail barcode. Intelligent Mail barcodes on all BRM must contain the barcode ID, service type ID, and correct ZIP+4 routing code, as specified under [708.4.3](#).

- a. Permit holders must use the ZIP+4 codes and equivalent Intelligent Mail barcode or POSTNET barcodes assigned by the USPS. Delivery point barcodes are not permitted on BRM. The ZIP+4 barcode must be placed on the address side of the piece and positioned in either of these two locations:
 1. As part of the delivery address block under [202.5.7](#).
 2. Within the barcode clear zone in the lower right corner of the piece if printed directly on the piece.

1.10 Additional Standards for Qualified Business Reply Mail (QBRM)**1.10.1 Description**

Qualified business reply mail (QBRM) is a subset of business reply mail. Permit holders distribute automation-compatible letter-size pieces that qualify for automation postage prices and reduced per piece fees. QBRM postage and per piece fees must be deducted from a BRM advance deposit account.

1.10.2 Eligibility

To qualify for QBRM, pieces must meet the eligibility requirements in [1.3](#).

1.10.3 Authorization

BRM permit holders must apply for authorization to participate in QBRM under [1.3](#).

1.10.4 Postage

Each piece of returned QBRM is charged the automation postage price for QBRM pieces in [1.2](#). Pieces that do not meet the format requirements for QBRM cannot qualify for automation postage prices and are charged First-Class Mail postage according to [1.6.1, Postage](#).

1.10.5 Per Piece Fees

Per piece fees listed in [1.1.3](#) are charged for each piece of returned QBRM (in addition to postage in [1.10.4](#)). Pieces that do not meet the format requirements for QBRM cannot qualify for QBRM per piece fees and are charged the high-volume BRM per piece fees in [1.1.2](#).

1.10.6 Annual Account Maintenance Fee and Advance Deposit Account

Permit holders are required to pay QBRM postage and per piece fees through a BRM advance deposit account, which requires payment of an annual account maintenance fee (see [1.6.3](#)).

1.10.7 Quarterly Fee for High-Volume QBRM

Mailers may choose to pay a quarterly fee in addition to the annual account maintenance fee. Payment of the quarterly fee entitles mailers to a lower per piece fee (the high-volume QBRM per piece fee listed in [1.1.4](#)). The quarterly fee and annual account maintenance fee must be paid at each Post Office where mail is returned and for each separate billing desired. Mailers are eligible for the

high-volume QBRM rates and per piece fees only for the time they pay the quarterly fee (i.e., mailers can opt out of the quarterly fee and related high-volume QBRM per piece fees simply by not paying the fee for the next quarter). The quarterly fee cannot be paid or renewed retroactively to receive a lower per piece fee on pieces already paid for and delivered. The quarterly fee can be paid for any three consecutive calendar months.

1.10.8 Payment Period for Quarterly Fee

The quarterly fee must be paid in advance for at least one but no more than four quarterly periods. A quarterly period begins on either the first day of the month (if a mailer pays on or before the 15th of the month) or the first day of the following month (if a mailer pays after the 15th of the month) and continues for three consecutive calendar months. A mailer who pays the quarterly fee is entitled to the high-volume QBRM per piece fee from the date of payment through the end of the quarterly period. The fee paid is that which is in effect on the date of payment.

1.11 BRM Distributed and Received by Agents of a Permit Holder

1.11.1 Description

Permit holders may give permission to subsidiary offices, agents, or authorized representatives to distribute and receive BRM using a single (corporate) permit number. BRM pieces are distributed by and returned to agents, who pay postage and per piece fees on those returned pieces. Agents may use any type of BRM service.

1.11.2 Permit

The main permit holder or “corporate” office applies for the permit number and pays the permit fee. The agent must present a letter of authorization from the permit holder showing the name, address, and telephone number of the local agent authorized to receive the BRM to the Post Office where the BRM is to be returned. Any time there is a change to the original permit application or the authorization letter, each agent must provide an amended letter of authorization to their local Post Office.

1.11.3 Annual Permit Fee

The annual permit fee must be paid by the permit holder ([1.6.3](#)). Agents do not pay a separate annual permit fee but must submit evidence (usually a copy of Form 3544) to the local office once each 12-month period to show that the annual permit fee has been paid. This evidence is not required if the permit holder has a centralized account processing system (CAPS) account through which the local Post Office can determine that the permit fee has been paid.

1.11.4 Postage, Per Piece Fees, and Annual Account Maintenance Fees

Agents receiving BRM or QBRM pay the postage, per piece fees, and annual account maintenance fees listed in [1.1](#) for the type of service received. The agent may choose to pay an annual account maintenance fee and establish a BRM advance deposit account. The agent receiving BRM is responsible for paying all postage and per piece fees.

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1.11.5 Payment Guarantee

The permit holder is ultimately responsible for postage and per piece fees for all pieces returned under that permit number. If a local agent refuses or neglects to pay postage or per piece fees on returned pieces, then those pieces are forwarded to the Post Office that issued the original permit for collection of postage and per piece fees from the permit holder. Once forwarded to the permit holder, these pieces cannot qualify for QBRM postage and per piece fees. The permit holder's refusal to accept and pay the required postage and per piece fees for BRM offered for delivery is grounds for immediate revocation of the BRM permit (1.5.5).

1.11.6 Format

BRM distributed by agents must meet all required format standards in 1.7 and 1.8. Authorized representatives distributing BRM on behalf of a permit holder must have the permit holder's name and permit number printed on the BRM and their own names and addresses printed below the permit holder's name, except:

- a. When the agent is a branch of an authorized business.
- b. The permit holder notifies a Post Office that authorized representatives may use the permit holder's permit number without printing the permit holder's name.

1.12 Bulk Weight Averaged Nonletter-size BRM**1.12.1 Description**

Bulk weight averaging is a method of counting, rating, and billing incoming nonletter-size BRM based on principles of mathematical statistics. Probability sampling techniques are used to measure the characteristics of the total BRM volume by examining a fraction of the volume. Statistically valid samples that are drawn from the incoming BRM volume each postal accounting period are used by Post Offices to compute average postage due per pound and average piece count per pound factors. The net bulk weight of mail received is multiplied by these conversion factors to get the estimated volume received and postage and fee amounts.

1.12.2 Eligibility

BRM pieces rated by the weight averaging method must:

- a. Meet the basic standards for BRM in 1.0.
- b. Not be letter-size (201.1.0) or card-size (201.1.2).
- c. Not exceed 5 pounds.

1.12.3 Postage, Per Piece Fees, and Other Fees

Returned pieces of bulk weight averaged nonletter-size BRM are charged postage and per piece fees according to 1.1.5. Permit holders participating in bulk weight averaged nonletter-size BRM must pay an annual account maintenance fee (see 1.6.3) and a monthly maintenance fee (1.3).

1.12.4 Application Procedures

A permit holder who wants to use bulk weight averaged BRM for nonletter-size pieces must submit a written request to the postmaster of the office where the BRM permit is held. The postmaster forwards this information to the manager, Customer Service Standardization, USPS Headquarters (see [608.8.0](#) for address). The request must include the following information:

- a. Permit holder's name and address.
- b. Name and location of the Post Office at which BRM will be received and a CAPS account number, if available.
- c. Information about the number of pieces expected to be returned over a 24-hour period and a 30-day period, and a breakdown of the weight distribution of those pieces (in nearest ounces or pounds) (e.g., X number of 3-ounce pieces, Y number of 4-ounce pieces, and Z number of 5-ounce pieces).
- d. Based on the estimated volume in [1.12.4c](#), a 24-hour estimate and a 30-day estimate of postage and per piece fees using the postage and charges listed in [1.1.5, Bulk Weight Averaged Nonletter-Size BRM](#).
- e. A statement indicating whether the piece volume has seasonal variation and, if applicable, estimates of monthly volumes for a 12-month period.

1.12.5 Authorization

The permit holder's request will be reviewed and approved by the manager, Customer Service Standardization, USPS Headquarters. If the request is approved, then a letter of authorization is sent to the permit holder from the Post Office where the BRM permit is held. The permit holder signs a service agreement and, if necessary, is assigned a Post Office box address.

1.12.6 Denial of Authorization

If the permit holder's request is not approved, then the Post Office sends a written notice, giving reasons for the denial. The permit holder has 15 days following receipt of the notice to file a written appeal of the decision with the postmaster and to furnish further information. If the postmaster still finds that the application should be denied, then the postmaster forwards the file to the manager, Customer Service Standardization, USPS Headquarters, who issues a final written decision to the permit holder.

1.12.7 Revoking Authorization

To revoke authorization for bulk weight averaging, the postmaster sends written notice to the permit holder. A postmaster may terminate authorization for bulk weight averaged BRM for any of the following reasons:

- a. The permit holder provided incorrect or incomplete information on the request for authorization.
- b. The permit holder's BRM pieces no longer meet the eligibility requirements in [1.0](#).
- c. The USPS finds that bulk weight averaging no longer provides adequate revenue protection.
- d. The permit holder no longer desires to participate in bulk weight averaging.

1.12.8 Notice and Appeal

Termination takes effect 15 days from the permit holder's receipt of the notice unless the permit holder files a written appeal within that period with the postmaster. The postmaster forwards the permit holder's appeal together with all pertinent information to the manager, Customer Service Standardization, USPS Headquarters, who issues a final agency decision to the permit holder. The permit holder may continue to use the bulk weight averaging method until a final decision is made on the appeal.

2.0 Permit Reply Mail**2.1 General Information****2.1.1 Description**

Permit reply mail (PRM) enables a permit imprint permit holder to receive First-Class Mail and Priority Mail back from customers by prepaying postage for reply pieces at the time of mailing. Mailers must distribute PRM pieces as part of a First-Class Mail mailing (see [230](#)) using a permit imprint, and not through any other means.

2.1.2 Services

No extra services (e.g., Certified Mail, insurance, Registered Mail) are permitted with PRM.

2.1.3 Address

The delivery address on a PRM mailpiece may not be altered to redirect it to any address other than the one preprinted on the piece.

2.1.4 Permit Holder Intentions

PRM may not be used for any purpose other than the purpose intended by the permit holder, even when postage is affixed.

2.1.5 Special Standards for PRM Pieces with an Optical Disc

[7-5-11] A letter-size PRM piece containing one standard optical disc will not be charged a nonmachinable surcharge if the piece meets the standards in [233.2.8](#). A flat-size BRM piece containing one standard optical disc and weighing no more than 2 ounces will be charged postage applicable for a 1-ounce First-Class Mail flat if the piece meets the standards in [333.2.7](#).

2.2 Authorization and Revocation**2.2.1 Authorization**

PRM customers must apply for authorization through the district manager of Business Mail Entry at the office where the permit imprint account is held.

2.2.2 Samples

Permit holders must submit preproduction samples of PRM pieces to the Postal Service for approval prior to distribution.

2.2.3 Error Notification

If the Postal Service discovers a PRM format error, the permit holder or authorized agent will receive a written notification of the error. The permit holder must correct the error and ensure that all future PRM pieces meet appropriate specifications. The Postal Service may revoke a PRM authorization if a mailer repeatedly distributes PRM with format errors (see [2.2.4](#)).

2.2.4 Revocation of Authorization

The Postal Service may revoke a PRM authorization because of format errors or misuse. If the authorization is revoked due to format errors, the format errors must be corrected before reauthorization.

2.3 Format Elements

2.3.1 General

All pieces of PRM must include the format elements shown in [Exhibit 2.3.1](#).

Exhibit 2.3.1 Permit Reply Mail Format Elements



2.3.2 Printing and Print Reflectance

All legible forms of printing are permitted. Mailers may not use handwriting, typewriting, or handstamping to prepare PRM.

2.3.3 No Postage Necessary Imprint

The imprint, "NO POSTAGE NECESSARY IF MAILED IN THE UNITED STATES," must be printed in the upper right corner of the address side of the piece. The imprint must not extend more than 1-3/4 inches from the right edge of the piece.

2.3.4 Permit Reply Mail Legend

The legend, "PERMIT REPLY MAIL," must appear on all pieces. The legend must appear above the address in capital letters at least 3/16 inch high. At the permit holder's discretion, the permit reply mail legend may be surrounded by a rule or border.

2.3.5 Permit Number and Postage Endorsement

Directly below the permit reply mail legend, the words, "FIRST-CLASS MAIL PERMIT NO. [NO., CITY, STATE]" (representing the permit holder's number and the Post Office that issued the permit) must appear in capital letters. The permit holder may replace the permit number and the Post Office with a company permit as described

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in [2.5](#). Directly below that, the endorsement, “POSTAGE HAS BEEN PREPAID BY ADDRESSEE,” must appear in capital letters. At the permit holder's discretion, the permit number and postage endorsement may be surrounded by a rule or border.

2.3.6 Delivery Address

The complete address (including the permit holder's name, delivery address, city, state, and ZIP+4 code) must be printed on the piece. PRM pieces must bear a delivery point POSTNET or Intelligent Mail barcode.

2.3.7 Facing Identification Mark

A facing identification mark (FIM) C must be printed on all letter-size PRM. The FIM C must meet the physical standards in [708.9.0](#).

2.3.8 Company Logo

A company logo is permitted as follows:

- a. On letter-size PRM, if the logo is placed no lower than 5/8 inch from the bottom edge of the piece.
- b. On any piece, if the logo does not interfere with any required format element.

2.4 Permit Imprint Account

Mailers may distribute PRM as part of the contents of an outgoing mailing only by using a valid permit imprint account. The standards for using permit imprints are located in [604.5.0](#).

2.5 Company Permit Reply Mail Imprint**2.5.1 Definition**

A company permit reply mail imprint is one in which the exact name of the company holding the permit is shown in the permit reply mail indicia in place of the city, state, and permit number.

2.5.2 Use

A customer may use a company permit reply mail imprint if, for 1 year from the date of mailing, the permit holder or its agent keeps records of each mailing paid with a company permit reply mail imprint and makes them available for USPS review on request. These records must include the weight of a single piece; the total number of pieces mailed; the total postage; and the dates and Post Offices of mailing. A complete sample mailpiece must be included for each mailing.

2.5.3 Format

To create a company permit reply mail imprint, replace the words “PERMIT No. [NO., CITY, STATE]” (representing the permit holder's number and the Post Office that issued the permit), with “PERMIT PAID BY [COMPANY NAME]” (representing the name of the company in the delivery address of the mailpiece) in capital letters.

3.0 Merchandise Return Service

3.1 Prices and Fees

3.1.1 Permit Fee

An annual permit fee must be paid once each 12-month period at each Post Office where a Merchandise Return Service (MRS) permit is held. See [Notice 123—Price List](#) for the applicable fee. Payment of the annual permit fee is based on the anniversary date of the permit's issuance. The fee may be paid in advance only for the next 12 months and only during the last 60 days of the current service period. The fee charged is that which is in effect on the date of payment.

3.1.2 Advance Deposit Account and Account Maintenance Fee

There is an annual account maintenance fee for the advance deposit account (see [Notice 123—Price List](#)). The permit holder must pay postage and extra service fees through an advance deposit account and must pay an annual account maintenance fee (see [3.1](#)). The account maintenance fee is charged once each 12-month period on the anniversary date of the initial account maintenance fee payment. The fee may be paid in advance only for the next year and only during the last 60 days of the current service period. The fee charged is that which is in effect on the date of payment. A separate advance deposit account for MRS is not required; the annual account maintenance fee is charged if MRS postage and fees are paid from an existing account:

- a. For each withdrawal, only one statement is provided for each annual account maintenance fee paid.
- b. The permit holder must pay an annual account maintenance fee for each separate statement (accounting) requested. If only one annual account fee is paid, then the permit holder receives only one statement.

3.1.3 Postage

Merchandise return service parcels are charged single-piece price postage and extra service fees based on the class or subclass marking on the label. If a parcel is unmarked, then it is charged Parcel Post prices. If the postage for the returned parcel is zoned and there is no way to determine its zone of origin (i.e., no postmark or return address), then postage is calculated at zone 4 (for Priority Mail or Parcel Post). Postage is deducted from an advance deposit account.

3.1.4 Postage Due Weight Averaging

MRS mailers may participate in the Postage Due Weight Averaging program described in [705.20.0](#).

3.1.5 Priority Mail Commercial Base and Commercial Plus Prices

Priority Mail commercial base and commercial plus prices are available to MRS permit holders when the following criteria are met:

- a. Commercial base prices are available for permit holders using MRS for Priority Mail items ([423.1.2](#)) when all MRS requirements for Priority Mail are met. See [Notice 123—Price List](#) for applicable prices.

- b. Commercial plus prices are available for permit holders using MRS for Priority Mail items who qualify for commercial base prices (423.1.2) and whose account volume exceed 100,000 pieces in the previous calendar year or who have a customer commitment agreement with the USPS (423.1.3.2).

3.2 Basic Standards

3.2.1 Description

Merchandise return service allows an authorized permit holder to pay the postage and extra service fees on single-piece price First-Class Mail, Priority Mail, and Package Services parcels that are returned to the permit holder by the permit holder's customers via a special label produced by the permit holder.

3.2.2 Availability

Merchandise return service is available to the permit holder for mailing to the postage due unit at any Post Office where authorized by an approved application.

3.2.3 Payment Guarantee

The permit holder guarantees payment of the proper postage and extra service fees (except for insurance and certificate of mailing purchased by the sender) on all parcels returned via a special label produced by the permit holder.

3.2.4 Where Service Established

Merchandise return service may be established at any Post Office in the United States and its territories and possessions or at any U.S. military Post Office overseas (APO/FPO). It is not available for any foreign country.

3.2.5 Official Mail

Any authorized user of official (penalty) mail may use merchandise return service subject to the standards in [703.7.0](#), which supersede conflicting standards below.

3.2.6 Application Process

The applicant must submit a completed Form 3615 and the annual permit fee to the Post Office issuing the permit. If the applicant already has a completed Form 3615 on file at that office, the form may be amended by adding the merchandise return service authorization to existing permit authorizations. Except for MRS labels generated by the USPS Application Program Interface (API), the Form 3615 must be accompanied by copies of the MRS labels (including printed copies of labels intended to be faxed to customers or transmitted to customers electronically) and the instructions provided to the permit holder's customers. All MRS labels that have preprinted Delivery Confirmation barcodes must be approved by the USPS ([503.10.0](#)). If articles are to be returned from customers as Registered Mail, the applicant must write "Registered Mail" on the application. After a permit is obtained, any change to label formats or customer instructions must be approved by the Post Office where the permit is held. The permit is valid for 12 months after the approval date of the application.

3.2.7 Procedure

An approved merchandise return permit on Form 3615 must be on file at every Post Office to which parcels are returned.

3.2.8 Multiple Accounts

When an advance deposit account is kept at each entry location, a separate permit is needed and the annual merchandise return service permit and annual account maintenance fees must be paid at each Post Office.

3.2.9 Renewal

To renew the permit, the permit holder must send the annual fee to the issuing Post Office by the expiration date of the permit or authorize the postmaster to deduct the fee from the advance deposit account. Written authorization is not needed for permit renewal if there is no change to the authorization on file at the delivery unit.

3.2.10 Nonrenewed Permit

If the permit is not renewed, merchandise return mail is returned to the sender if a return address is provided. Merchandise return mail that does not contain the sender's return address is treated as dead mail.

3.2.11 Permit Cancellation

The USPS may cancel a permit if the permit holder refuses to accept and pay postage and fees on merchandise return service parcels, fails to keep sufficient funds in the advance deposit account to cover postage and fees, or distributes merchandise return labels or tags that do not meet USPS standards.

3.2.12 Reapplying After Cancellation

To receive a new permit at the same Post Office after a merchandise return permit is canceled, the applicant must amend the Form 3615 on file at that office to reflect the new application date; pay a new permit fee; submit for approval two samples of any label format to be used; provide evidence that the reasons for the permit cancellation are corrected; and provide and keep funds in an advance deposit account to cover normal returns for at least 2 weeks.

3.2.13 Using Other Post Offices

The permit holder may distribute merchandise return labels for return through other Post Offices without paying an additional permit fee if the permit holder opens and keeps a centralized advance deposit account at the Post Office where the permit is issued and supplies the postmaster of the Post Office where the application is submitted the name, address, and telephone number of a representative in each additional location if different from the information on the application.

3.3 Additional Standards for Permit Holder**3.3.1 Insurance**

The permit holder may obtain insured mail service with MRS. Only Package Services matter (matter not required to be mailed at First-Class Mail prices under [133.3.0, Content Standards](#)) may be insured. Insured mail may be combined with Delivery Confirmation and special handling, or both. To request insured mail service, the permit holder must preprint or rubber-stamp "Insurance Desired by Permit Holder for \$_____ (value)" to the left of and above the "Merchandise Return Label" legend and below the "Total Postage and Fees Due" statement on the merchandise return label. The value part of the endorsement, showing the dollar amount of insurance for the article, may be handwritten by the permit holder. If insurance is paid for by the MRS permit holder, then only the MRS permit holder may file a claim ([609](#)).

3.3.2 Registered Mail

The permit holder may obtain Registered Mail service with MRS. The following standards apply:

- a. The customer using the MRS label must declare the full value of the article to be registered when presented at the Post Office. Registered Mail service may be obtained only on articles returned at First-Class Mail or Priority Mail prices and may not be combined with any other extra service.
- b. A permit holder wanting to add Registered Mail service under an existing permit must submit a written request to the Post Office where the permit is held, with samples of the merchandise return labels and a copy of the instructions to be provided to the permit holder's customers. The permit holder must not distribute labels that request Registered Mail service before receiving USPS written approval.

3.3.3 Delivery Confirmation

The permit holder may obtain Delivery Confirmation service with MRS. If the permit holder chooses to preprint the Delivery Confirmation barcode on labels, then those labels must be approved by the USPS. MRS labels with Delivery Confirmation barcodes must meet the standards in [503.10.0](#) as shown in [Exhibit 3.5.13d](#). Delivery Confirmation may be combined with insurance and special handling, or both. Delivery Confirmation is always charged at the retail price ([503.10.1](#)).

3.3.4 Return Receipt for Merchandise

The permit holder may obtain return receipt for merchandise ([503.6.0](#)) with MRS.

3.3.5 Special Handling

The permit holder may obtain special handling service with MRS.

3.3.6 Pickup on Demand Service

The permit holder may obtain Pickup on Demand service with MRS. Pickup on Demand service may be combined with Certified Mail (Priority Mail only), Delivery Confirmation, and special handling.

3.3.7 Mailing Acknowledgment

The permit holder may prepare a detachable mailing acknowledgment form, subject to these conditions:

- a. The acknowledgment must not bear adhesive but must be attached to the label and perforated or designed for easy separation at the time of mailing.
- b. The acknowledgment establishes no USPS liability for the parcel if damaged, lost, or stolen.
- c. The acknowledgment provides documentation for account management between the mailing customer and the permit holder. The USPS charges no fee, keeps no records, and does not provide copies of or further information about the acknowledgment.
- d. A merchandise return service parcel containing the detachable mailing acknowledgment form must be presented to the USPS acceptance employee at the time of mailing to be executed.

- e. Each mailing acknowledgment part of the label must include a unique parcel identification number assigned by the permit holder; the return address of the customer mailing the parcel, in the upper part of the detachable form; the permit holder's address, in the lower part of the form; an initials section in the acknowledgment portion for use by the USPS acceptance employee; and space in the acknowledgment part where the USPS acceptance employee places the date stamp.

3.4 Additional Standards for Permit Holder's Customer

3.4.1 Customer Options

If the permit holder has not indicated the extra services listed in [3.3.1](#) through [3.3.6](#) a customer may request the extra services listed in [3.3.1](#) through [3.3.6](#) at their own expense.

3.4.2 Insurance

If insurance is paid by the customer, then only the customer may file a claim ([609](#)).

3.4.3 Certificate of Mailing

A customer mailing merchandise return service articles may also obtain a certificate of mailing at the customer's own expense at the time of mailing by presenting the certificate at a Post Office to obtain the receipt.

3.5 Preparation

3.5.1 Distribution of Labels

Merchandise return service labels may be distributed to customers as an enclosure with merchandise, as a separate item, as part of a double postcard subject to [201.1.2.8](#) and the approval of the PCSC, as a facsimile transmission (fax), as an electronic transmission for customer downloading and printing, or through one of the permit holder's designated pickup facilities. Any such label distributed to a customer must meet the format standards in [3.5.13](#), including the requirement to furnish instructions.

3.5.2 Labels

The label or tag used for merchandise return service must have the delivery address of the postage due unit at the Post Office where the permit is held, the permit holder's address, a space for the customer's return address, and otherwise meet the format standards in [3.5.13](#).

3.5.3 Mailer Markings and Endorsements

It is recommended but not required that permit holders preprint a price marking on the merchandise return service labels they distribute. Preprinting a price marking guarantees that returned parcels will be given service and charged postage according to the wishes of the permit holder. Regardless of weight, all unmarked parcels will be treated as Parcel Post and charged Parcel Post prices.

3.5.4 Label Preparation

Any photographic, mechanical, or electronic process or any combination of such processes other than typewriting or handwriting may be used to prepare the MRS label or tag and detachable acknowledgment form. The background may be any light color that allows the address, postmark, and other endorsements to be readily

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discerned. Brilliant colors may not be used for the background. If labels are faxed to customers or electronically transmitted to customers for their local printing, the permit holder must advise customers of these preparation requirements as part of the instructions required by 3.5.6. All MRS labels that include Delivery Confirmation barcodes must be certified for use by the USPS prior to distribution. Labels with Delivery Confirmation barcodes cannot be faxed to customers.

3.5.5 Labeling Methods

If all applicable content and format standards are met (including the written instructions required by 3.5.6), a merchandise return service label may be produced by any of the following methods:

- a. As an impression printed by the permit holder directly onto the mailpiece to be returned.
- b. As a separate label preprinted by the permit holder for affixing by the customer onto the mailpiece to be returned. The reverse side of the label must bear an adhesive strong enough to bond the label securely to the mailpiece.
- c. As a facsimile transmission (fax) of a preprinted label sent by the permit holder to the customer. The facsimile transmission must include instructions that explain how to affix the label securely to the mailpiece to be returned and that caution against covering with tape or other material any part of the label where postage and fee information is to be recorded.
- d. As an electronic file created by the permit holder for local output and printing by the customer. The electronic file must include instructions that explain how to affix the label securely to the mailpiece to be returned and that caution against covering with tape or other material any part of the label where postage and fee information is to be recorded.

3.5.6 Instructions

Written instructions must be provided with the label that, at a minimum, direct the customer:

- a. To affix the label squarely onto the address side of the parcel, covering up any previous delivery address and barcode without overlapping any adjacent side. If tape or similar material is used, it must not cover any part of the label where postage and fee information is to be recorded.
- b. To obliterate any other addresses and barcodes on the outside of the parcel.
- c. To take the parcel to a Post Office, drop it in a collection box, or give it to a postal carrier. If insurance, return receipt for merchandise, or special handling is marked on the label, the parcel must be taken to a Post Office.

3.5.7 Insured Markings

The permit holder must either leave a clear space on the merchandise return label to the right of the return address for the insured label or instruct the customer to affix the merchandise return label to the article so that the USPS acceptance employee can place the insured label on the article directly above the merchandise return label.

3.5.8 Registered Mail Endorsement

To request Registered Mail service, the permit holder must preprint or rubber-stamp “Registered Mail Service without Postal Insurance Desired by Permit Holder” or “Registered Mail Service with Postal Insurance Desired by Permit Holder,” as applicable, to the left of and above the “Merchandise Return Label” legend and below the “Total Postage and Fees Due” statement on the merchandise return label. The First-Class Mail or Priority Mail marking must also be preprinted or hand-stamped on the labels.

3.5.9 Placement of Registered Mail Label

The permit holder must either leave a clear space on the merchandise return label to the right of the return address for the placement of Label 200 or instruct the customer to affix the merchandise return label to the article so that the USPS acceptance employee can place the Registered Mail label on the article directly above the merchandise return label.

3.5.10 Placement of Return Receipt for Merchandise Label

The permit holder must either leave a clear space on the MRS label to the right of the return address for the placement of Label 3804 or instruct the customer to affix the MRS label to the article so that the USPS acceptance employee can place Label 3804 on the article directly above the MRS label.

3.5.11 Special Handling Endorsement

To request special handling, the permit holder must preprint or rubber-stamp “Special Handling Desired by Permit Holder” to the left of and above the “Merchandise Return Label” legend and below the “Total Postage and Fees Due” statement on the merchandise return label.

3.5.12 Special Handling Label

The permit holder must provide “Special Handling” labels with instructions to customers about their placement on the parcel, leave a clear space on the merchandise return label to the right of the return address for the placement of the “Special Handling” marking, or instruct the customer to affix the merchandise return label to the article so that the USPS acceptance employee can place the “Special Handling” marking on the article directly above the merchandise return label.

3.5.13 Format Elements

Format standards required for the merchandise return label are shown in [Exhibit 3.5.13a](#) through [Exhibit 3.5.13d](#), and described as follows:

- a. Postage Guarantee. The endorsement “No Postage Necessary if Mailed in the United States” must be printed in the upper right corner on the face of the label. The left edge of the endorsement must not extend more than 1-3/4 inches from the right edge of the label.

Exhibit 3.5.13a Merchandise Return Label With No Extra Services or With Insurance, Special Handling, or Pickup on Demand Service (*see 3.5.13d)

Recommended blank space for Insurance Label or Special Handling Marking:
2-7/8" x 1-5/16"

Extra Service Endorsements

FROM: _____

POSTAGE DUE COMPUTED BY
ACCEPTANCE POST OFFICE

POSTAGE _____

INSURANCE FEE (IF ANY) _____

SPECIAL HANDLING FEE (IF ANY) _____

PICKUP ON DEMAND FEE (IF ANY) _____

TOTAL POSTAGE AND FEES DUE \$ _____

INSURANCE DESIRED BY
PERMIT HOLDER FOR \$ _____
(VALUE)

1-5/16"

2-7/8"

PRIORITY MAIL

NO POSTAGE
NECESSARY
IF MAILED
IN THE
UNITED STATES

MERCHANDISE RETURN LABEL
PERMIT NO. 1
ABC CO.
CONESTOGA PA 17516
1234 MAIN ST

POSTAGE DUE UNIT
US POSTAL SERVICE
PO BOX 9998
CONESTOGA PA 17516

- b. "Merchandise Return Label" Rectangle. The "Merchandise Return Label" rectangle must be placed above the return delivery address and must enclose these lines:
1. Line 1: The words "MERCHANDISE RETURN LABEL" (the "Merchandise Return Label" legend) must be shown in capital letters at least 3/16 inch high.
 2. Line 2: The words "PERMIT NUMBER" or "PERMIT NO.," followed by the permit number, and the name of the issuing Post Office (city and state), followed by the ZIP Code, must be shown in capital letters.
 3. Line 3: The name and delivery address (street or Post Office box number) of the permit holder at that Post Office must be placed directly below the permit number line. Alternatively, a permit holder may use a name other than the permit holder's own name on this line if a written notification of the change is provided to the issuing Post Office. A separate permit or fee is not required for using this alternative name.

Exhibit 3.5.13b Merchandise Return Label With Registered Mail Service

FROM: _____

POSTAGE DUE COMPUTED BY
ACCEPTANCE POST OFFICE

POSTAGE _____

REGISTERED FEE (IF ANY) _____

TOTAL POSTAGE AND FEES DUE \$ _____

Registered Mail
Endorsements
(Must indicate
with or without
Postal
Insurance)

REGISTERED MAIL SERVICE WITHOUT
POSTAL INSURANCE DESIRED BY PERMIT HOLDER

PRIORITY MAIL

NO POSTAGE
NECESSARY
IF MAILED
IN THE
UNITED STATES

2-1/4"

7/8"

Recommended blank
space for Registered
Mail label

MERCHANDISE RETURN LABEL

PERMIT NO. 1
ABC CO.

CONESTOGA PA 17516
1234 MAIN ST

POSTAGE DUE UNIT
US POSTAL SERVICE
PO BOX 9998
CONESTOGA PA 17516

- c. Price Marking. If a price marking is used, it must be placed in the space to the right and above the "Merchandise Return Label" legend. The marking must be at least 3/16 inch high and printed or rubber-stamped. Only the permit holder may apply this marking.

Exhibit 3.5.13c Merchandise Return Label With Mailing Acknowledgment (*see 3.5.13d)

Recommended Blank Space for Insurance Label, or Elliptical Insurance Marking, or Special Handling Marking: 2-7/8" x 1-5/16"

Location of Rate Marking

FROM: _____

I.D. # 654321A

POSTAGE _____
*INSURANCE FEE (IF ANY) _____
*SPECIAL HANDLING FEE (IF ANY) _____
*PICKUP ON DEMAND FEE (IF ANY) _____
TOTAL POSTAGE AND FEES DUE \$ _____

INSURANCE DESIRED BY
PERMIT HOLDER FOR \$ _____

MERCHANDISE RETURN LABEL
PERMIT NO. 1
ABC CO.
CONESTOGA PA 17516
1234 MAIN ST

POSTAGE DUE UNIT
US POSTAL SERVICE
PO BOX 9998
CONESTOGA PA 17516

NO POSTAGE
NECESSARY
IF MAILED
IN THE
UNITED STATES

FROM: _____

I.D. # 654321A

ROUND DATE
STAMP _____

ACCEPTANCE EMPLOYEE
INITIAL _____

**MERCHANDISE RETURN
MAILING ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**
PERMIT NO. 1
ABC CO.
CONESTOGA PA 17516-9998
1234 MAIN ST

Extra Service Endorsements

Perforated Edge (tear here)

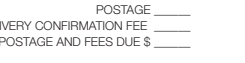
Customer Portion

- d. Extra Services Except Registry. If no extra service is requested, or if extra services other than registry service are requested, the applicable entries below must be shown in capital letters above the "Merchandise Return Label" legend rectangle and to the left of the space reserved for any class marking:
 1. If no extra service is requested, "POSTAGE DUE COMPUTED BY DELIVERY UNIT" must appear; if any available extra service other than registry is requested, "POSTAGE DUE COMPUTED BY ACCEPTANCE POST OFFICE" must appear.

2. As marked with an asterisk below, insurance, special handling, Delivery Confirmation, return receipt for merchandise, and Pickup on Demand service fee entries may not appear if the permit holder does not choose the corresponding service(s). As appropriate, these postage and fee markings must appear:

POSTAGE _____
 *INSURANCE FEE (IF ANY) _____
 *DELIVERY CONFIRMATION FEE (IF ANY) _____
 *RETURN RECEIPT FOR MERCHANDISE FEE (IF ANY) _____
 *SPECIAL HANDLING FEE (IF ANY) _____
 *PICKUP ON DEMAND SERVICE FEE (IF ANY) _____
 TOTAL POSTAGE AND FEES DUE \$ _____
 INSURANCE DESIRED BY _____
 PERMIT HOLDER FOR \$ _____
 (VALUE)

Exhibit 3.5.13d Merchandise Return Label With Delivery Confirmation Service

FROM: _____ _____ _____ POSTAGE DUE COMPUTED BY ACCEPTANCE POST OFFICE POSTAGE _____ DELIVERY CONFIRMATION FEE _____ TOTAL POSTAGE AND FEES DUE \$ _____	NO POSTAGE NECESSARY IF MAILED IN THE UNITED STATES _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____
USPS DELIVERY CONFIRM  8202 6837 3310 0000 0012	MERCHANDISE RETURN LABEL PERMIT NO. 1 ABC CO. POSTAGE DUE UNIT US POSTAL SERVICE PO BOX 9998 CONESTOGA PA 17516

Delivery Confirmation barcode

- e. Registry Service. If registry service is requested, the appropriate class marking must appear for First-Class Mail (“First-Class” or “First-Class Mail”) or Priority Mail (“Priority” or “Priority Mail”). In addition, the following applicable endorsements must appear in capital letters above the “Merchandise Return Label” legend rectangle and to the left of the space reserved for the class marking:
1. “ACCEPTANCE POST OFFICE COMPUTE POSTAGE DUE.”

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2. The following postage and fee entries:

POSTAGE ____
REGISTERED FEE ____
TOTAL POSTAGE AND FEES DUE \$ ____
3. The appropriate insurance endorsement, below the "TOTAL POSTAGE AND FEES DUE" entry: if matter returned has value (\$0.01 or greater), "REGISTERED MAIL SERVICE WITH POSTAL INSURANCE DESIRED BY PERMIT HOLDER"; if matter returned has no value (\$0.00), "REGISTERED MAIL SERVICE WITHOUT POSTAL INSURANCE DESIRED BY PERMIT HOLDER."
- f. Customer's Return Address. The return address of the customer mailing the article back to the permit holder must be shown in the upper left corner. Space must be provided for the customer's return address if it is not preprinted by the permit holder.
- g. Delivery Address. The lines "POSTAGE DUE UNIT" and "US POSTAL SERVICE," followed by the delivery address line and by the city, state, and ZIP Code line of the postage due unit at the Post Office where the permit is authorized, must be printed on the front of the mailpiece, at least 1 inch from the left edge of the piece, in capital letters at least 1/8 inch high.
- h. Horizontal Bars. Horizontal bars must be placed on the label below the postage endorsement that appears in the upper right corner. The bars must be uniform in length, at least 1 inch long, 1/16 inch thick, and evenly spaced. The vertical column of horizontal bars must not extend below the delivery address line, which is the line above the line containing the ZIP Code. A facing identification mark (FIM) must not be used on this label.
- i. Additional information. Additional information (e.g., company logo, return authorization number, inventory barcode) is permitted if it does not interfere with any required format elements. Inventory barcodes must not resemble the barcodes described in [402.4.0](#).

3.5.14 Certificate of Mailing

A customer mailing merchandise return service articles may obtain a certificate of mailing at the customer's own expense at the time of mailing by presenting the certificate at a Post Office to obtain the receipt.

3.6 Enter and Deposit

3.6.1 Customer Mailing Options

The permit holder's customers must mail the parcel within the service area of the Post Office shown in the return address on the label by depositing it at the main Post Office or any associated office, station, or branch; in any collection box (except an Express Mail box); with any rural carrier; on business routes during regular mail delivery if prior arrangements are made with the carrier; as part of a collection run for other mail (special arrangements might be required); or at any place designated by the postmaster for the receipt of mail. Parcels with extra services must be mailed

either with the rural carrier or at the main Post Office or any associated office, station, or branch. Any such parcels deposited in collection boxes are returned to the sender or, if there is no return address, treated as undeliverable mail.

3.7 Priority Mail Reshipment

3.7.1 Description

An authorized permit holder may use merchandise return service to have mail (previously sent at First-Class Mail and Package Services prices) reshipped by Priority Mail to the Post Office where the permit is held. The permit holder must make a written request for reshipment and send the request to the postmaster where the merchandise return service permit is authorized, specifying how often the reshipments are to be made from each affected postal facility. Reshipment is activated by the use of tags and address labels provided by the permit holder to those designated postal facilities that the permit holder authorizes to reship the mail by Priority Mail merchandise return service.

3.7.2 Reshipment Service

The USPS gathers mail addressed to Post Office boxes or business street addresses and, pursuant to the written request of the addressee and consequent service agreement between the addressee and the USPS, dispatches it as a Priority Mail merchandise return service shipment subject to these standards:

- a. Service frequency is scheduled.
- b. Priority Mail postage and fees are paid against the merchandise return service permit. The sack or container and its contents are considered a single piece for calculation of the Priority Mail price of postage and must not exceed 70 lbs.
- c. The mailer must keep a postage-due, merchandise return service account, or business reply mail account at the postal facility where the Post Office box or business street address is located for any shortpaid, merchandise return service, or business reply mail. The letter of request must state that such an account exists.
- d. Delivery Confirmation and accountable mailpieces (Certified Mail, COD, insured, Signature Confirmation, or Express Mail) are reshipped and charged separately from non-accountable mailpieces. Registered Mail is not allowed for Priority Mail reshipment service.
- e. The written request by the customer must list the postmaster at the originating office as the "Firm Representative" and show the pickup time is when the USPS employee gathers the mail and prepares it for dispatch as Priority Mail merchandise return service.
- f. A written request to the postmaster by the customer to terminate the agreement must be submitted 30 days in advance

3.7.3 Sack Tag

If a sack is used as the mail container for Priority Mail reshipment, the permit holder must provide a tag and an address label containing the delivery address of the postage due unit at the Post Office where the permit is held, the permit holder's address, a space for the customer's return address, and otherwise meet the format

standards in [3.6](#) for each affected postal facility. The sack or container and its contents are considered a single piece for calculation of the Priority Mail price of postage.

4.0 USPS Return Services

4.1 Description

[\[11-7-11\]](#) Priority Mail Return Service, First-Class Package Return Service and Ground Return Service provide return service options to customers who meet the standards in this section. Except as provided below, restricted material described in [601.8.0](#) and live animals under [601.9.3](#), any mailable matter may be mailed using any of the USPS Return Service options. Any content that constitutes First-Class Mail matter may only be mailed using Priority Mail Return Service or using First-Class Package Return Service at commercial plus prices. All USPS Return Service labels, except those using Parcel Return Service, must include an Intelligent Mail package barcode. Mailers using Priority Mail Return Service, First-Class Package Return Service or Ground Return Service must participate in a scan based payment program (SBP) under [705.24.0](#).

4.2 Permits, Authorizations and Fees

4.2.1 Permit Fee

An annual Merchandise Return Service permit fee, under [3.1.1](#), is required for the return services described in [4.1](#).

4.2.2 Advance Deposit Account and Account Maintenance Fee

The participant must pay postage through an advance deposit account and must pay a Merchandise Return Service annual account maintenance fee, under [3.1.2](#), for the return services described in [4.1](#).

4.3 Extra Services

Only USPS insurance for items with a value of \$200 or less can be purchased by the mailer at retail for Priority Mail Return Service, First-Class Package Return Service and Ground Return Service.

4.4 Pricing

4.4.1 Commercial Base Prices

Commercial base prices are available for permit holders receiving mailpieces under [4.0](#) bearing USPS-authorized labels and participating in a scan based payment program (SBP) under [705.24.0](#).

4.4.2 Commercial Plus Prices

Permit holders may combine cumulative volumes for Priority Mail Return Service and First-Class Package Return Service. Eligibility for commercial plus prices are available to permit holders who qualify for commercial base prices, and at least one of the following:

- a. Have cumulative Priority Mail Return Service, First-Class Package Return Service, and Ground Return Service volume exceeding a combined total of 25,000 return pieces in the previous calendar year.

- b. Have cumulative returns commercial plus cubic volume exceeding a combined total of 85,000 pieces returned in approved packaging in the previous calendar year.
- c. Have cumulative returns and outbound volume exceeding a combined total of 90,000 pieces in the previous calendar year.
- d. Have a signed commercial plus returns customer commitment agreement with USPS.

4.5 Computing Postage

Postage is calculated based on the weight of the parcel and zone, except for First-Class Package Return Service, for which postage is based on the weight of the parcel. Commercial base and commercial plus customers must pay postage under [705.24.0](#) and via an eVS/CAPS account.

4.6 Label Requirements

4.6.1 Label Preparation

Returns labels must be certified by the USPS for use prior to distribution as defined in the authorization letter. In addition, permit holders must obtain USPS certification for barcode symbology. Any photographic, mechanical, or electronic process or any combination of these processes may be used to produce labels. Labels must be prepared in accordance with [708.5.0](#), PUB 91 and PUB 205.

4.6.2 Labeling Methods

Permit holders or their agents may distribute approved USPS Return Service labels and instructions by any of the following methods:

- a. As an enclosure with merchandise when initially shipped, or as a separate label mailed by the permit holder to the customer. If the reverse side of the label bears an adhesive, it must be strong enough to bond the label securely to the mailpiece.
- b. As an electronic file created by the permit holder for local printing by the customer.

4.6.3 Label Instructions

Permit holders or their agents must provide written instructions to the label end-user (mailer) directing them as follows:

- a. "If not already printed in the return address area, print your name and address (or attach a return address label) in this area."
- b. "Attach the return label squarely onto the largest side of the mailpiece, centered when possible. Place the label at least one inch from any edge of the parcel, so that it does not fold over to another side. Do not put any tape over any barcodes on the label."
- c. "If reusing the original container, cover your delivery address, barcodes, and any other postal information on the container with the return label. If it is not possible to cover all that information, remove the old labels, mark them out completely with a permanent marker, or cover them completely with blank

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labels that cannot be seen through. If the labels cannot be removed or completely obscured or if the original container is no longer sound, use a new box to return the merchandise and attach the return label to the new box."

- d. "Mail the labeled parcel at a Post Office, drop it in a collection box, leave it with a letter carrier, or schedule a carrier pickup at USPS.com."

4.6.4 Label Format Elements

USPS Return Services standard label sizes are 3 inches by 6 inches, 4 inches by 4 inches, or 4 inches by 6 inches. All other label sizes require written approval from the National Customer Support Center (NCSC). The label must accommodate all required elements. All labels, except those using Parcel Return Service, must be prepared according to [708.5.1](#) and must include an Intelligent Mail package barcode. All USPS Returns label elements must be legible.

4.7 Priority Mail Return Service

4.7.1 Description

Priority Mail Return Service is an expedited service and may contain any mailable matter weighing no more than 70 pounds. Lower weight limits apply to commercial plus cubic (see [1.1.4](#)), APO/FPO mail is subject to [703.2.0](#) and [703.4.0](#), and Department of State mail is subject to [703.3.0](#).

4.7.2 4.7. 2 Service Objectives

Priority Mail Return Service receives expeditious handling and transportation, with service standards in accordance with Priority Mail.

4.7.3 Prices and Eligibility

Priority Mail Return Service items mailed under a specific customer agreement is charged postage according to the individual agreement. Otherwise Priority Mail Return Service eligibility is under [4.7](#). Commercial base and commercial plus prices are the same as for outbound Priority Mail in [Notice 123—Price List](#).

4.7.4 Labels

Labels must be prepared under [4.6](#). See exhibit [Exhibit 4.7.4](#).

Exhibit 4.7.4 Priority Mail Return Service Label Example

 UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE®	
P	NO POSTAGE NECESSARY IF MAILED IN THE UNITED STATES
PRIORITY MAIL® RETURN SERVICE	
John Smith 901 D ST SW STE 101 WASHINGTON DC 20024-2198	
ABC Company 475 LENFANT PLZ SW WASHINGTON DC 20260-0004	
USPS TRACKING #	
	
9211 7912 3456 7800 0043 35	

4.8 First-Class Package Return Service**4.8.1 Description**

First-Class Package Return Service is an expedited service. Items subject to commercial base First-Class Package Service parcel prices may contain any mailable merchandise matter weighing no more than 13 ounces. Items subject to commercial plus First-Class Package Service parcel prices may contain any mailable matter weighing less than 16 ounces. Parcels greater than 13 ounces will be charged the one-pound Priority Mail price unless they are eligible for commercial plus prices for items over 13 ounces but less than 16 ounces.

4.8.2 Service Objectives

First-Class Package Return Service receives expeditious handling and transportation, with service standards in accordance with First-Class Mail.

4.8.3 Prices and Eligibility

First-Class Package Return Service eligibility of contents is the same as for outbound First-Class Package Service parcels under [433](#). Parcels weighing more than 13 ounces but less than 16 ounces may be included in the eligibility calculation for commercial plus prices and parcels weighing 13 ounces or less are eligible for commercial base prices.

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4.8.4 Labels

Labels must be prepared under [4.6](#). See [Exhibit 4.8.4](#).

Exhibit 4.8.4 First-Class Mail Package Return Service Label Example

 UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE®	
F	NO POSTAGE NECESSARY IF MAILED IN THE UNITED STATES
FIRST-CLASS™ PACKAGE RETURN SERVICE	
John Smith 901 D ST SW STE 101 WASHINGTON DC 20024-2198	
ABC Company 475 LENFANT PLZ SW WASHINGTON DC 20260-0004	
USPS TRACKING #	
	
9221 6912 3456 7800 0043 04	

4.9 Ground Return Service**4.9.1 Description**

Ground Return Service provides ground transportation for mailpieces containing mailable matter weighing no more than 70 pounds and meeting the content standards in [153.3.0](#).

4.9.2 Service Objectives

Ground Return Service assumes the handling and transportation and service objectives for delivery of Parcel Post.

4.9.3 Prices and Eligibility

Ground Return Service mailpieces are charged per pound; any fraction of a pound is rounded up to the next whole pound. The minimum postage amount per addressed piece is the one-pound price. Ground Return Service eligibility and prices are the same as for outbound Parcel Post.

4.9.4 Labels

Labels must be prepared in accordance with [4.6](#). See [Exhibit 4.9.4](#).

Exhibit 4.9.4 Ground Return Service Label Example

 UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE®	
	NO POSTAGE NECESSARY IF MAILED IN THE UNITED STATES
GROUND RETURN SERVICE	
John Smith 901 D ST SW STE 101 WASHINGTON DC 20024-2198	
ABC Company 475 LENFANT PLZ SW WASHINGTON DC 20260-0004	
USPS TRACKING #	
	
9239 6912 3456 7800 0043 11	

5.0 Parcel Return Service**5.1 Basic Information****5.1.1 Description**

[10-3-11] Parcel Return Service (PRS) applies to parcels that are picked up in bulk by authorized permit holders or their agents. Permit holders guarantee payment of postage for all parcels mailed with a PRS label. By providing an approved PRS label to its customers, the merchant or other party designates the permit holder identified on the label as their agent for receipt of mail bearing that label, and authorizes the USPS to provide that mail to the permit holder or its designee. The permit holder must retrieve parcels at each of the return network distribution centers (RNDC). For this purpose, an RNDC is each NDC (but not any ASFs) listed in Exhibit [453.3.1.3](#). PRS permit holders also may retrieve parcels at one or more designated return delivery units (RDU). Payment for parcels returned under PRS is deducted from a separate advance deposit (postage-due) account funded through the Centralized Account Processing System (CAPS). The permit holder must be authorized to use eVS (see [705.2.9](#)).

5.1.2 Conditions for Mailing

Parcels may be mailed as PRS when all of the following conditions apply:

- a. Parcels contain eligible matter as described in [153.3.0](#) and [153.4.0](#).
- b. Parcels bear a PRS label that meets the standards in [5.4](#).
- c. Parcels show the permit number, and the permit holder has paid the annual PRS permit fee and the annual PRS account maintenance fee.

5.1.3 Services

Pieces using PRS may not bear an ancillary service endorsement (see [102.4.0](#) and [507.1.5](#)). Only a Certificate of Mailing, when the fee is paid by the mailer returning the parcel, is available as an extra service.

5.1.4 Customer Mailing Options

Returned parcels may be deposited as follows:

- a. At any Post Office, station, or branch.
- b. In any collection box (except an Express Mail box).
- c. With any letter carrier.
- d. As part of a collection run for other mail (special arrangements may be required).
- e. At any place designated by the postmaster for the receipt of mail.

5.1.5 Application

Companies who wish to participate in PRS must send a request on company letterhead to the manager, Business Mailer Support (see [608.8.0](#) for address). The request must contain the following information:

- a. Company name and address.
- b. An individual's contact name, telephone number, fax number, and e-mail address.
- c. The price category or categories to be used, and the proposed retrieval locations (delivery units and network distribution centers).
- d. A description of the electronic returns manifesting system to be used to document returns listed by location and price eligibility.

5.1.6 Approval

The manager, Business Mailer Support reviews each request and proceeds as follows:

- a. If the applicant meets the criteria, the manager, Business Mailer Support approves the letter of request. The USPS will require the customer to enter into a service agreement, may require additional documentation, and may conduct periodic review and inspection of each participant's PRS processing and accounting operations.
- b. If the application does not meet the criteria, the manager, Business Mailer Support denies the request and sends a written notice to the applicant with the reason for denial.

5.1.7 Cancellation

USPS may cancel a PRS permit for any of the following reasons:

- a. The permit holder fails to pay the required postage and fees for returned parcels.
- b. The permit holder does not maintain adequate available funds to cover postage and fees for returned parcels.
- c. The permit holder does not fulfill the terms and conditions of the PRS permit authorization.
- d. The return labels do not conform to the specifications in [5.4](#).

5.1.8 Reapplying After Cancellation

To receive a new PRS permit after cancellation under [5.1.7](#) the mailer must:

- a. Submit a letter to the manager, Business Mailer Support requesting a permit and a new agreement.
- b. Pay a new permit fee.
- c. Provide evidence showing that the reasons for cancellation no longer exist.
- d. Maintain adequate available funds to cover the expected number of returns.

5.1.9 Pickup Schedule and Location

[\[10-3-11\]](#) Permit holders or their agents must set up recurring or standing appointments to retrieve PRS parcels. If the permit holder (or agent) has existing appointments to deliver Parcel Select parcels to destination facilities and those facilities are one of the NDCs or are designated as RDUs, those appointments can be used for retrieving PRS parcels at the same time. Permit holders or their agents must retrieve parcels on a regular schedule as follows:

- a. From RNDs, at a minimum of every 48 hours, excluding Sundays and USPS holidays.
- b. From RDUs, according to the authorization letter. The USPS maintains a list of active RDUs and provides permit holders 30 days notice of changes to the list. This list may be obtained by contacting the manager, New Business Opportunities (see [608.8.0](#) for address).
- c. For parcels picked up from RNDs and that are shipped from origin ZIP Codes 006-009, 967-969, and 995-999, see [5.3](#).

5.1.10 Parcels Endorsed Hold for Pickup

PRS participants must pay the appropriate Parcel Return Service RDU price under [5.3](#) for any unclaimed, refused, undeliverable as addressed, or recalled parcels that are endorsed "Hold For Pickup" (under [508.7.0](#)) and that bear the marking "PARCEL RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED" or "PRS REQUESTED" followed by a unique 569 prefix ZIP Code.

5.2 Postage and Fees

5.2.1 Postage

There are two PRS price categories:

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- a. Parcel Return Service — RDU. Parcels returned as Parcel Post to, and retrieved in bulk from, a designated delivery unit.
- b. Parcel Return Service — RNDC. Parcels returned as Parcel Post to, and retrieved in bulk from, a designated NDC.

5.2.2 Permit Fee

The participant must pay an annual permit fee at the Post Office where the PRS permit is held. See [Notice 123—Price List](#) for applicable fee.

5.2.3 Advance Deposit Account and Annual Account Maintenance Fee

The participant must pay postage through an advance deposit account and pay an annual account maintenance fee. See [Notice 123—Price List](#) for applicable fee.

5.3 Prices**5.3.1 Parcel Return Service—Machinable**

RNDC parcels that weigh less than 20 pounds but measure more than 84 inches in combined length and girth are charged the applicable price for a 20-pound parcel (balloon price). Regardless of weight, any parcel that measures more than 108 inches (but not more than 130 inches) in combined length and girth must pay the oversized price. For Parcel Return Service prices see [Notice 123—Price List](#).

5.3.2 Parcel Return Service—Nonmachinable

RNDC parcels that weigh less than 20 pounds but measure more than 84 inches in combined length and girth are charged the applicable price for a 20-pound parcel (balloon price). Regardless of weight, any parcel that measures more than 108 inches (but not more than 130 inches) in combined length and girth must pay the oversized price. For Parcel Return Service prices see [Notice 123—Price List](#).

5.3.3 Parcel Post Prices

[10-3-11] PRS-labeled parcels shipped from origin ZIP Codes 006-009, 967-969, and 995-999 that are picked up at an RNDC are subject to single-piece Parcel Post prices.

5.4 Label Formats**5.4.1 Label Preparation**

PRS labels must be certified by the USPS for use prior to distribution as defined in the service agreement. In addition, permit holders must obtain USPS certification for barcode symbologies. Any photographic, mechanical, or electronic process or any combination of these processes may be used to produce PRS labels. The background of the label may be any light color that allows the address, barcodes, and other required information to be easily distinguished. If labels are electronically transmitted to customers for their local printing, the permit holder must advise customers of these printing requirements as part of the instructions in [5.4.3](#).

5.4.2 Labeling Methods

If all applicable contents and formats are approved (including instructions to the user), permit holders or their agents may distribute a PRS label by any of the following methods:

- a. As an enclosure with merchandise when initially shipped as part of the original invoice accompanying the merchandise, or as a separate label preprinted by the permit holder. If the reverse side of the label bears an adhesive, it must be strong enough to bond the label securely to the mailpiece.
- b. As an electronic file created by the permit holder for local printing by the customer.

5.4.3 Instructions

Regardless of label distribution method, permit holders or their agents must always provide written instructions to the user of the PRS label that, at a minimum, direct the user to do the following:

- a. “If your name and address are not already printed in the return address area, please print them neatly in that area or attach a return address label there.”
- b. “Attach the label provided by the merchant squarely onto the largest side of the mailpiece, unless you need to use another side to make the parcel more stable. Place the label at least 1 inch from the edge of the parcel, so that it does not fold over to another side. If you are using tape to attach the new label, do not put tape over any barcodes on the label, even if the tape is clear.”
- c. “If you are reusing the original container to return the merchandise, use the label to cover your original delivery address, barcodes, and any other postal information on the container. If it is not possible to cover all that information with the label, remove the old labels, mark them out completely with a permanent marker, or cover them completely with blank labels or paper that cannot be seen through. If that cannot be done, or if the original container is no longer sound, please use a new box to return the merchandise and attach the return label to the new box.”
- d. “Once repackaged and labeled, mail the parcel at a Post Office, deposit it in a collection box, or leave it with your letter carrier.”

5.4.4 Label Format Elements

There is no minimum size for PRS labels; however, the label must be big enough to accommodate all of the label elements and standards in this section. All PRS label elements must be legible. Except where a specific type size is required, elements must be large enough to be legible from a normal reading distance and be separate from other elements on the label. See the PRS label format examples in [5.4.5a](#) and [5.4.5b](#). The following elements are required:

- a. *Postage guarantee*. The imprint “No Postage Necessary If Mailed in the United States” must appear in the upper right corner.
- b. *Horizontal bars*. A minimum of three horizontal bars must appear directly below the imprint in the upper right corner. The bars must be uniform in length, at least 1 inch long, 1/16 inch thick, and evenly spaced.
- c. *Parcel Return Service legend*. The legend must be placed directly above the address and must include:
 - 1. Line 1: In capital letters at least 3/16” high, “PARCEL SELECT RETURN SERVICE” (or “PARCEL SELECT RTN SVC”).

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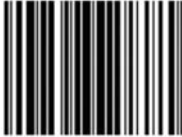
2. Line 2: In all capital letters, the permit holder's name, left justified, followed by "PERMIT NO.," followed by the actual permit number.
- d. *Customer's return address.* The return address of the customer using the label to mail the parcel back to the permit holder must appear in the upper left corner. If it is not preprinted by the permit holder or merchant, space must be provided for the customer to enter the return address.
- e. *Address for Parcel Return Service labels.* The address must contain the unique PRS ZIP Code (569 prefix) assigned by the USPS to the particular customer or agent. The address must consist of two or three lines in all capital letters, as specified below. The ZIP Code must be printed in at least 12-point type on a line directly below the Parcel Return Service line.
 1. Line 1: PRS AGENT'S OR MERCHANT'S NAME.
 2. Line 2: "PARCEL RETURN SERVICE" (or "PARCEL RETURN SVC").
 3. Line 3: The unique PRS 569## ZIP Code assigned by the USPS in the service agreement. The unique ZIP Code alternatively may be located as part of the second line of the address.
- f. *Parcel Return Service barcode.* A PRS barcode must be printed directly on the label. The barcode may appear in any location on the label except the upper left, upper right, and lower right corners. The barcode must meet the standards for barcodes in Publication 91, *Confirmation Services Technical Guide*, with the following exceptions:
 1. The barcode must be produced using the GS1-128 barcode symbology.
 2. The service type code (STC) contained in the barcode on PRS labels must contain the value "58."
 3. Text above the barcode must read "USPS PARCEL RETURN SERVICE" (or "USPS PARCEL RTN SVC"). If the barcode is a single concatenated barcode with the postal routing code described in [5.4.4g](#), the text above the barcode must read "NDC ZIP - USPS PARCEL RETURN SERVICE" (or "NDC ZIP - USPS PARCEL RTN SVC"). In the text below the barcode, the leading application identifier ("420"), ZIP Code information, and subsequent numbers must be parsed as shown in [5.4.5b](#).
 4. The clear zone between the barcode, the human-readable text, and the horizontal bar above and below the barcode must be at least 1/16 inch.
- g. *Postal routing barcode.* If a single concatenated barcode is not used for the PRS barcode, a postal routing barcode also must be printed directly on the label. The barcode may appear in any location on the label, except the upper left, upper right, and lower right corners. Postal routing barcodes must meet the standards in [708.5.0](#), except that the text below the barcode must read "NDC ZIP -," followed by the unique PRS ZIP Code assigned by USPS in the service agreement.
- h. *Mailer identification (ID).* The permit holder assigns a mailer ID to each individual client (merchant). An individual mailer ID must appear in the lower right corner as follows:

1. The mailer ID must consist of a single, uppercase alpha character followed by a two-, three-, or four-digit number, with no spaces or dashes.
For example: X01.
 2. The mailer ID must be at least 3/16 inch high and be surrounded by a box, with a clearance of at least 1/16 inch between the mailer ID characters and the edges of the box.
 3. The mailer ID may be reverse-printed.
- i. *Additional information.* Additional information (e.g., company logo, return authorization number, inventory barcode) is permitted on the PRS label if it does not interfere with any required format elements. Inventory barcodes must not resemble the barcodes described in [708.5.0, Standards for Package and Extra Service Barcodes](#).

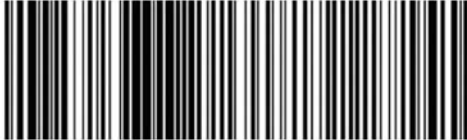
5.4.5 PRS Label Format Examples

[11-7-11] The following are PRS label format examples. Note: The ZIP Code 56999 appears in each example for demonstration purposes only.

- a. Parcel Return Service label using a separate PRS barcode and postal routing barcode.

John Smith 901 D ST SW STE 101 WASHINGTON DC 20024-2198	 NDC ZIP - 56999	NO POSTAGE NECESSARY IF MAILED IN THE UNITED STATES 
PARCEL RETURN SERVICE ABC RETURNS INC PERMIT NO. 77999		
USPS PARCEL RETURN SVC  9158 0268 3733 1000 0010 154	AGENT / CLIENT NAME PARCEL RETURN SERVICE 56999	
		X01

- b. Parcel Return Service label using a concatenated barcode.

John Smith 901 D ST SW STE 101 WASHINGTON DC 20024-2198	NO POSTAGE NECESSARY IF MAILED IN THE UNITED STATES 
PARCEL RETURN SERVICE ABC RETURNS INC PERMIT NO. 77999	
NDC ZIP - USPS PARCEL RETURN SVC  420 56999 9158 0268 3733 1000 0010 14	AGENT / CLIENT NAME PARCEL RETURN SERVICE 56999 X01

6.0 Bulk Parcel Return Service

6.1 Bulk Parcel Return Service (BPRS) Fees

6.1.1 Permit Fee

An annual permit fee is required. See [Notice 123—Price List](#) for applicable fee.

6.1.2 Account Maintenance Fee

An annual account maintenance fee is required. See [Notice 123—Price List](#) for applicable fee.

6.1.3 Per Piece Charge

There is a per piece charge for each mailpiece returned, regardless of weight. See [Notice 123—Price List](#) for applicable fee.

6.2 Charges and Fees

6.2.1 Permit Fee

An annual permit fee must be paid once each 12-month period at each Post Office where a BPRS permit is held. Payment of the annual permit fee is based on the anniversary date of the permit's issuance. The fee may be paid in advance only for the next 12 months and only during the last 60 days of the current service period. The fee charged is that which is in effect on the date of payment.

6.2.2 Per Piece Fee

Each piece returned through BPRS is charged only the per piece fee in [6.1](#). Postage is not charged for pieces returned through BPRS.

6.2.3 Advance Deposit Account and Annual Account Maintenance Fee

The permit holder must pay BPRS fees through an advance deposit account and must pay an annual account maintenance fee (see [6.1](#)). This fee covers the administrative cost of maintaining the account and provides the mailer with a single accounting of all charges deducted from that account. The account maintenance fee is charged once each 12-month period on the anniversary date of the initial account maintenance fee payment. The fee may be paid in advance only for the next year and only during the last 60 days of the current service period. The fee charged is that which is in effect on the date of payment.

6.2.4 Existing Advance Deposit Account

A separate advance deposit account for BPRS is not required; the annual account maintenance fee is charged if BPRS fees are paid from an existing account.

6.2.5 Payment Guarantee

The permit holder guarantees payment of all applicable fees. The Post Office returns BPRS items to the permit holder only when there are sufficient funds in the advance deposit account to pay the fees on returned pieces.

6.2.6 Postage Due Weight Averaging

BPRS mailers may participate in the Postage Due Weight Averaging program described in [705.20.0](#).

6.3 General Information**6.3.1 Description**

Bulk parcel return service (BPRS) allows mailers of large quantities of Standard Mail machinable parcels that are either undeliverable-as-addressed or opened and remailed by addressees to be returned to designated postal facilities. The mailer has the option of picking up all returned parcels from a designated postal facility at a predetermined frequency specified by the USPS or having them delivered by the USPS in a manner and frequency specified by the USPS. For this service a mailer pays an annual permit fee and a per piece charge for each parcel returned. Payment for the returned pieces is deducted from an advance deposit account.

6.3.2 Availability

A mailer may be authorized to use BPRS when the following conditions apply:

- a. All returned parcels are initially prepared as Regular or Nonprofit Standard Mail and are machinable parcels as defined in [401.1.0](#).
- b. At least 10,000 Standard Mail machinable parcels will be returned to a designated postal facility during a 12-month period.
- c. Parcels are returned to the mailer either because they are undeliverable-as-addressed or because they have been opened, resealed, and redeposited in the mail by the recipient and it is impractical or inefficient for the USPS to return them.
- d. Parcels bear one of the following BPRS endorsements ([507.2.0](#)):
 - “Return Service Requested — BPRS”
 - “Address Service Requested — BPRS”
- e. Parcels have a return address that is in the delivery area of the Post Office that issued the BPRS permit.

505.6.3.3

- f. The postal facility designated for returned parcels is located in the United States, its territories or possessions, or is a U.S. military Post Office overseas (APO or FPO).
- g. The mailer has a valid postage due advance deposit account and pays the annual BPRS permit fee.
- h. BPRS parcels may be combined with the shipper paid forwarding service (507.4.2.9).
- i. Standard Mail parcels that qualify for a single-piece Package Services price under the applicable standards and that contain the name of the Package Services price in the mailer's ancillary service endorsement are not eligible for BPRS.

6.3.3 Optional Label

An authorized BPRS permit holder has the option to use a label to identify BPRS parcels for return to a designated postal facility. The label is prepared at the mailer's expense and must meet all format requirements described in 6.5 and 6.6 and specifications in 402.4.0, *General Barcode Placement for Parcels*, for a postal routing barcode symbology used to produce a correct, readable barcode for the return address. Each label must be accompanied by complete instructions for its use.

6.3.4 Extra Services

Extra services cannot be added to pieces returned via bulk parcel return service.

6.4 Permits**6.4.1 Application Procedures**

To obtain a BPRS permit, a mailer must send a written request to the postmaster at each Post Office where parcels are to be returned. The request must include the following:

- a. Payment for the annual BPRS permit fee.
- b. Information pertinent to each requested delivery point that documents either the receipt of at least 10,000 machinable parcels originally mailed at Standard Mail prices during the past 12 months, or that there are reasonable grounds to expect at least 10,000 machinable parcels originally mailed at Standard Mail prices will be returned during the next 12-month period.
- c. A description of the returned parcels (e.g., piece size and packaging).
- d. A statement of the desired frequency and location of the parcel pickup or delivery point.
- e. Sample documentation that will be used to substantiate the number of parcels returned daily to each location.
- f. If labels will be furnished for returning opened parcels, sample labels prepared in accordance with 6.5 along with instructions for their use.
- g. A written statement agreeing to pay the per piece fee for each returned parcel from a centralized advance deposit account.

6.4.2 Authorization

Upon approval of a mailer's request, the Post Office issues an authorization letter and provides a postage due service agreement with a BPRS permit number. The permit number is used for account administration only and is not for use on mail.

6.4.3 Postage Due Service Agreement

A BPRS mailer will be required to sign a postage due service agreement with each Post Office that issues a permit for the return of BPRS parcels.

6.4.4 Permit Renewal

A Post Office provides BPRS permit holders with annual renewal notices advising that their permits are due to expire. A notice must be returned to the issuing Post Office with the fee payment or authorization for the postmaster to deduct the fee from the advance deposit account by the permit expiration date. Written authorization is not necessary for renewal of a permit if there is no change to the authorization on file at the Post Office where the parcels are returned. If a permit holder does not renew a BPRS permit after having been given notice, the USPS will endorse the mail "Bulk Parcel Return Service Canceled" and will charge postage due at the single-piece First-Class Mail or Priority Mail price as appropriate for the weight of the piece. If the single-piece First-Class Mail or Priority Mail price is not paid, the mail is forwarded to the nearest mail recovery center.

6.4.5 Permit Cancellation

A BPRS permit may be canceled by the USPS for any of the following reasons:

- a. Failure to meet the minimum volume requirement of 10,000 parcels returned during a 12-month period to each postal facility.
- b. Failure of the mailer to pay the required postage and fees for returned parcels.
- c. Insufficient funds in an advance deposit account to cover postage and fees that are due for returned parcels.
- d. Failure to fulfill the terms and conditions of the BPRS permit authorization.
- e. Failure to conform return labels to the specifications in sections [6.5](#) and [6.6](#).

6.4.6 Reapplying After Cancellation

A mailer must do the following to receive a new BPRS permit at the same Post Office where a permit was previously canceled:

- a. Submit a letter to that office requesting a permit and new agreement.
- b. Pay a new permit fee.
- c. Provide evidence showing that the reasons for cancellation of the previous permit no longer exist.
- d. Maintain adequate funds in an advance deposit account to cover the number of returns expected over at least a 2-week period.

6.5 Label Requirements

6.5.1 Production Methods

Any photographic, mechanical, or electronic process, or any combination of such processes other than typewriting or handwriting may be used to prepare the BPRS label. The background may be any light color that allows the address, postmark, and other endorsements to be easily read. Brilliant colors may not be used for the background. If a label is prepared with adhesive on its reverse side, the adhesive must be capable of securely bonding the label to the parcel.

6.5.2 Label Instructions

Written instructions must be provided with the label that, at a minimum, advise the user to do the following:

- a. Obliterate all other delivery addresses and barcodes on the outside of the parcel.
- b. Print a complete return address in the location provided in the upper left corner of the label.
- c. Place the label with the delivery address and barcode on the side of the mailpiece with the largest surface area. If tape or similar material is used, it must not cover any part of the label where the mailer's return address and postal routing barcode are located. The barcode should be at least 1 inch from the edge of the parcel. If the shape of the parcel requires specific orientation for stability, the label must be placed on the top surface.
- d. Take the parcel to a Post Office, drop it in a collection box, or give it to a postal carrier.

6.5.3 Distribution

BPRS return labels may be distributed to customers as an enclosure with merchandise, as a separate item, as a facsimile transmission (fax), or as an electronic transmission for customer downloading and printing. Regardless of distribution method, all standards in [6.5.2](#) and [6.6](#) must be met. An electronic file must include instructions that explain how to affix the label securely to the parcel as required in [6.5.2](#).

6.6 Format

6.6.1 General

The BPRS label contents and format must meet all applicable standards before the label may be distributed for use. Format requirements are shown in [Exhibit 6.6.9](#).

6.6.2 Postage Guarantee

The endorsement "NO POSTAGE NECESSARY IF MAILED IN THE UNITED STATES" must be printed in the upper right corner of the face of the piece. The endorsement must not extend more than 1-3/4 inches (1.75 inches) from the right edge of the label.

6.6.3 Horizontal Bars

To facilitate recognition of BPRS parcels, a series of horizontal bars parallel to the label length must be printed directly below the endorsement "NO POSTAGE NECESSARY IF MAILED IN THE UNITED STATES:"

- a. The bars must be uniform in length, at least 1 inch long and 1/16 inch (0.0625 inch) to 3/16 inch (0.1875 inch) thick, and evenly spaced.
- b. There must be at least a 1/2 inch (0.500 inch) clearance between the right edge of the ZIP Code in the delivery address and the left edge of the horizontal bars.
- c. The bottom bar in the series must be above (not on or below) the top of the delivery address line (the next-to-last line in the address, just above the line with the city, state, and ZIP Code).
- d. Do not use a facing identification mark (FIM) on this label.

6.6.4 Class Endorsement

The “STANDARD MAIL” class endorsement must be at least 1/4-inch (.25 inch) high and shown in capital letters to the left of the postage guarantee endorsement.

6.6.5 Bulk Parcel Return Service Legend

The “BULK PARCEL RETURN SERVICE” legend must be placed above the return delivery address on all BPRS parcels. The legend means that the BPRS permit holder guarantees payment of postage and fees on all returned Standard Mail parcels. The following information must be enclosed in a rectangle:

- a. Line 1: Show the words “BULK PARCEL RETURN SERVICE” in capital letters at least 3/16 inch (0.1875 inch) high, enclosed in a rectangle.
- b. Line 2: The name of the BPRS permit holder must also be printed in capital letters in the rectangle directly below the words “BULK PARCEL RETURN SERVICE.”
- c. The permit holder’s city, state, and ZIP Code must appear in capital letters and must be located on the same line as the company name.
- d. The Post Office box number and/or street address must appear in capital letters on the line beneath this information.

6.6.6 Delivery Address

A complete delivery address (city, state, ZIP Code) specified by the Post Office that issued the BPRS permit and to which parcels are returned must be printed in capital letters at least 3/16 inch (0.1875) high below the “BULK PARCEL RETURN SERVICE” rectangle and at least 1 inch from the left edge of the label. There must be at least a 1/2-inch (0.50 inch) clearance between the ZIP Code and the horizontal bars.

6.6.7 Customer’s Return Address

The complete return address (street, city, state, ZIP Code) of the customer mailing the article back to the permit holder must be shown in the upper left corner of the label. Space must be provided for the customer’s return address if it is not preprinted by the permit holder.

6.6.8 Optional Information

At the option of the permit holder, a single line above the top line of the customer return address may be used for customer account or other information.

6.6.9 Postal Routing Barcode

505.6.6.9

Every BPRS label must include a properly prepared barcode that represents the correct ZIP Code information for the delivery address of the returned parcel plus the appropriate verifier character suffix or application identifier prefix characters appropriate for the barcode symbology as described in [402.4.0, General Barcode Placement for Parcels](#), for machinable parcels. In addition to the barcode requirements in [402.4.0](#), the following requirements must be met in preparing BPRS labels:

- Barcode Location.** The barcode must be placed on the label immediately adjacent to the address and the label must be located on the parcel so the barcode is at least 1 inch from the parcel edge.
- Barcode Clear Zone.** No printing may appear in the area 1/8 inch (0.125 inch) above and below the barcode regardless of location on the label. A minimum clear zone equal to 10 times the average measured narrow element (bars or space) width must be maintained to the left and right of the barcode.
- Human-Readable Barcode Information.** The human-readable equivalent of the ZIP Code or ZIP+4 code encoded in the barcode as referenced in [402.4.0](#) may be omitted.

Exhibit 6.6.9 Bulk Parcel Return Service Label