A000 Basic Addressing

A010 Standard Addressing Formats

Summary A010 describes the required elements of a complete address and proper placement of delivery and return addresses. It also provides standards for addressing military mail, Periodicals, and using a return address.

1.0 ADDRESS CONTENT AND PLACEMENT

Delivery Address
1.1 The delivery address specifies the location to which the USPS is to deliver a mailpiece. Except for mail prepared with detached address labels under A060, the piece must have the address of the intended recipient, visible and legible, only on the side of the piece bearing postage.

Address Elements
1.2 [6-12-03] All mail not bearing a simplified address under A020 must bear a delivery address that contains at least the following elements in this order from the top line:

a. Intended recipient's name or other identification.

b. Private mailbox designator ("PMB" or optional "#") and number.

c. Street and number. (Include the apartment number, or use the post office box number, or general delivery, or rural route or highway contract route designation and box number, as applicable.)

d. City and state. (The city is any acceptable mailing name shown for the 5-digit ZIP Code listed in the USPS City State Product serving the intended recipient.)

e. ZIP Code (5-digit or ZIP+4) where required. ZIP Codes may be omitted from pieces mailed by the general public at the single-piece rates for First-Class Mail and from pieces bearing a simplified address. ZIP Codes (5-digit or ZIP+4) are required on Presorted First-Class Mail, all mail claimed at automation rates, postcards mailed under specific First-Class standards, Periodicals, Standard Mail, Package Services, business reply mail, merchandise return service, mail sent to military addresses within the United States, and penalty mail. ZIP Codes are also required in the return address of mail on which postage is paid with precanceled stamps and company permit imprint and in the sender's return address on Periodicals when return service is requested.

OCR Read Area
1.3 On a letter-size piece, the recommended address placement is within the optical character reader (OCR) read area, which is a space on the address side of the mailpiece defined by these boundaries (see Exhibit 1.3):

a. Left: 1/2 inch from the left edge of the piece.

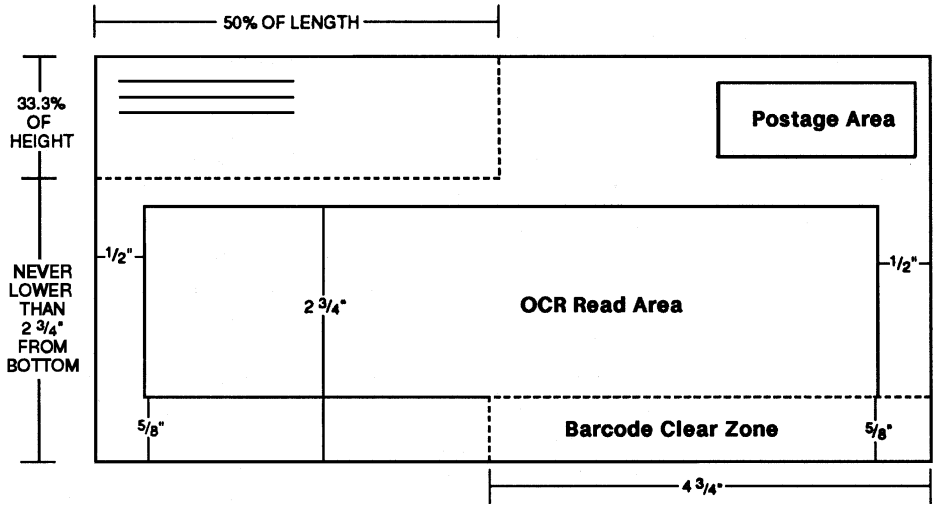
b. Right: 1/2 inch from the right edge of the piece.

c. Top: 2-3/4 inches from the bottom edge of the piece.

d. Bottom: 5/8 inch from the bottom edge of the piece.

Nonmailable, Nonmachinable Placement
1.4 The location of the delivery address on a letter-size mailpiece determines which dimensions are the length and height of the piece. Consequently, the placement of the address may render a piece nonmailable or nonmachinable.

OCR Read Area
Exhibit 1.3



Clear Space
1.5

A clear space must be available on all mail for the address, postage (permit imprint, postage stamp, or meter stamp), postmarks, and postal endorsements.

Attachment of Different Class
1.6

If the names and addresses of the sender and intended recipient do not appear on both the host and attachment, the sender's name and address must be placed on one piece and the recipient's name and address on the other. Combination containers that have inseparable parts or compartments are mailable with the names and addresses on only one.

Basic Addressing
1.7

Basic addressing standards for First-Class Mail, Express Mail, Standard Mail, and Package Services are in E100, E500, E600, and E700, respectively. Additional standards for Periodicals are in 7.0. Additional standards apply to overseas military mail, Department of State mail, mail in window envelopes, international mail, and mail claimed at any automation rate.

2.0 ZIP CODE

Purpose
2.1

The ZIP (Zone Improvement Plan) Code system is a numbered coding system that facilitates efficient mail processing. The USPS assigns ZIP Codes. All post offices are assigned at least one unique 5-digit ZIP Code. Larger post offices may be assigned two or more 5-digit ZIP Codes (multi-5-digit ZIP Code offices). Separate 5-digit ZIP Codes are assigned to each delivery unit at these offices. Unique 3-digit and multi-5-digit ZIP Code post offices have street listings in Publication 65, *National Five-Digit ZIP Code and Post Office Directory.*

ZIP+4
2.2

The most complete ZIP Code is a nine-digit number consisting of five digits, a hyphen, and four digits, which the USPS describes by its trademark ZIP+4. The correct format for a numeric ZIP+4 code is five digits, a hyphen, and four digits. The first five digits represent the 5-digit ZIP Code; the sixth and seventh digits (the first two after the hyphen) identify an area known as a sector; the eighth and ninth digits identify a smaller area known as a segment. Together, the final four digits identify geographic units such as a side of a street between intersections, both sides of a street between intersections, a building, a floor or group of floors in a building, a firm within a building, a span of boxes on a rural route, or a group of post office boxes to which a single USPS employee makes delivery.

Numeric DPBC
2.3 A numeric equivalent of a delivery point barcode (DPBC) consists of five digits followed by a hyphen and seven digits as specified in C840. The numeric equivalent is formed by adding three digits directly after the ZIP+4 code.

3.0 COMPLETE ADDRESS

Definition
3.1 [6-12-03] A complete address has all the address elements necessary to allow an exact match with the current USPS ZIP+4 Product to obtain the finest level of ZIP+4 code for the delivery address. A complete address may be required on mail at some automation rates.

Elements
3.2 [6-12-03] A complete delivery address includes:

a. Addressee name or other identifier and/or firm name where applicable.

b. Private mail box designator and number (PMB 300 or #300).

c. Urbanization name (Puerto Rico only, ZIP Code prefixes 006 to 009, if area is so designated).

d. Street number and name (including predirectional, suffix, and postdirectional as shown in USPS ZIP+4 Product for the delivery address or rural route and box number (RR 5 BOX 10), highway contract route and box number (HC 4 BOX 45), or post office box number (PO BOX 458), as shown in USPS ZIP+4 Product for the delivery address). ("PO Box" is used incorrectly if preceding a private box number, e.g., a college mailroom.)

e. Secondary address unit designator and number (such as an apartment or suite number (APT 202, STE 100)).

f. City and state (or authorized two-letter state abbreviation). Use only city names and city and state name abbreviations as shown in USPS City State Product. Contact the National Customer Support Center (see A930) for more information about the City State Product.

g. Correct 5-digit ZIP Code or ZIP+4 code. If a firm name is assigned a unique ZIP+4 code in the USPS ZIP+4 Product, the unique ZIP+4 code must be used in the delivery address.

4.0 RETURN ADDRESS

Purpose
4.1 The return address tells the USPS where the sender of a mailpiece wants it returned if the piece cannot be delivered. The return address contains elements corresponding to those for the delivery address. Although the sender's name is required in the return address in only specific circumstances (under 4.3), if the sender's name is not included in the return address, another clear designation (apartment, suite, or room number) is required to ensure proper handling of ancillary services and/or return of the piece.

Ancillary Services
4.2 The USPS uses the return address to provide ancillary services requested by the mailer (e.g., "Return Service Requested"). The return address on any mailpiece endorsed for an ancillary service must identify where the piece is to be returned and where the mailer is prepared to pay applicable postage and fees for pieces returned or for ancillary service provided at the mailer's request. A domestic return address must be placed in the upper left corner of the address side of the piece or the upper left corner of the addressing area.

Required Use 4.3

Except as provided in 4.1, the sender's domestic return address must appear legibly on:

a. Mail of any class, when its return and/or an address correction service is requested.
b. Official mail.
c. Mail paid with precanceled stamps.
d. Matter bearing a company permit imprint.
e. Priority Mail.
f. Periodicals in envelopes or wrappers.
g. Package Services (except unendorsed Bound Printed Matter).
h. Registered mail.
i. Insured mail.
j. Collect on delivery (COD) mail.
k. Certified mail if a return receipt is requested.
l. Express Mail if a return receipt is requested. The return address on the Express Mail label meets this standard.

Postmark 4.4

An endorsement directing return to point of mailing (postmark) is not honored.

5.0 RESTRICTIONS

Dual Address 5.1

Mail with a dual address, i.e., both a street address and a post office box number, is delivered to the address immediately above the city and state (or to the post office box if both the street address and post office box are on the same line). If a ZIP+4 code or 5-digit ZIP Code is used, it must correspond to the address element immediately above the city and state (or with the post office box number in the address if both the street address and post office box are on the same line). These restrictions also apply to return addresses on mail (for more information, see Publication 28, *Postal Addressing Standards*).

More Than One Post Office 5.2

Mail with the name of more than one post office in the delivery address or return address is not acceptable for mailing.

Mail Addressed to CMRAs 5.3

Mail sent to an addressee at a commercial mail receiving agency (CMRA) must be addressed to their private mailbox ("PMB" or "#") number at the CMRA mailing address.

6.0 MILITARY MAIL

Overseas Address 6.1

[4-17-03] Overseas military addresses must conform to domestic addressing standards. The delivery line (i.e., the second line from the bottom in the address) must show the ship name, unit number, CMR or PSC number, and box number if assigned. The last line must contain the APO and FPO designation and the appropriate two-letter "state" abbreviation (AA, AE, or AP), followed by the ZIP+4 or 5-digit ZIP Code. AA, AE, and AP are used for addresses with the 3-digit ZIP Code prefixes 340, 090-098, and 962-966, respectively. In addition:

a. Mail addressed to Army personnel must show full name, including first name and middle name or initial, and unit number.

b. Mail addressed to Air Force personnel must show full name, including first name and middle name or initial, and PSC or unit number.

c. Mail addressed to Navy and Marine Corps personnel must show full name, including first name and middle name or initial, and PSC number for shore-based units, or ship name.

d. Mail sent to dependents residing in overseas areas must be addressed in care of the sponsor.

Geographic Address
6.2 Mail showing a foreign city and country in addition to the military address is subject to the postage rates and conditions for international mail.

Address Within United States
6.3 [4-17-03] Mail addressed to military personnel within the United States must show the name of the military installation, state, and either the correct ZIP Code or ZIP+4 code. In addition:

a. Mail addressed to Army personnel must show full name, including first name and middle name or initial, and organization.

b. Mail addressed to Air Force personnel must show full name, including first name and middle name or initial, organization, and box number (if served by a PSC).

c. Mail addressed to Navy and Marine Corps personnel must show full name, including first name and middle name or initial, and organization.

d. Mail sent to dependents of military personnel for delivery through the sponsor's military unit must be addressed in care of the sponsor.

e. Mail sent to dependents of military personnel for delivery at the sponsor's military quarters need not be addressed in care of the sponsor.

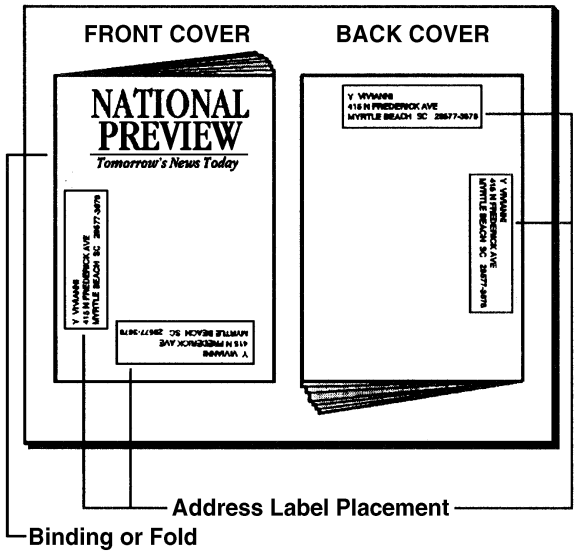
7.0 ADDITIONAL STANDARDS FOR PERIODICALS

Preparation
7.1 Each addressed piece, including the top copy of a firm package, must bear the addressee's name and address. The address must include the correct ZIP+4 code or 5-digit ZIP Code.

Address Label
7.2 White or other light-colored paper must be used for the address label. To identify the mailpiece as Periodicals, the mailer may place, vertically along the left-hand side of the label, a 1/4-inch or narrower strip of solid pink or of pink "PER" characters.

Address Placement
7.3 The delivery address must be clearly visible on or through the outside of the mailpiece, whether placed on a label or directly on the host publication, a component, or the mailing wrapper. If placed on the mailing wrapper, the address must be on a flat side, not on a fold (see Exhibit 7.3). If a polybag is used, the address must not appear on a component that rotates within the bag, and the address must remain visible throughout the addressed component's range of motion.

Address Placement for Periodicals
Exhibit 7.3



Return Address
7.4 The return address must appear on any mailing wrapper that is endorsed "Address Service Requested."